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# Parties without brand names: the causes and consequences of party relabeling

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PARTIES WITHOUT BRAND NAMES: THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF
PARTY RELABELING

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PH.D. THESIS

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To my parents, Dongkyu & Daniel

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# ABSTRACT

The dissertation explores the causes of party relabeling by focusing on four party systems: South Korea, France, Taiwan and the United States. The existing literature on political parties considers one of their primary functions to be providing a brand name. As a result, party name change has been viewed as an anomaly caused by internal and external shocks that disturb the status quo equilibrium or a phenomenon symptomatic of unstable, weakly institutionalized party systems. However, party name changes are not as rare as assumed in the existing literature.

Therefore, my dissertation addresses the following questions: When and why do parties change names? What are the characteristics of a party system that hamper the development of brand-name party labels? I theorize that the combination of the following three factors increases the likelihood of party relabeling: (1) prominence of personalistic party cues, (2) strong levels of political attention in the electorate, and (3) high degree of governmental centralization. These three factors encourage vote-, office-seeking motivations in the party so greatly that the party is willing to do whatever it takes to win including such a radical strategy as relabeling.

In order to test the proposed theory, I closely examine South Korea and France, where parties commonly replace their labels, in comparison to Taiwan and the United States whose parties do not change labels, respectively. These four cases are chosen because they allows cross-case and within-case analysis that is crucial for a comparative case study to gain internal and external validity. I utilize various types of data – both qualitative and quantitative in investigating these cases.

My dissertation will contribute to a broad range of literatures in party politics as well as in East Asian politics. By providing a new theoretical model on this understudied phenomenon, I contribute to a better understanding of the role of party labels and initiate more active discussion over party strategy and party branding. Furthermore, by examining Korean and Taiwanese parties in depth, my dissertation provides a systematic analysis on the studies of East Asian politics.

# PUBLIC ABSTRACT

Despite the conventional wisdom that party labels are brand names, there are some parties that change their labels frequently. What are the characteristics of a party system that hampers the development of brand-name party labels? When and why do parties change names? I theorize that the combination of the following three factors increases the likelihood of party relabeling: (1) prominence of personalistic party cues, (2) strong levels of political attention in the electorate, and (3) high degree of governmental centralization. These three factors encourage vote-, office-seeking motivations in the party so greatly that the party is willing to do whatever it takes to win elections including such a radical strategy as relabeling. In order to test the proposed theory, I closely examine South Korea and France, where parties commonly replace their labels, in comparison to Taiwan and the United States whose parties do not change labels, respectively. These four cases are chosen because they allows cross-case and within-case analysis that is crucial for a comparative case study to gain internal and external validity. I utilize various types of data – both qualitative and quantitative in investigating these cases.

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**CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION**

It is unquestionable that political parties are at the heart of democracy
(Schattschneider 1942). Parties, defined as a group of politicians seeking to win
government office under a common label (Downs 1957; Hicken 2009), articulate political
interests, recruit candidates for government office, provide choices to voters in elections
and represent the interests they stand for in government. Parties provide "brand names" to
politicians and this helps parties perform these various functions well. Through their
labels, parties identify candidates to voters and provide voters with information about
their ideological preferences. Party labels, in short, convey established reputation and
they are an information shortcut for voters (Aldrich 1995; Campbell et al. 1960; Downs
1957; Kiewiet and McCubbins 1991; Snyder and Ting 2002). In legislatures, politicians
under the same labels behave similarly though the degree of this intra-party coherence
varies across parties and party systems (Cox and McCubbins 1993; Kiewiet and
McCubbins 1991; Snyder and Groseclose 2000).

In short, a party label serves politicians in their performance in government and in
the electorate. Labels give parties a meaningful identity as an organization in the same
way that a brand name helps companies. Given such informational assets that a party
label carries, it seems reasonable to expect that a party label is or should be stable so that
it could serve its purpose effectively. In fact, this expectation is upheld in many cases,
especially in well-established democracies. In some settings, however, it is not
uncommon for parties to change their names from time to time.

For instance, the *New Politics Alliance for Democracy*, the main opposition party in South Korea has changed its name approximately nine times since Korea's democratization in 1987, meaning that each party label was good for about 2-3 years only. Also, the largest party in France, *Les Republicans* (The Republicans)[1], has changed its name six times since its foundation in 1946. Then, why are party name changes more common in some countries than in others? Under what conditions do parties relabel themselves? What does a party label mean to politicians and to the electorate in this setting where party relabeling is common? These are the questions that this research aims to answer.

Despite the fact that party name change is not an unusual phenomenon, at least in some countries, the existing literature does not provide sufficient, if any, explanations as to why parties change labels. Based on the underlying assumption that a party label is something that is stable, party relabeling has been treated as an anomalous or undesirable phenomenon in the party literature. This tendency has left party relabeling largely understudied – its mechanism as well as its practical and theoretical implications. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to examine the mechanism and the significance of party relabeling in depth. Given that there are cross-national variations in the frequency of party relabeling, this research focuses on system-wide conditions that are conducive to this phenomenon.

In the next section, I review the existing literature on a "party as a brand name" and show how little attention the field has given to relabeling of parties. After the

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[1] Until May 2015, it used to be the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP).

overview of how the broad party literature treats party relabeling, I focus on the two

existing explanations, so called the "weak party system" and the "shock" arguments.

These arguments provide some explanations regarding party relabeling, albeit superficial,

which are most relevant in the existing literature. Then, I elaborate the puzzle that party

relabeling poses, which these existing explanations cannot resolve. I then propose a

theory that explains the phenomenon of interest focusing on the features of a party system

where party relabeling is common. Lastly, I conclude this chapter with an outline of this

research.

## 1.1 Party as a Brand Name

It is conventional wisdom that political parties provide brand names to politicians.

Just as brand names work for firms as well as customers in the commercial market, party

labels work for politicians and voters in the political market. "Party as a brand name"

provides an established reputation to a party and its members, particularly elected

politicians and candidates. The extant literature on a party as a brand name can be

categorized broadly into three dimensions:  party in the electorate, party in government,

and party as an organization (Key 1964).

### 1.1.1 Party in the Electorate

Researchers on voting behavior have focused on the importance of party labels in

the electoral market. They argue that party ID is one of the most decisive factors that

explain an individual's voting decision. From the politician's perspective, party affiliation

helps candidates win elections more easily holding other things constant. The core

mechanism at work is reputation attached to a party label as a brand name. For instance,

Aldrich (1995) argues that as a political party offers a brand name to politicians,

affiliation with a well-established party increases the likelihood that a candidate will win

elections. Well-established parties are those who have been in the political arena with

platform consistent over time and have fielded candidates in elections continuously. Such

parties cue "established" reputations attached to them and thus make information on

candidates and parties themselves cheap to voters like renowned brand names do to

customers in the market. Answering the question, "Why do parties exist?" Aldrich

contends that parties are an endogenous institution created by ambitious politicians for

the purpose of achieving their goals. In this sense, a party as a brand name is beneficial

for politicians electorally.

Aldrich draws his idea about the party label's being a low-cost information cue

from Downs (1957). Downs argues that party labels are a cost-saving device for voters in

that parties' names serve as an information shortcut. Using a party label, voters can make

informed decisions because ideologies represented by each party label enable the voters

to have an idea, though vague, of what positions the parties take on a wide range of

issues. This helps voters to make reasoned comparisons across parties as well as

candidates and figure out who fits best for their own interests or preferences without

knowing all the details about policy issues. For party labels to be an effective information

shortcut by building reputation, however, Downs emphasizes that parties should maintain

ideological coherence and stability of their party labels. Kiewiet and McCubbins (1991)

directly following this logic argue that the party label contains informational value and

thus electoral benefits for politicians. Moreover, they assert that there are several measures available to party leaders that they could employ for quality control of their brand names by maintaining ideological coherence and consistence among their members.

Campbell et al. (1960) empirically show how the informational and electoral value contained in the party label works in voting behavior of the electorate. Showing that party ID is the most decisive factor in American voting behavior, the authors prove that party labels in the United States give parties their identity. Most American voters do not have sophisticated knowledge about politics and lack consistent ideological belief systems. They have what Converse called "nonattitudes" (Converse 1964, 1970). Due to this lack of political sophistication prevalent among the American public, American voters decide who to vote for largely based on their party ID. In other words, an individual affiliated with the Republican Party is highly likely to vote for a Republican candidate no matter what while a Democratic Party sympathizer is likely to vote for a Democratic candidate. The authors further claim party ID is characterized by stability. Once built in it tends not to change because it channels an individual to accept political information selectively filtered through her partisan lens reinforcing her preexisting political beliefs.

Snyder and Ting (2002) test how parties as brand names work for voters. Their basic assumption is that voters are incompletely informed about candidates' policy position. Also, it is unlikely that candidates follow a policy platform declared in a campaign perfectly once elected. Parties build informative brand names and recruit candidates whose ideology is consistent with the brand screening out those whose

ideological preferences are not close enough to the party brand. By doing so, parties can signal their ideological positions and policy preferences to voters effectively.

Based on the studies discussed above, it can be said that the discussions on a "party as a brand name" in relation to the electorate are built upon a certain set of assumptions as follows: First, given that the general public is incompletely informed about candidates and policies, the informative value of the party label is crucial in voters' decision making in elections. Thus, establishing a reliable brand name and reputation is crucial for parties electorally. Second, due to the importance of establishing brand name value, it is unlikely that parties change their names. Since the party label itself means something and signals to voters an image or information associated with a candidate or a party, party relabeling can confuse the voters and thereby reduce the signaling quality of the party label.

Third, building reputation attached to the party label is a long-term process. For instance, Downs (1957) emphasizes parties should maintain ideological coherence and stability over time to make their party labels an effective information shortcut. In other words, Downs assumes that the longer the parties remain consistent ideologically under certain labels, the better the labels as brand names work for politicians electorally.

### 1.1.2 Party in Government

Besides those examining the role of a party label in the electorate, there are researchers who focus on how party labels function among politicians in government. They examine whether representatives do party voting or personalistic voting and what "a

party as a brand name" means in the legislature. Kiewiet and McCubbins (1991) elaborate on the informational value of a party label developed by politicians in the legislature. They believe that the informational content of a party label is a common good produced collectively by individual legislators in government. As legislators vote according to their party platform and behave consistently with it over time, they build expectations and reputation about their behavior, attaching this informational value to their party label. This informational content of the party label is, in turn, utilized by voters as cheap information cues when they decide who to vote for as discussed above.

Through their analysis, Kiewiet and McCubbins find that parties in the legislature are able to build and maintain this informational value of their labels and give them a certain amount of control over the behavior of their members in the legislature. Using such measures as screening and selection mechanism to have like-minded members and monitoring mechanism over individual legislators' behavior, parties in government prevent their member legislators from drifting away from the ideal position cued in their party labels. In short, this prevents members from violating a party's brand name.

Similar to Kiewiet and McCubbins (1991), Cox and McCubbins (1993) argue that parties in the legislature enjoy a substantial amount of disciplinary power over their individual members, which is crucial for building reputation and brand name value for party labels. They start from the assumption that politicians are self-interested. Their primary goal is reelection, which is a function of individual as well as partisan reputations.

According to them, politicians are constantly exposed to the incentives to pursue their individual interests that many times are in conflict with their party goals, which

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might lead to an agency loss from the party's perspective. In other words, the legislative behavior and the outcome of it are collective goods. To overcome the collective action problems prevalent in the legislative process, individual legislators find it beneficial to place central authority in their parties' leaders and sacrifice their individual interests. Parties, therefore, as a "legislative leviathan" in Hobbsian terms, are able to keep their members in check (Cox and McCubbins 1993). This helps them add brand name value to their labels through regulated behavior of the members in the legislature and thereby establishing a certain set of expectations or reputations associated with the party labels. The brand name value offered by the party label helps politicians get reelected because it affects partisan as well as individual reputations in a positive way.

Rohde (1991, 1995) and Snyder and Groseclose (2000) empirically test the "party as a brand name in government" model in American Congress. Rohde finds that since the Congressional reforms of the 1970s, there has been a resurgence of partisanship in the House. Congressional parties became more cohesive internally and more distinct externally as legislators in the House began to vote along party lines increasingly (Rohde 1991, 1995). Snyder and Groseclose investigate the influence of parties on the legislators in Congress using roll call voting. They find that party voting is prevalent in US Congress and the party influence is more salient on key issues such as procedural rules, budgetary bills, social security, and tax policy.

As is the case in the discussion of a "party as a brand name in the electorate," the underlying assumption of party government studies is that a party label should be stable over time in order for it to develop brand name value and the informational content of it is created collectively by politicians in a cumulative and gradual process. Because of the

stability assumption, studies on party government also do not pay attention to party name changes.

### 1.1.3 Party as an Organization

According to V. O. Key's definition, the dimension of "the party as an organization" highlights the functions that parties play for their survival and operation like other types of organizations do such as firms and interest groups. These functions include recruiting political elites, office-seeking activities, and articulating and aggregating interests (V. O. Key 1958, pp. 163-165). They are closely related to the institutionalization of party organizations (Huntington 1965). Given that its main interests are about organizational operations, the literature on parties as political organizations is almost silent about the importance and the roles of a party label as a brand name in relation to party organization. Further, as Schlesinger claimed, theories of party organization are the least developed of the three dimensions of V. O. Key in general (Schlesinger 1984).

The literature in this category addresses the following questions. First, some researchers in this field are interested in identifying various types of parties within the historical party development framework, for instance, party development from cadre party to mass party, catch-all party and cartel party (Duverger 1990; Katz and Mair 1995; Kirchheimer 1990; Koole 1996). They examine how parties have adapted organizational features to the changing environment. Second, some focus on measuring parties' organizational strengths, often cross-nationally, using various indicators such as a party's

fundraising capability, membership, hierarchical organizational structure, etc. This group of scholars is mostly interested in addressing the party decline argument, either by refuting or corroborating the claim (Farrell and Webb 1990; Scarrow 1990). Third, there are scholars who examine party's organizational change, i.e., what factors lead to organizational change, whether internal factors or external factors are more decisive, etc. (Harmel and Janda 1994; Harmel et al. 1995; Harmel and Tan 2003).

As the first two groups of scholars are quiet about how a party label as a brand name works in the organizational framework, I will not discuss them any further. The third group, however, is worth more attention since this line of literature touches, albeit slightly, on the concept of party labels. Researchers in this category consider party relabeling as one of the party's organizational change variables. For instance, Harmel et al. (1995) includes party name change as one of their 26 organizational change variables in their study on what accounts for party change. Investigating whether change in dominant factions within the party leads to significant party change, both organizational and identity changes, Harmel and Tan (2003) counts party name change as a type of organizational changes. Notwithstanding, they do not pay attention to what this party label change means and what the implications are as it is not their question of interest.

One thing from these studies that is somewhat related to my research questions is one of their assumptions. They assume that parties are not likely to change either in organizational features or in identity as is the case for other organizations. Organizations are conservative in nature and thus favor the status quo (Michels 1962). Focusing this logic on party relabeling, they believe that parties are not expected to change their names under normal conditions. Put differently, parties will relabel themselves when they are

forced to, caused by either internal or external "shocks". This view is discussed more in depth in the following section.

## 1.2 Existing Explanations

As examined above, the extant literature largely remains silent about relabeling of parties, discounting it as anomalous or undesirable for representation. To reiterate, the existing discussions on the importance and roles of the party label as a brand name are based on the assumption that it is unlikely to see a party label change. Since there is information attached to the party label in a form of reputations or expectations, a change of party label impairs its brand name. Also, because a brand name is a long-term product, it takes time to restore the informational value in it once changed, which is not beneficial for the party in the political market. Moreover, it raises the normative concern that party relabeling is undesirable for representation in a democracy. It confuses voters making it difficult for them to identify candidates ideologically and thus matching their own preferences to ideal candidates becomes much harder, which in turn hinders the voters from voting "correctly" as they would with full information (Lau and Redlawsk 1997).

Drawing on these assumptions underlain in the field, we can infer two arguments from the existing literature that are most relevant to understanding party relabeling, which are the Weak Party (system) and the Shock Hypotheses. According to the literature on party system institutionalization (or consolidation), it can be inferred that parties in a less institutionalized system are more likely to change labels frequently than those in a well-established system others being equal. By definition, it is less likely that parties in

the former have built a close bond with voters and established reputation yet than those in the latter setting. In short, parties of an unconsolidated system have less chance to have developed brand name value attached to their labels. Therefore, we can expect that fewer costs incur by party relabeling in a weak party system and thus parties are generally more comfortable with an idea of relabeling when it is believed necessary than those in a strong party system. This same logic works at the party level as well – it applies to explaining a variation on the frequency or likelihood of relabeling among individual parties within a same party system. Weak parties are more likely to change labels than their stronger counterparts. This argument is named the Weak Party Hypothesis.

Secondly, according to the literature on party organizational change, it can be inferred that "shocks" might cause parties to relabel. As discussed in the previous section, the underlying assumption in this literature is that under normal conditions parties do not make significant organizational changes such as relabeling because parties like any other types of organizations are conservative in nature. However, shocks break the status quo and may trigger organizational changes. Examples of shocks include catastrophic electoral results or factional, leadership changes. Following this view, one can expect, for instance, that a party that has been hit by calamitous elections is more likely to change its label than one with satisfactory electoral results. This is what I term the Shock Hypothesis.

In this section, I review the literatures on party system institutionalization and party organizational change upon which the Weak Party Hypothesis and the Shock Hypothesis are based, respectively. Then, these two explanations to party relabeling are discussed more in depth.

### 1.2.1 Party System Institutionalization

Party system institutionalization, consolidation, and stability are concepts that are commonly discussed in the party system development literature. Surprisingly however, there are no clear definitions of these concepts that are universally adopted in the literature. Moreover, all these terms are used interchangeably (Mainwaring and Scully 1995b; Mainwaring and Torcal 2006; Randall and Svasand 2002; Sartori 1976; Tavits 2008; Toole 2000). Although it is challenging to define and distinguish each concept, they all imply regularity, continuity, and patterned interactions among parties. For instance, Lipset and Rokkan (1967) in their evaluation of the West European party system of the 1960s claimed that the system matured to the extent that it froze to the configuration of party competition and voter alignment that had been formed during the 1920s. Similarly, in her investigation of the causes for party system instability across East European democracies, Tavits (2008) adopts electoral volatility and supply of parties, which is measured by the counts of new parties entering and parties exiting a given election as indicators of party system instability.

Given conceptual vagueness around these terms, I decide to focus on party system institutionalization because it offers the clearest definition and measures of the three. The concept of party system institutionalization was developed by Mainwaring and Scully (1995, 2006). Based on the notion of regularity and continuity, they define party system institutionalization as a process by which interactions among parties become well established and widely known. There are four conditions for a party system to be institutionalized. First, there should be stability in the patterns of interparty competition.

Second, parties should have stable roots in society. Third, parties and party-based elections should be considered legitimate by both politicians and voters. Fourth, party organizations should be developed as autonomous entities.

Mainwaring and Scully suggest that the first condition, stability in the patterns of interparty competition, is measured by Pedersen's index of electoral volatility (Pedersen 1979). Pedersen's index gauges the net change in the seat (or vote) shares of all parties from one election to the next calculated by summing up the absolute values of all gains and all losses of the percentage of seats or (votes) and dividing it by two. Parties which survive longer are more highly institutionalized.

There are several measures of the second condition, party's stable roots in society. First is the difference between the percentage of legislative seats won by parties and the percentage won by their presidential candidates. Higher values indicate a weakly institutionalized system. Second, ideological voting, which is the extent to which party competition is ideological, can be used. Prevalence of ideological voting is an indication of a high level of party system institutionalization. Thirdly, as opposed to ideological voting, personalistic voting can be employed to measure the strength of party roots in society. Personalistic voting is an average share of vote won by outsider candidates in elections. A higher number of personalistic voting means a low degree of institutionalization. Lastly, the average age of parties can be used. The longer the party survives the higher level of institutionalization it means.

Compared to the first and second criteria, Mainwaring and Scully do not offer clear measures for the third and the fourth. The third condition, legitimacy accorded to parties and elections can be gauged by survey questions such as "Do you think current

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parties are legitimate?" "Do you think elections are a legitimate channel to choose political leaders?" The fourth condition, the development of party organizations, the authors suggested, can be measured by the presence of hierarchical party organizations, i.e., headquarters and local offices and the degree of party discipline in legislatures.

### *1.2.1.1 Party Relabeling vs. New Party Emergence*

Before discussing the theoretical implications that the party system institutionalization research offers regarding party relabeling, it should be noted that this literature does not address the issue of party relabeling directly. Instead, this focuses on the rise and fall of parties in the system. Therefore, it is important to distinguish party relabeling from a new party emergence that is more directly dealt with in the literature. According to the criteria for party system institutionalization, party relabeling does not necessarily indicate system instability or weak institutionalization. Party relabeling by definition means the continuation of the same party but under a new label. Therefore, the relabeled party is not a "brand new" party. The latter is an obstacle to the "freezing" of party system (Lipset and Rokkan 1967) while the former does not do any harm to party system freezing. For this reason, party relabeling does not necessarily hamper the stability of interparty competition, party roots in society, legitimacy accorded to parties and elections, and development of party organizations. Now, let us think more about the differences between party relabeling and a new party emergence.

First, party relabeling leaves a party essentially the same in identity and membership though its label has changed. A political party could change names for many reasons, for instance, in an effort to create a new image and appeal to the public. Even under a different label, however, the members and ideology of the party could remain the

same. There is continuity in this case. In contrast, the emergence of a new party implies a whole different membership, leadership, and identity with a new label. The frequent appearance of new parties indicates a low degree of party system institutionalization, which disturbs the regular or stable patterns of interparty competition.

Second, relating to the point mentioned above, party relabeling does not change a party system whereas the emergence of new parties impairs the level of system institutionalization. As relabeled parties are not brand new parties entering the political arena but essentially the same one but under the different labels, these parties do not increase or decrease the number of parties and thus do not lower the average age of parties in their systems. In short, they do not fragment or destabilize the preexisting party system. However, the frequent emergence of new parties means the rise and fall of many short-lived parties and this in turn has a destabilizing effect on the party systems.

Lastly, parties that change their names frequently can be strong as a governing entity in the legislature and they can also have well-developed party organizations. Put in V. O. Key's terms, this type of party can be strong in the aspects of a "party in government" and a "party as an organization". Members remain loyal to their parties as the parties are the primary providers of resources critical for their career as politicians such as campaign funding, staff, and nomination processes. Furthermore, with such organizational power, these parties have strong party discipline over their members in government. Weak parties in a weakly institutionalized party system, on the other hand, tend to have loose party discipline in government and lack organizational strength besides weak electoral support (Strom 2000). For instance, in Brazil legislators vote according to their personal or clientele incentives (Figueiredo and Limongi 2000). Also, it is common

for politicians to switch parties before and after elections for electoral purposes and new

parties rise and fall frequently (Desposato 2006; Heller and Mershon 2009).

### *1.2.1.2 Weak Party Hypothesis*

Then, what implications can be drawn from the party system institutionalization

literature with regards to party relabeling? Although the literature does not say directly

about party relabeling, it is possible to infer some relevant implications as we focus on

the second criterion of party system institutionalization developed by Mainwaring and

Scully – parties' stable roots in society. Put differently, an institutionalized party system

is characterized by a stable party-voter linkage. It means that voters in general are aligned

along parties and thus parties enjoy stable support bases. In a system with a stable party-

voter linkage, parties tend to have developed brand name value and their labels convey

some form of information, reputation, and image to the general public. In this system, it

can be expected that parties do not have strong incentives to change their labels for their

labels are brand names in the political market, which have been established over time.

On the other hand, a less institutionalized system implies a lack of such stable

party-voter linkages. Therefore, a majority of voters would not display loyalty or

emotional attachment to any party in the system and party labels tend not to bear special

meaning to voters compared to what party labels mean to voters in an institutionalized

system. In this setting, party labels do not have much brand name quality, and therefore,

relabeling is a less costly option for parties compared to institutionalized party systems

where parties have information-rich label. Moreover, relabeling could even be considered

as one of the most effective rebranding strategies for parties in an unconsolidated system.

Relabeling could give a fresh look to a party almost instantly by just changing its label

and without effort to make any "real," "substantive" changes to the party, which is usually a more painstaking process than mere name change. Therefore, parties in a setting where the party-voter linkages are loose may find it attractive to shed their older labels and come under new, fresh banners as a way to create new appeals to the voters. In short, we are led to conclude that party relabeling is a characteristic of a "weak" party system.

By extending this logic of the weak-party-system argument to a party level, we can explain a variation in the frequency of party relabeling across parties within a system. It can be predicted that less-established parties are more likely to change names than well-established ones in a given system. This indicates that even in a highly institutionalized party system there could be some parties that relabel themselves from time to time if they have not established brand name quality attached to their labels. By the same token, it can be also true that not all parties under an unstable party system are to change names. Instead, parties that have built tight bonds with the electorate and thus their labels work as brands might hardly get rid of these valuable labels although they are situated in an underdeveloped system.

### 1.2.2 Party Change

In the literature of party change, there are two traditions: one that regards party change as a long-term, gradual adaptive process and the other that regards party change as a discontinuous outcome of deliberate decisions made by a party. Scholars in the former school of thought are committed to investigating how parties have modified their organizational features, roles, and functions in response to changes in the environment

which they are surrounded by over time. For instance, Kirchheimer asserts that parties in the Western European countries have de-ideologized since 1945 and tried to broaden their ideological bases so as to capture as wide electorates as possible (Kirchheimer 1990). Katz and Mair (1995) traces back the evolutionary path of party development in the party's relation to the public and government and classifies party types from the cadre party to the cartel party that is of today. One of the most hotly debated topics in this literature is whether political parties decline.

Unlike this long-term, gradual pattern of party change, the second group of researchers focuses on changes in individual parties. Party changes are viewed discontinuous and ad hoc in nature given that they are outcomes of decisions made by parties in response to internal and external stimuli. These researchers are interested in what causes a party's organizational or ideological changes and what factors affect the magnitude of the changes.

Most notably, Harmel and Janda (1994) develop a model that explains party change by incorporating the notion of variant party goals into it. Parties may have different goals such as vote-, office-, policy-seeking, and intraparty democracy maximization. However, it is unrealistic to assume that parties pursue only one of these goals; instead, they may have a combination of them. Of these goals, Harmel and Janda emphasize that what matters most for significant party change is what they call "primary goals," the most important goals that parties care for. They argue that party change is resulted by internal and external stimuli or shocks. Internal shocks are leadership change and a change of dominant faction within the party. External shocks are any event originating outside the party that harms the party's primary goal or that causes party

leaders to seriously question the party's effectiveness on the performance and delivery of its primary goal. For vote-seeking parties, for instance, calamitous electoral failure will be an external shock that will trigger significant and fundamental changes to the parties.

Based on this theoretical model, Harmel et al. (1995) conduct an empirical analysis to test hypotheses derived from the model. The authors quantify variables in the model such as leadership change, a change of dominant faction, external stimulus and most importantly, party change with its magnitude. Here in this study, the authors examine only one external stimulus, which is electoral performance, the single most prominent external factor. Regarding the party change variable, they operationalize it using 26 organizational change variables and 17 issue change variables. Of 26 organizational change variables, name change is included. Using their original data covering three parties each of Britain and Germany from 1950 to 1990, they find partial support for the claim that bad electoral performance triggers party change but also reveal that internal factors such as leadership change and dominant faction change play an important role for party change.

As a sequel of Harmel et al. (1995), Harmel and Tan (2003) develop more specified hypotheses on the role of internal stimuli for party change. These hypotheses include: whether the intensity of rivalry between the old dominant faction and the new faction affects the magnitude of party change; whether the internal cohesiveness of a dominant faction affects the magnitude of party change; and whether a change in dominant faction coincided with leadership change brings about more significant party change. Electoral performance, the major external shock variable for party change, is also included in their empirical model as a control variable. The results show that although

poor electoral performance precipitates change, the cohesiveness of a new dominant

faction matters a lot. The authors conclude that internal shocks alone can lead to

significant party change departing from the prevalent belief that external shocks are a

necessary and oftentimes sufficient condition for significant changes in a party's

organization and identity.

### *1.2.2.1 Shock Hypothesis*

The Shock Hypothesis discussed above does not pay close attention to party

relabeling per se. Instead, it treats relabeling as one type of party organizational changes,

the 26 variables that Harmel and his colleagues consider in their model. Nonetheless, we

can draw some implications from the argument that is relevant to explaining party

relabeling. By directly borrowing the causal mechanism of the argument, one can predict

that both external and internal shocks cause party name change. For instance, calamitous

electoral results may lead a party to change its name in order to garner more support and

recover from its loss. Also, leadership change may bring about party name change.

## 1.3 The Puzzle

As discussed in the first section above, the existing studies on political parties

share the notion that a party is a brand name to politicians as well as voters and thus party

labels are unlikely to change. For this reason, they do not offer sufficient, if any,

explanations to understanding party relabeling, which is in fact not as rare as generally

assumed in the literature. Instead, the literature has considered party name change to be

an anomaly caused by internal and external "shocks" that disturb the status quo

equilibrium (Harmel et al. 1995; Harmel and Janda 1994; Harmel and Tan 2003) or a phenomenon symptomatic of unstable, weakly institutionalized party systems (Mainwaring and Scully 1995b; Mainwaring and Torcal 2006; Stockton 2001). The first approach is named the Shock Hypothesis and the second the Weak Party Hypothesis in this research.

Party relabeling can be explained by these two theories but there is some empirical evidence that does not conform to the expectations of these explanations. First of all, in contrast to the Weak-Party-System Hypothesis party relabeling occurs even in highly institutionalized systems such as France and Sweden. For instance, the major right party of France, currently known as the *Les Republicans* has contested elections using no fewer than six different names since its foundation in 1946. Also, in Sweden, five of its eight parties have been renamed at least once since 1945. Moreover, in some countries it is mainstream parties not small, unestablished ones that commonly undertake relabeling, which is inconsistent with the Weak-Party-System Hypothesis. These countries include France as mentioned and South Korea.

Secondly, although the Shock Hypothesis provides more direct and specific explanations regarding party relabeling than any other existing theories and has sound empirical support, it cannot explain cross-national variation in this phenomenon. For instance, while it is common that parties change names in France it is almost unthinkable in the United States. Given that there are always some parties who suffer electoral debacles in any country, meaning that a shock is a constant to all party systems, the Shock Hypothesis hardly explains why France witnesses party name change often whereas the American party system boasts extremely stable party labels. In other words,

the Shock Hypothesis cannot explain why some party systems are more prone to shocks and thus result in more frequent name changes than others.

Also, it should be noted that the Shock Hypothesis presupposes that a party makes changes as a reaction to various sorts of shocks, i.e. internal and external stimuli. However, there are some parties that change their names proactively as a strategic tactic to achieve their goals, not reactively as a response to shocks. As a result, some relabeling cases cannot be viewed merely as an outcome of the party's reaction to shocks. For instance, it is more common that major parties in South Korea relabel themselves prior to elections as a rebranding strategy than they do after elections in order to recover from poor electoral outcomes.

In order to understand party relabeling more accurately, therefore, a more comprehensive theory is needed which elucidates the characteristics of a party system that makes relabeling attractive to parties as well as voters. For this purpose, I aim to address the following question: what are the characteristics of a party system that hamper the development of brand name value of party labels? More specifically, what are the conditions that lead parties to invest less in maintaining labels and accumulating information and reputation attached to them? Given that shocks cause party changes as suggested by the extant party change literature, what are the features of a party system that make party labels particularly vulnerable to shocks?

I argue that a system with a high frequency of party relabeling is a result of the combination of certain factors. First, when parties have strong personalistic cues attached to their labels instead of ideological or clientelist information cues, they are less likely to invest in their labels as brands than parties with ideological or clientelist cues. Second,

strong levels of political attention from the electorate in combination of the first factor further hinder the development of brand party labels. The public with hyper interest in politics keeps a close eye on parties and this puts parties under intense pressure when negative shocks strike them such as scandals, internal conflict, and electoral failure. In other words, strong popular attention given to political affairs makes parties extremely vulnerable to shocks. Third, high degrees of governmental centralization aggravate the negative impact the two previously-mentioned factors on the stabilization of party labels. High centralization of power increases office benefit that a party can get from winning national-level elections and this prods the party to develop more of vote- and office-seeking attitudes than policy maximization. In combination of the three aforementioned factors, power centralization motivates parties, particularly major ones, to be so electorally oriented and to strive so desperately to win national office that they are willing to adopt even aggressive strategies to win elections including relabeling. Given that party labels are less value-laden in a system with weak party-voter linkages than where parties are strong in the electorate, shedding older labels is less costly. In short, it is the combined impact of the three elements that increase the likelihood of party relabeling.

To test this theory, I employ mixed-methods utilizing both qualitative and quantitative analyses. Particularly, I analyze four different party systems – South Korea, France, Taiwan, and the United States. This selection of cases facilitates "cross-case" and "within-case" analyses that are believed to increase both internal and external validity of theory (Brady and Collier 2004). From the empirical analyses, I find that it is the combination of the three parts of my theory that is a strong drive force for the parties in South Korea and France to relabel themselves frequently. Taiwan and the United States,

on the other hand, due to lack of all three parts have parties with stable brand labels. The results support my theory.


## 1.4 Plan of the Dissertation

The next chapter will clarify the definition of party relabeling, its meaning, and purposes more in depth. In doing so, I will incorporate discussions from the marketing literature as the literature focusing on studies on brand management and rebranding. Given a great degree of conceptual similarities between rebranding in marketing and party relabeling, these studies offer lots of important implications concerning party relabeling and help clarifying concepts and ideas entailed in this phenomenon. The inclusion of the brand management literature is particularly useful in that the party politics literature has not given sufficient attention to relabeling.

Chapter 3, a theoretical chapter, will discuss assumptions and detailed causal mechanisms of a theory of party relabeling that I propose. First, I will discuss three different types of party information cues and elaborate how each type is conducive or unfavorable to party relabeling. Second, drawing on the Civic Culture argument by Almond and Verba (1963), I will develop a new argument that strong levels of political attention in the electorate can be harmful for the development of brand party labels in a party system. As this is a counterintuitive view, I will provide various explanations from a diverse set of literatures on political culture, political development, and populism. Third, I will discuss the consequences of centralization versus federalism in terms of office perks across different levels of office – national and subnational. Further, I will

elaborate how centralization incentivizes parties to adopt name change as their radical

strategy to maximize their office benefits which are disproportionately concentrated in

the national office. I will elaborate how these components of my model all *combined*

encourage a party to relabel.

Chapter 4 will discuss the methods adopted in this research to test the proposed

theory and explain why I choose to study South Korea and France with Taiwan and the

United States as shadow cases. Then, I will offer thick descriptions of party relabeling in

South Korea and France. The descriptions of Taiwan and the U.S. will be included and

compared to the former cases. Addressing the systematic differences of the frequency of

party relabeling that exist between South Korea and Taiwan and France and the U.S., I

will first attempt to apply the existing theories introduced in Introduction. Then, I will

point out some of the theoretical weaknesses that the conventional wisdom has. Finally, I

will briefly show how my theoretical model works in explaining the variation across the

four cases. To clarify the causal linkages of the three discrete parts of my theory, I will

conduct a brief comparative analysis including more real-world cases besides the four

that are of my core interest.

Based on these descriptions, Chapters 5 to 7 will use empirical data to test the

model – each part of it as presented in the theoretical chapter. Chapter 5 will investigate

South Korea and Taiwan in depth and test whether and how the offered model works in

explaining the varying degree of party relabeling or (in-)stability of party labels between

these countries. France and the U.S. will be examined in Chapter 6 using the same

empirical framework applied to the South Korean and Taiwanese comparison. Chapter 7

will gauge the electoral consequences of party relabeling using a novel dataset within the

European context. Along with statistical analysis, I will provide some qualitative

evidence that reveals real or believed benefits that party relabeling provides to parties in

electoral competition.

Chapter 8 will summarize the theory, empirical findings and contributions of this

research. Then, I will conclude with offering some implications for future research.

# CHAPTER 2 CONCEPTUALIZING PARTY RELABELING

As discussed in the previous chapter, the literature agrees that political parties consider party labels a brand. Just as brand names work for firms as well as consumers in the commercial market, party labels work for politicians and voters in the political market. The concept of a brand and related ideas like rebranding and brand management are important topics of research in the discipline of marketing and the literature provides sophisticated theories and analytical tools concerning them. For this reason, it is beneficial for our purpose to borrow the concrete and refined models of rebranding from marketing and apply to our enquiry about party relabeling. Accordingly in this chapter, I review the brand literature in marketing and present definitions of terms and models used in this literature. Then, I apply these concepts and models to political parties and elaborate what party relabeling is. Lastly, I discuss the main objectives of party relabeling focusing on the perspectives of parties.

## 2.1 Understanding Brand and Rebranding: Discussion from the Marketing Literature

In the marketing literature, a brand is defined as a "name, term, sign, symbol, or design which is intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors" (Jevons 2005). It is believed that brands are a fundamental marketing device and the most valuable asset of a product or a company (Aaker 1991; Kohli, Harich, and Leuthesser 2005; Kohli and LaBahn 1997;

Muzellec 2006). And brand names contain reputation and brand identity. Brand names are the vehicle that conveys brand knowledge – associative information including images, identity, culture, position, etc. of the branded object – to customers (Dunnion and Knox 2004). In this light, Aaker (1991) capitalizes on the importance of a brand name in forming the essence of the brand concept and the basis for awareness, on which brand equity is built.

There are researchers who conceptualize a brand as consumer memory to explain how a brand name conveys brand knowledge to the consumer (French and Smith 2010; Keller 1993). According to their view, brand knowledge is a complex associative network of information linked to the brand, which is held in the memory of consumers. Particular pieces of information are recalled from memory when activated through a stimulus (French and Smith 2010: 462). For example, seeing the Golden Arches in the street as a stimulus activates your memory and retrieves information that is associated with McDonald's such as affordability, simple, fast food, "i'm lovin' it", etc. Further, the researchers suggest that any stimulated and thereby retrieved brand association can activate other pieces of information that are stored in memory.

### 2.1.1 Roles of Brand Names

As discussed above, a brand name itself constitutes the essence of a brand and is the foundation of a brand's image (Aaker 1991; Kohli and LaBahn 1997; Sen 1999). Further, it is argued that brand names with strong images influence choices of consumers and command a premium in the market (Kohli and LaBahn 1997). Many blind test results surprise us that consumers' choices of products strikingly differ with and without brand

names being revealed; strong brand names increase the approval rating for their products dramatically in the consumers. For instance, when consumers were told the brand name, Kellogg's Corn Flakes, their favorability of the product increased from 47% to 59% (Kohli and LaBahn 1997, p. 5).

Accordingly, researchers in marketing further contend that a well-chosen name per se can add value and strength to the brand (Klink 2001; Kohli, Harich, and Leuthesser 2005; Kohli and LaBahn 1997; Zinkhan and Martin 1987). Creating the right name for a new product becomes very important. Empirical studies suggest that good brand names, in general, (1) are easy to remember, pronounce, and spell, (2) have distinctiveness or uniqueness, and (3) elicit positive associations. In short, the name itself is a critical asset of a brand because it forms brand knowledge in the consumer's mind and could further reinforce or weaken the strength of brand.

For instance, Zinkhan and Martin (1987) argue that a typical name which is defined as a memorable name that easily reminds the consumer of the product category is more favorably accepted by the consumer than an atypical name. A typical name enables an individual to make positive inferences about brand characteristics even without any additional information about the product. A typical name has strong brand name imagery and it leads to a more favorable attitude formation whereas an atypical name lacks such inferential cues. For instance, Zinkhan and Martin (1987) show that "Polar Bear" a fictitious name considered to be a typical ice cream brand is more remindful of the respective product category than is "Pharaoh" an atypical ice cream brand name.

In the similar vein, Klink (2001) argues that effective brand names are based on semantics and sound symbolism. Brands which convey a clearer message to consumers

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helps them better position the products. For instance, he finds that as a shampoo brand

"Silsoft" shampoo (using both semantics and sound symbolism) is more effective than

"Silbee" shampoo (using only sound symbolism), which is better than "Polbee" shampoo

(using neither of them) (Klink 2001, p. 31). Kohli, Harich, and Leuthesser (2005) call the

names of the first two sorts' meaningful names and the last one non-meaningful. They

also find that meaningful names are more favorably accepted by consumers than non-

meaningful ones. These studies all suggest that brand names serve as a "powerful and

reliable cue for associated brand information" (Sen 1999, p. 433).

The roles and importance of brands can be understood more systematically with

Aaker's concept of brand equity. Aaker's axiomatic conceptualization of brand equity

suggests that there are four dimensions of brand equity – brand awareness, associations,

perceived quality and brand loyalty (Aaker 1991, 1992, 1996). According to this model, a

strong brand is one that is recognized very well by consumers, believed to provide quality

products and services, elicits lots of positive, unique associated images and information,

and thus enjoys a high level of consumer loyalty. The discussion above with regards to

the effect of good brand names on brand knowledge formation is particularly relevant to

brand associations and perceived quality dimensions of Aaker's brand equity. However,

this model more generally even with the other two dimensions included capitalizes on the

importance of brand names.  The names are the prima facie medium that conjures up

associations and evaluations of brands in the consumer's mind and the symbol that raises

brand awareness and draw loyalty from consumers in the market.

### 2.1.2 Rebranding

The term "rebranding" is frequently used in the marketing literature but it is one of those concepts that has yet to be clearly defined. It is mainly because as discussed above there are diverse elements to a brand, both tangible and intangible, "re"-branding could mean various things as well. However, Muzellec and his colleagues provide a definition that is helpful to understand the essence of rebranding: rebranding is the "practice of building anew a name representative of a differentiated position in the mind frame of stakeholders and a distinctive identity from competitors" (Muzellec, Doogan, and Lambkin 2003, p. 32).

As noticed in this definition, there could be various tactics under the frame of the "practice of building anew a name". In fact, it is more common that rebranding is considered as a continuum of change from minor to complete changes. For instance, Daly and Moloney (2004) envision a rebranding continuum of increasing the degree of change from changing the brand aesthetics such as colors of symbol and logo and repositioning the brand by giving it a new image to change the brand name. Both Stuart and Muzellec (2004) and Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) view this rebranding continuum in terms of an evolutionary-revolutionary scale although their conceptualizations of the scale are slightly different. Stuart and Muzellec (2004) consider revolutionary rebranding is a comprehensive change that incorporates all three – name, logo, and slogan changes whereas evolutionary rebranding involves the slogan or logo changes only. On the other hand, Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) provide definitions that are more comprehensive. They suggest evolutionary rebranding is a minor modification in the brand's positioning and aesthetics that is gradual and hardly perceptible to outside observers. They argue that

all companies and brands undertake this cumulative process over time in their brand management effort. Revolutionary rebranding, however, refers to a major, identifiable change that fundamentally redefines the brand such as a name change.

What does the marketing literature suggest the drivers of rebranding? Broadly there are three factors that precipitate rebranding: change in ownership structure, in corporate strategy, and in the external environment (Muzellec, Doogan, and Lambkin 2003, p. 34). Change in ownership structure caused by mergers, spin-offs, or privatization commonly triggers rebranding, particularly renaming as the old names or brand images are mostly inappropriate in this situation (Muzellec and Lambkin 2006; Stuart and Muzellec 2004). Also, decreased share, or crises in the market, and outdated images are pressing reasons for rebranding. Additionally, new strategic direction such as globalization of brands or a newly set focus or vision of the company leads to rebranding (Stuart and Muzellec 2004).

Although these internal and external stimuli create the clear need for the brands to be modified to varying degrees, researchers suggest that rebranding in general requires careful execution not to lose the assets accumulated under the older brand name or image. For instance, Stuart and Muzellec (2004) caution that consistency is the most critical issue in the course of rebranding by quoting the classic marketing phrase "consistency is a virtuous circle" (Stuart and Muzellec 2004, p. 480). Based on the importance of consistency, Merrilees and Miller (2009) stipulate six principles of rebranding, two of which are pertinent to our interest in consistency. First, rebranding exercises should maintain the core identity of the old brand but at the same time represent the drive for progress. Closely related to the first, the second principle states that some core or

peripheral brand concepts should be retained to build a bridge from the existing brand to the rebranded one. Here, the authors clearly recognize the prominence of consistency in rebranding processes. The rest of the principles deal with promotion tactics, i.e. communications methods, media use, etc. In this light, Aaker and Keller (1990) argue that strong brand equity is a product of well-maintained long-term branding management. They further contend that when the existing brand is repositioned or extended to a new product of a completely different product class, the conceptual consistency and fit between the two different product classes are extremely important (Aaker and Keller 1990; Merrilees and Miller 2009; Muzellec and Lambkin 2006).

### 2.1.3 Renaming as a Rebranding Strategy

The emphasis on consistency of brand identity in rebranding suggests that renaming or a change of a brand name is considered an uncommon and radical rebranding strategy in the marketing literature. In fact, many of the researchers mentioned above contend that brand renaming is one of the least frequently used rebranding tactics (Daly and Moloney 2004; Muzellec, Doogan, and Lambkin 2003; Muzellec and Lambkin 2006; Stuart and Muzellec 2004). Also, brand name change is referred to as the most revolutionary rebranding practice in contrast to evolutionary rebranding practices. With the name being the basic cosmetic element of brand identity, some argue that brand name changes should be considered only when there are no other alternatives (Kilic and Dursun 2006, p. 235).

The risks associated with brand renaming include that it can result in a total loss of previous reputation or brand knowledge, confuse consumers, leading to decreased

share in the market, and require tremendous amount of effort, time and financial resources to rebuild assets of the new brand (Kilic and Dursun 2006). From the perspective of Aaker's brand equity model, renaming is considered particularly radical and risky as this practice might easily lower brand awareness, which is a key dimension to brand equity. Deteriorated brand awareness has spillover effect across the other dimensions of brand equity. Foremost, it directly leads to less positive associations that are elicited by the brand in the consumer's mind. Together, these effects negatively affect perceived quality of the brand and it will eventually result in less loyal consumers in the market. In short, brand name change violates basic brand management principles by erasing an older name and possibly all the associative images and reputations as a consequence. Referring to this point, Stuart and Muzellec (2004) even claim that there are more failures of rebranding than successes, implying that the 'no renaming' rationale has a solid theoretical and empirical foundation.

However, this does not mean that rebranding is totally irrelevant. Successful brand renaming could indicate an innovative and positive vision of the brand and improve its current reputation, market performance, equity, etc. In certain circumstances, name changes are inevitable. For instance, Morris and Reyes indicate that many firms undertake name changes if "the existing name limits growth opportunities, lacks distinctiveness, and elicits a negative image of the company's activities" and is outdated (Morris and Reyes 1991, p. 110). In fact, many empirical studies suggest that successful renaming results in enhanced brand equity and market performance. In addition, there are a variety of factors that need to be taken into account when gauging the impact of renaming.

Depending on the scope of name change, partial versus wholesale name changes, for instance, renaming is expected to create varying effect in terms of brand equity. Kilic and Dursun (2006) find that partial name changes vis-à-vis have significantly positive effect in the value creation measured by stock returns. Also, they find that renaming is disastrous for industrial goods conglomerates that use a single brand name, logo, and aesthetics for all their product divisions and brands whereas name changes made by consumer goods companies do not have any significant effect. Jaju, Joiner, and Reddy (2006) suggest merger-and-acquisition-driven renaming in general reduces brand equity but this negative effect varies in accordance with similarity in brand attitudes and perceived fit of the two merged firms. They find evidence that renaming for the similar-attitude and high-fit brands by M&A is more effective in terms of brand equity than in the case of dissimilar-attitude and low-fit brands.

## 2.2 Applying Marketing Models to Political Parties

Now that the marketing studies on brand and rebranding have been reviewed, let us investigate the possibility and appropriateness for applying these marketing models to political parties. Given that a brand is defined in marketing as a "name, term, sign, symbol, or design which is intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors", it seems appropriate to view political parties as "brands". Party labels provide voter-consumers with cues on political products such as policies and candidates that identify and differentiate them from competing parties in the electoral market. In fact, the terms like "party brands," "political brands," "ideological brands," or "brand leaders" are increasingly in use in

recent party research (Lupu 2013; Needham 2005, 2006; Neiheisel and Niebler 2013; Nielsen and Larsen 2014; Pope and Woon 2009; Scammell 2007; Woon and Pope 2008).

A party contains brand knowledge such as established reputations and images in its label. Thus when the party label is given as a stimulus, it activates the voter's memory and retrieves pieces of information associated with the party. Lupu refers to it as a *party brand* which is composed of prototypes that voters have in their association with a given party (Lupu 2013). In terms of Aaker's brand equity, a strong party label is defined as a political brand that enjoys a high level of awareness and reputation of providing quality goods and services in politics, provokes lots of positive associated images and reputations among voter-consumers and thereby elicits strong loyalty from them. It is this brand equity attached to a party label that increases the likelihood that a candidate affiliated with the party wins elections, ceteris paribus (Aldrich 1995).

Party labels act as brands that differentiate between broadly similar political products, i.e. candidates, by reducing the cost of information to both voter-consumers and the parties themselves. Voters using party labels as an information shortcut can make informed decisions based on the ideologies and policy issues represented, albeit vaguely, by each party label without knowing all the details (Downs 1957; Kiewiet and McCubbins 1991). In this regard, researchers on voting behavior recognize that party ID is one of the most decisive factors that explain an individual's voting decision (Campbell et al. 1960).

In order to more accurately examine the appropriateness of applying the marketing concepts to party politics, it is necessary to compare general attributes of marketing and politics in depth. First of all, voters in electoral politics are analogous to

consumers in the commercial market. Voters casting votes for a certain party or a candidate can be compared to consumers purchasing a product of a certain brand from other brands. A vote is a "psychological purchase" (Butler and Collins 1994) or a "purchase of value and ideology" whereas buying in the commercial setting is a "purchase of tangible benefit". Secondly, the product that is marketed in politics by parties is a package of several elements including persons (candidates, party leaders), ideology, policy, identity, and emotional attachment (Butler and Collins 1994; Smith and French 2009). Compared to the political product, the product in commercial markets tends to be simple, concrete, and tangible. Thirdly, election campaigning is similar to commercial marketing although there are differences in nature. For instance, election campaigning is heavily ideologically charged and reliant on negative campaigning – attack messages as a way to differentiate its own product from competitors (other parties) (Butler and Collins 1994). Also, campaigning in politics tends to be periodic while commercial marketing is permanent (Butler and Collins 1994; Needham 2005). However, recent studies suggest that this distinction becomes obscure as incumbent politicians recognize the importance of relationship marketing and invest in it to reassure previous supporters for continued support (Butler and Collins 1994).

Due to the analogies between politics and marketing that is indicated in the discussion above, there have been numerous attempts to understand political parties and elections by borrowing marketing models. For instance, French and Smith (2010) measure brand equity of Labour Party and Conservative Party in the United Kingdom using the measures of Aaker's brand equity model. Phipps, Brace-Govan, and Jevons (2010) using Aaker's model classify brand equity of a political party into two elements

and examine how these two interact. These are the corporate brand image of the political party and the brand image of an individual politician that he/she creates by engaging in relationship marketing at the constituency level. O'Cass and Pecotich (2005) using survey data in Australia test the impact of uncertainty of electoral results, which they name "voter-perceived risk" and political opinion leaders on the behavior of brand-voters; how these voters seek out and process information of party brands and how they eventually vote, etc.

The majority of brand-based studies of politics share a consumer-oriented perspective of brands as an analytic framework. A consumer-oriented approach focusing on the interaction between the consumer and the brand offers views on how brand knowledge is developed in the consumer's mind and how the brand affects an individual's pattern of consumption (French and Smith 2010; Nielsen and Larsen 2014; O'Cass and Pecotich 2005; Reeves, de Chernatony, and Carrigan 2006; Smith and French 2009). Accordingly, studies on political brands are voter oriented and examine how party brands influence voting behavior. There are some concerns that this approach oversimplifies complex processes of democracy and normatively inappropriate to consider elections as repeated and periodic transactions between voter-consumers and parties. Yet, many studies show that voting behavior is well explained by such approach and in fact, the application of this marketing model to politics benefits our understanding of voting behavior especially the interaction between voters and party brands (Reeves, de Chernatony, and Carrigan 2006). Based on this evaluation, this research shares the assumption with the literature in political marketing that political parties are brands and

voters use these brands as a heuristic in learning, evaluating, and deciding parties and candidates in elections.

### 2.2.1 Definition of Party Relabeling

I define party relabeling as a change of a party name with substantial continuity in the party's leadership, membership, and identity. Accordingly, party relabeling does not create perceivable changes regarding any aspects of the party organization. Further, it does not alter the preexisting ideological configuration of parties in a system. It does not change the overall features of the party system such as the average age of parties, the effective number of parties, and electoral volatility. In short, party relabeling is a cosmetic change of a party name which does not entail any perceivable intraparty and interparty changes. In terms of Morris and Reyes (1991) in marketing, party relabeling is "pure" name changes that are "attributed to changes in strategic direction and to changes in communication efforts" in contrast to non-pure name changes resulting from organizational changes such as mergers or restructuring (1991, p. 110).

The key elements of the party brand are the party label, the leader and candidate as its tangible characteristics, and policy or ideology as intangible characteristics as well as core service offerings (Smith and French 2009). The studies on party rebranding have extensively focused on the latter two elements of the party brand – i.e. modifying leader brands, issue and ideological positioning but have largely remained silent on the rebranding aspect pertaining to the party label. There are several reasons that are responsible for such uneven attention given to the aspects of rebranding. First of all, rebranding the label or relabeling is rare compared to the other types of rebranding.

Secondly, considered to be a cosmetic retouch party relabeling has been assumed to have little theoretical value in and of itself. Thirdly, relabeling poses a thorny question not only in marketing but also political science as the issue that seems to be contrary to the axioms of brand theories in both disciplines.

Party labels as a brand have informational assets that are gradually accumulated over time and this makes relabeling an extremely costly exercise from a party's perspective. As discussed above, the similar rhetoric resonates well in the marketing literature as suggested that a change of brand's name is one of the least frequently used rebranding tactics (Muzellec and Lambkin 2006); that brand renaming should be the last resort (Kilic and Dursun 2006); that brand renaming weakens brand equity (Aaker 1991, 1992, 1996). Here, it is noted that the underlying assumption of the literature is that label experience or brand exposure for an extended period of time is a necessary though not sufficient condition for strong party brands. Based on these general views shared in the literature, I acknowledge that party relabeling is less common than other tactics of party rebranding. Nevertheless, given that there are certain party systems where party relabeling is common while it is extremely rare in the rest and there are certain parties that engage in frequent name changes while others do not, this needs more thorough investigation. And this is the aim of this research.

### 2.2.2 Purposes of Party Relabeling

Given that relabeling is a costly and risky rebranding strategy, what are the purposes behind it? The fundamental factor that prompts a party to consider and undertake rebranding that includes relabeling as the most revolutionary method is its

underperformance in the electoral market – i.e. gradual or sudden loss of votes, negative images, low approval rating, etc. Therefore, the party relabels itself in pursuit of revitalizing its deteriorating images, reconnecting with its voter-consumers, and eventually regaining support from the electorate. With this underlying motivation, I argue that there are two specific goals that a party aims to achieve by changing its name: first, to break with the disgraceful past and second, to effectively signal that something about the party has changed.

Parties change their labels as a break with their past. The past they wish to distance themselves from can be anything that is related to the main elements of the party brand: leaders, candidates, policy or ideology. For instance, scandals around their leaders or influential, highly visible figures such as presidents, prime ministers, and cabinet members may seriously taint their reputations and images. When the damage is deeply felt the parties can replace their old names with new ones attempting to shed negative associations attached to the preexisting labels. Particularly in a system where voters predominantly rely on personalistic cues when identifying parties and candidates, stained leader brands often become detrimental to the party as a whole. This gets to be a particularly serious issue to mainstream, established parties. For instance, South Korea where personalistic party cues prevail suffers frequent party relabeling caused by scandals that involve high-profile politicians such as presidents and party leaders. Parties directly or indirectly related to such scandals often change their names to break with their disgraceful past. Indeed, the leader brand-induced relabeling is one of the factors that are responsible for party relabeling in South Korea.

In addition to leader brands, the other aspects of the party brand concerning candidates, policy and ideology such as undesirable attributes of the party brand developed through intraparty disputes and policy failure can cause parties to be relabeled. Another factor that triggers relabeling is catastrophic electoral failures (Harmel et al. 1995; Harmel and Tan 2003). In line with Morris and Reyes's (1991) discussion on the causes of corporate name changes, these failures could render the affected party to feel its existing name limits growth opportunities, elicits a negative image of the party's activities, and conveys wrong messages to voters. In short, relabeling being a cosmetic modification visualizes the party's divorce from its past or existing brand knowledge more directly speaking.

Related to the break-with-the-past function of party relabeling discussed above, political parties change their labels as a means of signaling to voters that they have changed and they are committed to this reform. A party name being the most visible and fundamental element of the party brand is a strong formal signal to the public that something about the party has changed. This similar argument is also found in the marketing literature that a name change of a company communicates dramatic organizational changes to consumers and stakeholders (Muzellec, Doogan, and Lambkin 2003; Muzellec and Lambkin 2006; Stuart and Muzellec 2004). It is crucial for relabeled parties to convince the voter-consumers that they have reinvented their identities, repositioned ideals or visions, and renewed their images. Putting on a new label, the parties can signal these changes vividly and visualize their resoluteness of committing to abiding by the newly proposed promises and changes they intend to make. Relabeling

enables the parties to signal their changes effectively particularly in a short period of time.

**CHAPTER 3 THEORY**

The discussions in the previous chapter show that the existing theories – the Weak-Party-System and the Shock Arguments – do hold water in some cases of party relabeling. However, they are by no means sufficient. First of all, these existing theories fail to explain why party relabeling is common in some well-established party systems such as France and Sweden. Further, the fact that there are large, established parties that frequently change names cannot be understood by the extant explanations. More important, they cannot explain the cross-national variation of party relabeling. Therefore, it is obvious that we need a more nuanced and comprehensive theoretical model of party name changes that could resolve these puzzles.

In order to find answers to these puzzles accurately, I aim to address the following question in this chapter. What are the characteristics of a party system where party name changes are common besides being weakly institutionalized? Put differently, what are the conditions that lead parties to invest less in maintaining labels and accumulating information and reputation attached to them? What are the features of a party system that makes party relabeling attractive to parties and voters? And what are the features of a party system that leaves parties more prone to shocks and leads them to undertake relabeling? In short, what are the system-specific characteristics that hinder the development of a party brand label?

I argue that a combination of the following features poses a formidable obstacle to the endurance of party labels and thus the development of brand-name party labels. First, it is the prevalence of personalistic party cues that is responsible for frequent party

relabeling. If a party system is characterized by the dominating usage of personalistic cues that link parties and voters rather than ideological or clientelist cues, then it weakens the function of a party label as an information shortcut. Second, it is strong levels of political attention in the electorate. If the general public displays excessive interest in politics, then it makes political parties prone to shocks emanating from shifts in public opinion. Once struck by shocks parties are led to employ drastic rebranding strategies like relabeling in order to overcome the issue.

Third, in combination of the two mentioned above, centralization of power is conducive to party relabeling. The two features – the prevalence of personalistic cues and excessive political interest in the public – significantly hinder parties from adhering to their old labels for an extended period of time by rendering party labels not so meaningful from the beginning and by leaving parties highly prone to shocks. These adverse effects are even more reinforced when combined with high centralization of power. In a highly centralized political system, office benefit that parties could gain from winning national office is much larger than what a federal system provides. Therefore, parties in the former become extremely nationally-oriented and office- and vote-seeking. Parties with such orientations tend to be very sensitive to public opinion, making them vulnerable to shocks and willing to even abandon older labels if that they view will help garnering more votes.

In short, I argue that a party system which is characterized by the combination of (1) dominant use of personalistic cues, (2) strong levels of political attention in the electorate, and (3) high degrees of governmental centralization is more vulnerable to party relabeling than otherwise. The underlying feature that is shared among these three

factors is, in short, the weakness of parties in the electorate or weak party-voter ties (Key 1964). I contend that such a system tends to have parties with labels that are less meaningful both to the parties and voters, thereby making relabeling less costly from the party's perspective.

In this chapter, I discuss this theoretical model of party relabeling in depth. Each of the three features is described in depth and their implications with regards to relabeling are discussed as well. The model developed in this chapter provides clear predictions about the conditions under which party relabeling is likely to occur. Figure 3.1 presents the model developed here.

**Figure 3.1: Model of Party Relabeling**

PERSONALISTIC PARTY CUE + HYPER-POLITICAL INTEREST IN THE ELECTORATE + CENTRALIZATION
= **FREQUENT PARTY NAME CHANGES**

## 3.1 Prominence of Personalistic Cues

There are three types of information cues that a political party provides: ideological or programmatic, clientelist, and personalistic or charismatic cues (Kitschelt 2000). Kitschelt also refers to these information cues of parties as different types of elite-citizen linkages. According to him, it is these party cues that citizens resort to in making their partisan alignment – party ID and voting decision, linking voters to politicians. Each type of party cues represents different mechanisms that connects voters and parties and is

characterized with peculiar intraparty organizational features. In this section, I discuss these differences of the three party information cues and how they affect the strength of party labels and thus the likelihood of party relabeling.

### 3.1.1 Definitions of Three Party Cues

Parties with ideological cues present clear policy platforms to voters which have remained consistent and coherent over time. In a system where ideological cues are prevalent, parties provide clear policy packages that they promise voters to enact when elected to office and voters affiliate themselves with parties largely based on these policy positions that each party stands for. In short, what connects voters to parties or politicians is an ideological cue in such a system. As a matter of fact, this type of party cue, which is based on Downs (1957) and Lipset and Rokkan (1967), is the one that the existing literature overly emphasizes or assumes as a default model in discussions of voting behavior and representation. Studies based on this notion of party-voter linkage emphasize the relationship between party systems and the ideological distribution or cleavages in the electorate; how social cleavages affect a party system or how well a given system reflects cleavages.

Kitschelt, however, critiques that this programmatic linkage is just one kind of various elite-voter linkages and the existing literature is heavily biased toward this particular type of linkage. In the same line, Mainwaring and Torcal (2006) assert that this ideology-based model can be hardly considered a universal model that holds in all systems. It is the particular model that has developed in Western Europe and North

America and thus suits in these particular regions of the world. Mainwaring and Torcal further argue that this ideological linkage is not upheld in many of the newer, third-wave democracies. Instead, personalistic, clientelist, and traditional/affective linkages are prevalent in this setting.

A clientelist cue links voters and a party based on the reciprocal exchange between partisan support and material benefits. Voters surrender support or loyalty to a party and the party gives them exclusive and direct material benefits in return. Kitschelt illustrates two forms of exchange that are involved in a clientelist linkage (Kitschelt 2000, p. 849). First, resource-rich but vote-poor constituencies give parties financial support in exchange for administrative, regulatory benefits that parties could offer once elected to office. Second, vote-rich but resource-poor constituencies give parties their votes and parties provide them with selective goods in return for their support. These selective goods can take a variety of forms including gifts, public sector jobs, and any preferential policy that targets a certain group of people.

Although it seems that the main difference between ideological and clientelist cues lies in the types of goods the party provides, whether universal or selective goods, the difference is more procedural than substantial (Kitschelt 2000; Scheiner 2005a). For instance, even a party with ideological cues can provide farm subsidies that target a farming population, a specific constituency. However, unlike a clientelist party which provides farm subsidies strictly to those who gave support to the party and excludes those who did not, an ideological party provides farm subsidies to the overall farming population based on its platform without any consideration who among the farmers voted for the party and who did not. In short, the distinction between ideological and clientelist

cues is drawn by how a good that a party provides is dispensed – whether it is dispensed to the targeted group of a universal population that the policy is supposed to affect or it is dispensed to the universal population.

Lastly, a party can be said to have a personalistic cue when voters orient their party loyalty or affiliation largely based on a single or a few charismatic leaders who represents the party. Kitschelt asserts that what holds members altogether and forms a party that is with a personalistic cue is mainly these charismatic leaders (Kitschelt 2000, p. 849). Leaders of such parties tend to equate themselves with their parties and voters who take personalistic cues also tend to associate particular leaders with the parties they represent. Parties with personalistic cues do not make much effort to articulate policy programs they stand for as they view it unnecessary and undesirable. It is viewed unnecessary because their charismatic leaders represent albeit symbolically and vaguely what the parties are for. Further, it is considered undesirable because an emphasis on programs mutes the charismatic aura of the leaders by changing a focus from individual leaders to policy programs.

### 3.1.2 Three Party Cues and the Strength of Party Labels

The different types of party information cues affect the tightness of voter-party bonds and hence determine the strength or stability of party labels. If a party system that is prevalent of tight voter-party bonds then it is highly likely that each party label in the system is so meaningful to the electorate and information-rich that it performs in the political market exactly like brands in the consumer market. In short, in such a system,

party labels are strong. However, if a system is characterized by weak voter-party linkages then party labels in this system tend to cue less information and provoke less emotional attachment or loyalty among the electorate than those in the former setting. These party labels are weak compared to the brand-like labels in the former.

### 3.1.2.1 Ideological Cues

Ideological cues tend to yield stable and strong voter-party linkages as so their definition implies. As discussed above, for parties to have ideological cues, they should articulate policy programs they stand for, make them clear to voters, and implement them in office accordingly consistently over time. Then, voters compare these policy programs across parties, support parties based on the proposed programs, and evaluate how these proposals are implemented by the parties in government. Throughout these repeated games between parties and voters, parties build ideology-based reputations and images associated with their labels and these become clear to voters. Ideological cues, themselves are a long-term product that connect parties and voters. They, therefore, are the epitome of Downs' voting model. Downs emphasizes the importance of consistency and reliability of party platforms for them to be useful as information shortcuts for both parties and voters (Downs 1957). According to Downs, a party with an ideological cue can be said to have proven its having consistent and reliable ideologies to the electorate over time and have established stable ties with its supporters.

Ideological cues produce stable voter-party linkages and strong party labels in a system for the fact that they reflect cleavages of the system, which themselves are a long-term, historical product and thus something that is highly stable. Parties set their ideological stances and develop specific programs based on salient cleavages in a society

(Downs 1957; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Ordeshook and Shvetsova 1994). A cleavage divides the public into separate groups, each of which holds distinct, mutually exclusive positions concerning the issue. Downs describes cleavage structures by referring to ideological distributions among the electorate. For instance, if voters are normally distributed along the left-right ideological dimension then it leads to a two-party system with one leaning slightly left and the other slightly right. And if voters are ideologically distributed such that there are multiple humps then it leads to a multiparty system where constitutive parties incorporate each segment of the voters divided by the lines that cut through the humps.

Lipset and Rokkan (1967) in their explanation of the development of the West European party system enumerate four major cleavages that existed in West Europe from the 16th to the early 20th centuries and discuss how they form and affect their party system. These four cleavages were the center-periphery, state-church, land-industry, and owner-worker cleavages and along these critical cleavages sprouted parties with certain ideological positions incorporating each constituency of the society. As their analysis reveals, cleavage structures are historically formed and therefore they evolve gradually. This, in turn, leads to stable arrangements of parties in a society, which is the reason why Lipset and Rokkan claimed that the West European party system has frozen since the early 20th century. For this reason, ideological parties that are developed in reflection of cleavage structures produce fairly stable voter-party linkages. These stable linkages give party labels solid meanings, making them stable as well.

Another factor that renders the labels of ideological parties stable can be found in intraparty organizational features. Kitschelt (2000) argues that ideological parties invest

in developing organizational mechanisms to solve a collective action and a social choice problem to which Aldrich (1995) attributes the reason why parties form. A collective action problem is about resource pooling and provision among candidates and voters' information problems in elections whereas a social choice problem has to do with the difficulty of ordering policy or political preferences among party members. Kitschelt argues that the former is solved by some administrative infrastructure and the latter by well-defined, codified conflict resolving mechanisms within the party. For a party to have well-performing ideological cue, it should have coherent and clearly articulated policy packages and underlying principles. Therefore, ideological parties tend to have well-defined mechanisms that resolve a social choice and a collective action problem, scheduling policy preferences through bargains and persuasion based on the rules and settling intraparty conflicts. Due to these well-developed organizational mechanisms, ideological parties are less prone to external or internal shocks than those without such mechanisms and thus they are able to maintain their labels and linkage with voters surviving through various conflicts.

### 3.1.2.2 Clientelist Cues

Clientelist cues also yield stable voter-party ties like ideological cues do but through a different mechanism. Clientelism links voters and politicians tightly through direct, tangible exchanges of favors, votes and selective material benefits. For the fact that these exchanges between patrons and clientele are direct and tangible, clientelist parties can be more responsible and accountable than ideological parties (Kitschelt 2000). Under clientelism, if a candidate fails to provide once in office what he/she has promised to his/her supporters then the supporters will quit throwing support to the politician in

return. It works the other way around as well: if clientele fail to do their part then the politician will not do his/her part either. As these deals between patrons and clientele are outcomes of repeated games, their bonds get tighter over time. This feature makes clientelist linkage as stable as ideological linkage and hence it enables clientelist parties to have brand-like, stable labels.

Of the two common problems that every political party faces – a collective action and a social choice problem, Clientelist parties invest in developing some sort of mechanisms to resolve a collective action problem not necessarily a social choice problem (Hellmann 2011b; Kitschelt 2000). The aggregation and articulation of policy programs do not pose a serious problem to the parties as long as they manage resource pooling and distributions among their members well. Coherent policy packages are unnecessary because each patron-client tie within the party performs as a measure that resolves the conflicts of interests among party members under a general ideological framework the party advocates. Therefore, leaders of clientelist parties are heavily engaged in providing pork to backbenchers such as special projects that an individual legislator could bring to his/her district and cabinet posts in government; and backbenchers, in return, surrender their loyalty to the leadership (Mershon 2001; Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1997). These layers of clientelist chains between leaders and backbenchers within the party and between politicians and supporters resolve a social choice problem that the party faces. This particular mechanism contributes to the stabilization of the party as an organization, consolidation of party-voter linkage, and finally development of brand value to party labels.

Japan is a prime example of a stable clientelist party system. Especially, the *Liberal Democratic Party* (LDP), the seemingly invincible party that has dominated Japanese politics for almost the entire postwar period, enjoys highly institutionalized clientelist mechanisms within government and in the electorate (Nemoto 2009; Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1997; Scheiner 2005a). Parliamentarism reinforces the reciprocity- and loyalty-based clientelist relationship between faction leaders and backbenchers in government as this constitutional system makes available uninterrupted access to government resources to a ruling party leader in the parliament who is also the head of the executive branch (Nemoto 2009; Samuels and Shugart 2010). This mechanism has institutionalized the exchanges between LDP leaders and backbenchers by making these exchanges the infinite repeated game through the LDP's continuous dominance. This "pipeline of pork" flows all the way down to local governments and solidifies party-voter ties at both national and local levels (Scheiner 2005a, 2005b).

### 3.1.2.3 Personalistic Cues

As mentioned above, Kitschelt asserts that in case of a party with personalistic cues, largely it is a single or few charismatic leaders that hold politicians with diverse interests together under a common label (Kitschelt 2000, p. 849). For this reason, leaders of such parties tend to consider parties as formal devices to pursue their political career. At the same time, members of the parties and even voters in a system where personalistic cues are prevalent are likely to equate party leaders with the parties, themselves. For instance, the *Saenuri Party*, the ruling party in South Korea is widely recognized as the Park Geun-hye party, who is current President of South Korea and has served in the party

as a charismatic leader for a long period of time. South Korean voters habitually associate a handful of leaders with respective parties.

In line with the prevalent notion of "a leader equals a party," organizational features of personalistic parties also give tremendous discretion to party leaders (Hellmann 2011b; Kitschelt 2000). The lack of institutionalized mechanisms that resolve a collective action and a social choice problem inside the party indicates that leaders handle internal conflicts caused by these problems at their discretion. In short, personalistic parties as organizations are less institutionalized than the other two types of parties, ideological and clientelist parties. Given that less institutionalized organizations are commensurate with being unstable, parties with personalistic cues are more likely to be unstable than those with either ideological or clientelist cues (Huntington 1965; Mainwaring and Scully 1995a; Mainwaring and Torcal 2006). They are more vulnerable to shocks or changes. For instance, leadership change or change in dominant faction can bring about significant party changes to the extent that it might as well be considered as a whole new party.

Party-voter linkage tends to be weak in a system prevalent of personalistic party cues. As a particular figure represents a party as a symbol, this linkage mechanism is unable to extend the relationship between a party and voters to the level of the infinite repeated game. Instead, it renders the relationship to endure for a relatively short-term, i.e., while the same figure remains in the party as a leader. On top of that, personalistic cues are less enduring but more contingent on various factors than ideological or clientelist cues by nature. Therefore, in a party system where personalistic cues are prominent, it is hard to distinguish whether it is a party *per se* or a charismatic figure of a

party that connects the electorate to the party. As an individual figure is the cue that a party mainly provides to voters, if that person resigns or withdraws from the party then the party is said to lose its major information cue; possibly resulting in the need for voters to reexamine the party and reposition themselves accordingly.

### 3.1.3 Three Types of Party Cues and Party Relabeling

Based on the varying stability of party-voter linkage and strength of party labels determined by the types of party information cues, it is possible to make predictions regarding the likelihood of party relabeling as a rebranding strategy across party types. I argue it is highly unlikely that ideological and clientelist parties change labels when they need to rebrand themselves. That is because their labels are solid brands as discussed above. Their labels are information rich, which makes it extremely costly for the parties to discard them. Put differently, labels of ideological or clientelist parties take deep roots in the electorate and this renders relabeling an irrational option for the parties. Instead, these parties could rely on other more effective rebranding options. For instance, a party with ideological cues should make changes to its programmatic package in order to create a new appeal to the electorate. As it is the ideological cues that link the party with voters, modifying ideological stance is the most vivid and effective rebranding strategy for this type of party to employ. Similarly, for a party with clientelist cues redefining its clientele and restructuring its patron-clientele networks will be the most effective rebranding option available.

Unlike these two party types, parties with personalistic cues might be more inclined to relabel given that their labels do not cue much information to the public nor they signify strong party-voter ties. What holds them as a party is a single or few charismatic leaders (Kitschelt 2000) and these individuals are largely the core "substance" of these parties. The leaders represent ideologies of their parties, position their parties vis-à-vis other parties in the party system, and signal how the parties will perform once in government. Therefore, if these parties want to create a new look, there are not many options by which they can make substantive changes other than leadership change. However, given that these parties are held as a party under the aura of their leaders, a reshuffle in leadership, especially chairpersonship could bring about fundamental changes to an extent that it is almost like a birth of a new party. With limited tools to rebrand its substance, a personalistic party is inclined to work with its image-related, cosmetic, thus oftentimes superficial measures to create a new face. For instance, after calamitous elections it could change its label to overcome the failure. Even without any substantive changes in ideology or membership, name change can be a strong signal to the public that the party is different now. By simply changing a name, the party can instantly create a new image although it is uncertain how effective the tactic is and how long the effect might last.

From the voter's point of view, if voters predominantly utilize personalistic cues in identifying parties and making voting decisions, they are able to reorient a relabeled party more easily than in the case where ideological or programmatic cues and clientelist cues are attached to the party. In the former case, voters can identify the party under a new label by simply checking out the charismatic leader(s). By looking at who the

leaders are, i.e. whether the leaders remain in the party, voters would associate a vague yet correct ideological position and image with this relabeled party. On the contrary, if voters predominantly use ideological cues then it takes more time and effort for them to reorient the relabeled party since they should compare the policy preferences of this party with that of the party under the former label. This can be done by various measures such as comparing platforms, listening to what the members (politicians) of the party say on media, or reading newspapers, all of which are more time- and energy-consuming than checking out the leaders.

This point is supported by Converse's (1964) recognition of the importance of information visibility to the general public. He claims that there are certain types of information that are highly visible to the general public, "nonattitudes," helping them to make intelligent political decisions or give them a better idea of what parties stand for. These visible information cues include social groupings and prominent figures associated with a party, i.e. does the African-American politician belong to Party A? Does the female politician belong to Party B? (Converse 1964: 234-238) Since the appearances of politicians are particularly visible even to less informed voters, these information cues work effectively in the general electorate. Following Converse's argument, I believe that personalistic cues attached to parties make relabeling less damaging to parties than those attached with ideological cues as voters in the former situation can identify a relabeled party by looking at the party leaders that are more visible than ideology.

Besides mere relabeling, a personalistic party could also change its leadership as a way of rebranding itself. As the leader largely defines the party symbolically as well as organizationally, leadership change is a more substantive and fundamental reform to the

party.  Moreover, it should be noted that the label of the personalistic party is closely attached to the party leader to the extent that the name of the leader is a synonym of the party label. For this reason, when leadership change occurs one can expect that relabeling of the party almost always follows. This relabeled party with new leadership will be considered a comprehensively rebranded party.

## 3.2 Strong Levels of Political Attention in the Electorate

In addition to the two features discussed above, when parties are situated in a system with the general public that is excessively interested in politics, they find themselves constantly exposed to rigorous public surveillance. This leaves them highly prone to shocks. For instance, when a party is involved in a scandal, the public in this setting tends to have very detailed knowledge of the incident. They follow up relevant news stories closely and the media catering to the interests of the public circulate relevant information quickly and widely. As a consequence of this reciprocal interaction between audience and media, a party scandal can easily stir up public opinion in a significant way. From the party's point of view, this close attention given by the public puts the party under significant pressure to resolve the issue as quickly and visibly as possible. For this reason, hyper political interests in the electorate might motivate parties to employ highly visible and aggressive measures like relabeling when hit by a shock in order to appease the public.

In this section, I discuss this ironical consequence of the public having excessive political interest on the behavior of parties. Counter to the popular belief that the more

political interest shared in the public the better for democracy or political development of

a society, I argue that there is a threshold up to which point this holds true. However, if

the general public has too much interest in politics past this threshold, then it could work

against the good and sound operations of a polity. The exorbitant political input from the

public can exert too much pressure onto the government and political elites including

parties. It could lead these actors to develop a populist bent, willing to do whatever it

takes to win favor from the masses. I believe relabeling of political parties for its being a

radical form of rebranding can partially be understood as this effort to please the public.


### 3.2.1 The Paradox of Too Much Democracy

Democracy is a delicate political system as its maintenance and good performance

require a fine balance between contradictory values such as conflict and competition

versus consensus, governmental power versus representativeness, and equity and justice

versus effectiveness (Almond and Verba 1963; Diamond 1990). A democratic political

system allows diverse conflicting interests and competition among them but at the same

time it needs to be based on a general consensus from its citizens. Moreover, democracy

emphasizes representativeness of the government but also values its authority and

governability; likewise democracy demands not only equitable policy but also

effectiveness of such government programs. Referring to this delicate nature of

democracy, Diamond asserts that "democratic polities inevitably find themselves saddled

with certain built-in paradoxes" (Diamond 1990, p. 48).

From these built-in paradoxes of democracy, it can be drawn that democracy requires that the citizens voice their opinions but not too much and be deferential to government decisions. Put differently, the general public needs to care about politics and feeds in their demands but not too much for the sake of well-functioning democracy. Here lies the potential danger of too much democracy or hyper-democracy. If the public is too much involved in politics and concerned about every single activity that a government does, then it would likely result in ineffectiveness and immobility of government operation. It will make the polity prone to unstable and whimsical political processes creating a chaotic and inefficient political culture such as populism. Populism cultivates opportunistic behavior of politicians whose primary goal is to get more votes or approval from the public. Populist politicians would do whatever it takes to win favor from the people even if what they get to do is harmful for the society in the long run. For instance, they would formulate policies or make a decision to dampen the fervor of the masses or make them happy instantly when the public is upset by a certain issue.

Examples include South Korean government's common practices to dethrone ministers when the public gets infuriated at government ministries. For instance, after the sinking of Sewol ferry, the tragic accident in April 2014 in Ansan City that killed more than 400 hundred passengers most of whom were the students of Danwon High School, drastic measures were taken in South Korean government. As a consequence, Joo-young Lee, minister of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries and Byong-kyu Kang, minister of the Ministry of Security and Public Administration were forced to resign. Further, the Korea Coast Guard, which was an external branch of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, was disbanded by President Park Geun-hye due to the

total failure of its salvage operation. The Korean public was in shock and their frustration turned to distrust in government. As a response to this, the government swiftly made such drastic decisions in order to appease the mad public.

Policies or decisions made by politicians in a system where populism is prevalent have several characteristics. As seen in the South Korean example, they tend to be short-sighted, ad-hoc, and disruptive. Politicians in such a system are overly attentive to public opinion and act in accordance with public sentiment, which is unpredictable and ephemeral. For this reason, populist-driven policies sometimes could be detrimental to the society as a whole from the long-term perspective. Furthermore, the type of decisions these politicians make tends to be symbolic, pretentious, and radical. The main motivation behind their act is catering to the demands of the public in a way that is highly visible to the public. What matters the most is to "show" the public and assure them that their demand is met instead of "how" it is dealt with. This aspect encourages a politician to employ radical and visible measures to make the electorate happy.

This notion, the danger of too much democracy can partly explain a political party's heavy reliance on relabeling as a strategy to maximize votes, which is of my interest in this research. To reiterate, too much popular interest in politics holds the governing authority including parties and individual politicians accountable to rigorous surveillance of the public. In this circumstance, parties once hit by a shock such as bribery scandals or catastrophic elections are put under tremendous pressure to resolve the issue as quickly and visibly as possible. Parties are motivated to employ highly visible and aggressive measures like relabeling in order to overcome the crisis and appease the public.

Now, let us thoroughly examine the Civic Culture argument developed by Almond and Verba to clarify this concept, the danger of too much democracy. Almond and Verba point out that active political participants should remain a minority or be well balanced with those with political passivity to have a civic culture. After examining the Civic Culture argument, I move to discuss populism in depth as a prime example of non-civic culture, which is characterized by an imbalance between political enthusiasts and impassionates.

### 3.2.1.1 The Civic Culture

Almond and Verba assert that the civic culture is a mixed political culture (Almond and Verba 1963, pp. 337-360). It is mixed because in it there are many individuals who are active in politics but there are also many who are passive. Their view is different from the commonly held belief that a successful democracy requires active citizens and thus the more the political sophisticates a polity has the better the chances are it has a political culture desirable for democracy. Almond and Verba, quite on the contrary, argue that it is not the dominance of active citizens but the mixture of active and passive citizens that characterizes the civic culture. Based on comparative survey data covering the United States, Britain, Germany, Italy, and Mexico, the authors find that there are as many subjects and parochials as participants in the U.S. and Britain whose political cultures are the most proximate to the civic culture among the five. They emphasize the role of individuals with subject and parochial attitudes in addition to the importance of those who take the participant role.

The importance of subjects and parochials arises from the fact that democracy operates on a delicate balance between governmental power and responsiveness to the

demands of the people. The passivity of the subjects and parochials mitigates the intensity of political involvement and activity of the participants. It gives deference to the authority of and decisions made by the government or political elites, maintaining effectiveness of politics. Of course, Almond and Verba do not dismiss the importance that active citizens bear in the civic culture. In fact, they do attribute the civic cultures that the U.S. and Britain have to their having more numbers of participants than do the rest of the countries under their study. What they emphasize, however, is the cushioning role of the politically apathetic that is found in the civic culture which keeps politics in its place by making political activity less intense and divisive.

They further contend it is not that the subjects and parochials sit side by side with the participants in the civic culture but the tempered political attitudes of the former penetrate and modify the rather aggressive attitudes of the latter. Also, even in an active citizen these varying political attitudes of the subject, parochial and participant are mixed. As evidence for this observation, the authors suggest that their survey data show there are much smaller numbers of respondents in the U.S. and Britain who have actually attempted to exercise their influence on the government than of those who believe they have such competence (Almond and Verba 1963, pp. 344-346). It is this gap between actual influence and sensed efficacy or obligation to participate that maintains a balance between governmental power and responsiveness, and effectiveness and equity. Almond and Verba are, therefore, led to conclude that a citizen within the civic culture is not a "constant political actor"; he is not the "active citizen" but the "potentially active citizen" (Almond and Verba 1963, p. 347).

Then, what are the implications of this Civic Culture argument? First, a political culture characterized by too large a proportion of active citizens is as detrimental as that predominantly of those with subject and parochial attitudes. The latter implies that too much power is likely given to political elites and it would be difficult for the citizens to hold the rulers accountable to their demands. This system is far off democracy. The former situation, on the other hand, gives too much weight to people highlighting the governmental representativeness side of democracy. It makes extremely hard for the government to take the initiative and make decisions because whatever the government does will be faced with a myriad of opinions and stuck particularly in criticisms from the public. As it is almost impossible to satisfy every citizen in a polity, the political elites in such system will find themselves trapped in a catch-22 situation; both doing something or not doing it causes problems.

In these circumstances, politicians tend to develop peculiar patterns of tendencies. First of all, they pay too much attention to public opinion. This weakens their vitality as a decision maker and executer to move forward with their agenda and get it implemented. Instead, they vacillate according to what public opinion dictates. Second, political elites tend to be caught up in a particular opinion that is voiced out the loudest among many others. The most salient voice that appeals to the majority of masses is the most urgent issue that the politicians need to attend to. Otherwise, they will face unwanted consequences of not listening to it. They could lose elections, for instance. This leaves the politicians highly vulnerable to the whims of demagogues. And last, more importantly, due to their too much concern about public opinion their approach to handling issues tends to be short-term oriented. Their number one concern is getting

critical voices against them subsided as soon and effectively as possible. This does not allow them to think and act with a long-term perspective. To effectively appeal to the public that they have redressed the grievances of their citizens, the politicians oftentimes adopt measures that are more dramatic, visually vivid and thus sometimes superficial.

This last point is well illustrated by Heclo (1999) where he laments pathological hyperdemocracy that the U.S. politics has. He describes the current American politics as tainted by too much popular influence. As politics gets more open and inclusive, paradoxically public distrust, contentiousness, and discontent increase. This leads the American public to be more alienated from politics than engaged (Heclo 1999, p. 62). News about politics and government endlessly flow from the media, and public anxieties and excitement fill the public discourse. Politicians are now overly sensitive to these public responses and under pressure to address them constantly. He describes this ceaseless feedback between the public and politicians as an "on-line" process (Heclo 1999, p. 66).

Every aspect of political processes including the legislative process and candidate nomination process has been more open to the public involvement and popular investigation in the U.S. Heclo claims that this publicity makes the politics more contentious, creates more dissatisfaction among the citizens, and leaves the system ineffective and highly vulnerable to public opinions. Discussing the side effects of citizen involvement in the presidential candidate nomination process in the U.S., Sanford (1981) criticizes the current practice is not so much more than media contests. The direct appeals that candidates try to create to the voters using media prevail over other factors that affect

the nomination results. This leads the candidates to rely on more dramatic and visual

tactics to get their names known to the public. Concerning this Heclo argues,

> It [media's expose approach to policy issues] plays to short attention spans,
> short-term reactions, and the inevitable human demand for simplified dramatics.
> Media attention typically lurches from one "hot" topic to another, stressing in
> each case only one side of the issue, be it positive or negative, evoking
> enthusiasm or fear…Consequently, information about public policy choices tends
> to be conveyed in the form of human interest "story lines" involving dramatic
> conflict, visual imagery, and compelling hopes and fears. (Heclo 1999, p.66)

In short, the civic culture is achieved through a good combination of participants,

subjects and parochials. When any of these actors dominate a polity, it will result in a

political culture that falls short of the civic culture. A system dominated by subjects and

parochials lacks the responsiveness part of democracy and resembles oligarchy, elite-

dominated system whereas a system with an overwhelming proportion of participants

tends to destabilize the government's decision-making processes. Too much democracy

can be as equally detrimental as lack of democracy for the well-functioning democracy.

### 3.2.1.2 Populism as an Example of Too Much Democracy

Populism like democracy is a slippery concept that lacks a single, universally

accepted definition adopted in the literature. However, it is generally agreed that

populism is a thin ideology which advocates the sovereign rule of the common people as

a homogenous body (Abts and Rummens 2007; Canovan 2002; Mudde 2004). Populism

is thin as an ideology in that this does not have fully-developed, solid ideological content.

Due to its ideological deficiency, populism can be easily combined with other fuller

ideologies such as conservatism, liberalism, and chauvinism, etc. (Pauwels 2011, p. 99). For instance, we see not only right-wing populist parties like the *National Front* (FN) in France but also leftist populist parties like the *Democratic Revolutionary Party* (PRD, Partido Revolucionario Democrático) in Mexico. A number of scholars suggest that populism originates from the paradox of democracy similar to what is discussed above (Abts and Rummens 2007; Canovan 2002).

What these theorists call the two-strand model suggests that democracy is an uneasy combination of a constitutional and a democratic pillar (Abts and Rummens 2007, pp. 409-411). The constitutional pillar emphasizes procedural aspects of democracy, representation, rule of law, checks and balances. The supreme political authority is from the law and this guarantees individual rights against any arbitrary exercise of power by the state or a tyranny of the majority. The democratic pillar, on the other hand, emphasizes participatory aspects of democracy, direct democracy, general or common will of the people. This tradition is skeptical about the neutrality of law and thus the supreme authority should be from the people instead of the law. According to the two-strand model, democracy is built upon a balance between these two incompatible logics of the liberal and the democratic pillar. Populism arises when this balance fails in favor of the liberal pillar.

This logic is analogous to Diamond's (1990) argument on the built-in paradoxes of democracy. In his terms, the liberal pillar requires the people to acknowledge authority and governing power of the government that is composed of elected representatives and give deference to their decisions. The democratic pillar, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of the citizen's participation in politics and their ability to keep the

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government in check. Populism is a phenomenon where more weight is given to the people's participation and direct involvement in politics than to the entrustment representatives with decision-making. Therefore, populism is inherent in democracy because it stems from the paradoxical tensions of democracy between representative democracy and direct democracy (Abts and Rummens 2007).

Populism has several defining features (Pauwels 2011). First, populism as an organizational form is highly centralized and led by a charismatic leader. For instance, a populist party is hierarchically structured with a charismatic leader at the top and this personalized leader appeals to the people that he/she belongs to them. Second, populism as a political style relies on a "simplistic, direct language that is similar almost to demagogy" (Pauwels 2011, p. 99). In order to appeal to the general public effectively, populist leaders define the causes of problems and solutions in a simple, clear, and direct language, which oftentimes results in a tabloid style communication. This aspect of populism leads us to equate populist policies to be opportunistic. Populist policies are sought for the purpose of pleasing the people and buying their support quickly rather than looking rationally for the best option for a society (Mudde 2004, p. 542). Examples include providing welfare benefits or lowering taxes just before elections. Third, populism as an ideology makes use of a dichotomous frame that views the politics as a contentious field between the people and the elite. Populist leaders therefore argue that politics should be an "expression of the general will of the people" and they themselves represent the voice of the people. For this reason, populists are devout advocates of plebiscitary politics or direct democracy such as referendums.

Along with such characteristics, populism could pose a threat to sound democracy in various ways. Populism discourages open diverse debate on policies and government by using the binary concept of politics – we, the people and they, the elite. When a policy issue emerges, a populist leader tends to define the existing authority and political elites as the source of problems and offer the people solutions that are more or less anti-system. This denial of the existing political authority and any alternatives they offer is likely to closes down meaningful debate amongst various actors. Further, as populism as a political organization is centered on a charismatic leader, advocating this extraordinary person to represent the common people and personifying politics allow them to circumvent more institutionalized and complex processes and issues of discourse (Taggart 2012). This can hamper the working of representative politics (Jones 2007; Taggart 2012).

Populism encourages opportunistic behavior in politics (Jones 2007; Pauwels 2011; Taggart 2012). Populist politicians provide visions that tend to be ad-hoc and disruptive in a sense that they are devised to win favor from the people quickly instead of developed incrementally in line with their existing ideologies. In Downs' (1957, p. 105) terms, populist policies lack responsibility as they tend to be less predictable and consistent than their non-populist counterparts: a party is responsible "if its policies in one period are consistent with its actions in the preceding period" and "the absence of responsibility means party behavior cannot be predicted by consistently projecting what parties have done previously." Instead, when public opinion changes populists change accordingly. This lack of responsibility in populism can be problematic for several reasons.

Irresponsible behavior of populist parties hinders voters' capability of prospective voting. Given that these parties do not act in accordance with their promises made during campaign or their record in government does not show over-time consistency, voters cannot make accurate projections of what these parties are going to be like once elected ahead of time. This particularly deteriorates the "representation" quality of democracy because these parties would do what deviates from the voters' expectation based on which the voters have elected them to office (Mair 2009). In other words, these parties do not "represent" those who have voted for them. Of course, the flexibility or adaptability that populism affords in policy-making could be beneficial, i.e., it allows the government to be more readily responsive to public opinion and function swiftly. Nonetheless, this potential benefit in the instrumental function of populist parties comes at the expense of their expressive function (Mair 2009, pp. 7-9).

Moreover, populist politicians would do whatever it takes to win favor from the people even if what they get to do is harmful for the society in the long run. For instance, they would formulate policies or make a decision to dampen the fervor of the masses or make them happy instantly when the public is upset by a certain issue. What is more worrisome is the possibility that the type of voice that populist leaders are likely to listen cannot represent the true voice of the "people". Populists are easily led to attend to those whose voice is the loudest and seemingly more dominant than the rest. Put differently, it is highly likely that populist leaders can be swayed by a few opinion leaders who tend to be extreme ideologues compared to the general public. Therefore, it could not be guaranteed that populist policies represent the demands of the common people against the elite.

### 3.2.2 Politics as a Sport

In light of the discussion above, when a polity is composed of an enormous proportion of participants vis-à-vis subjects and parochials, there are too many eyes fixed on politics. The public in general watch politics as excited spectators and closely follow political news. In other words, politics in this setting are enjoyed as a "sport". For instance, the citizens consistently observe political parties, their leaders, and policies, make evaluations on them and keep their information updated. The political interest surges during election and campaign periods but it maintains a fairly high level even throughout non-election years. In this context, when a political scandal breaks out or policy fiasco is revealed, it reverberates in the society so profoundly that it leaves significant changes and results in politics. Therefore, when something bad happens to a political party, for example, the vast majority of the public knows the incident and closely follows up with ensuing stories. Their interests continue until the issue at hand is resolved. These spectators are particularly enthusiastic about knowing how the issue gets resolved just as sports fans are eager to see the results of the game. "Hot" news in politics such as scandals and elections, thereby, can stir up public opinion significantly as well as quickly in this setting.

From the perspective of political parties, this setting places them under lots of pressure. Anything, good or bad, that happens to them and that is related to them is disclosed to the public and excites the public. This leaves little room for the parties to move on their own. With everything exposed to the spectators, parties are always forced to do something as a resolution or respond to an issue at hand to prove the public that

they care what the people think. Parties under this condition naturally become sensitive to public opinion. This effect is more pronounced among large, mainstream parties than small, niche parties for the former tend to be more vote- and office-oriented than the latter. This is supported by the findings of Adams et al. (2006) that niche parties do not respond to shifts in public opinion while mainstream parties display consistent tendencies to adjust their policy positions to public opinion shifts. They further suggest that policy moderation is a costly option for niche parties once some modifications made in their policy positions they get punished electorally. In their later research, Adams and his colleagues (2009) find that leftist parties do not respond to public opinion and also appear less responsive to short-term changes in global economic conditions. They argue that it is because parties of the left are ideologically and organizationally less flexible than their competitors due to their policy-seeking orientation.

The news media in a polity where political interest in the public is high usually takes an active role and feed into the system. The media is quick to circulate information on a political issue that grabs the public attention and updates news very quickly. This is done as a way to satiate the public's thirst to know how the issue of their concern unfolds; and simultaneously this motivates the public to learn more about it and be politically aware all the more. The relationship between the public and media is interactive and spiral, intensifying their mutual interdependence.

### 3.2.3 Hyper-Political Interest in the Public and Party Relabeling

How are all these implications drawn from hyper political interest in the public or too much democracy connected to my theory on explaining the frequency of party

relabeling? I believe that party relabeling is one of the populist tactics that parties in this setting can make use of as a resolution to issues they face. As discussed above, scandals or any issues related to parties and politicians easily come to attention of the public with hyper political interest and rapidly create emotions and vocal responses from the wide majority of the people. Especially, stories involving high-profile politicians like a president or prime minister and a party leader stir up the public strongly. The media also spotlight these "hot" stories and report every detail of them inundating the whole society with related news stories, which in turn attract more popular attention to the issues of interest. Referring to this, Heclo illustrates "publicity, exposure, investigation, and revelation through the media have become the norm" and "information about politics flows continuously into the public forum" (Heclo 1999, p. 65). This becomes problematic because he argues that this usually creates a pervasive sense of contentiousness and mistrust in the public.

Once a negative incident occurs, politicians in this situation feel compelled to put an end to ongoing criticisms, debates, and negative spiral effect revolving around them as rapidly as possible. Letting the issue stay and spread in the public harms their reputation; they have to contain the problem as tightly as they can. In addition to rapid containment, the involved politicians need to resolve the issue in a way that is highly visible to the people so as to effectively put an end to the problem. To meet the expectations and demands from the public that the problem is fully addressed and well resolved, or to give the impression, more accurately speaking, these politicians need to use pretentious measures. The South Korean ferry tragedy discussed earlier illustrates this point. After the tragedy, two ministers of the relevant ministries were forced to resign, and President

Park Geun-hye closed the Korea Coast Guard in response to the public anxiety and resentment concerning the accident. The interesting point to note is that whether what the politicians do in response to public opinion is "substantively" meaningful does not matter. What is important is the fact that they "visibly" act attending to public demands.

To sum, politicians under this condition are led to resort to dramatic, radical, and highly visible and symbolic resolutions addressing problems. This political culture, I argue, is conducive to party relabeling. If a party is involved in a notorious scandal in the polity with politically charged public, then that puts the party in particularly serious jeopardy for the reasons discussed so far. The party should employ some drastic rebranding strategies in order to re-establish its reputation and break with the scandal that has happened. Of various measures, name change is at the top of the list due to its visibility, simplicity, and symbolism. By changing its name, the party strongly signals to the public that they regard what has happened very seriously and thus are committed to becoming a whole new party. Though this does not mean any substantive change, name change could effectively appeal to the electorate as a visible signaling device.

In a polity where the level of political interest and awareness is low, on the other hand, does party relabeling not bear relevance. No matter how much a party is tainted with a scandal or any other issues, it does not attract considerable attention from the public simply because the people do not care in this setting. Of course, this does not mean that the party is immune to any kinds of problems; instead, it could be put in trouble by various problems. However, in general, the intensity of reputational damage and thus the potential electoral loss emanating from the problems are much less felt in this context than when hyper political interest prevails in the public. With a lower level of public

interest in politics, parties are given more room to move and ironically more diverse options when hit by a problem. In other words, they are not forced to use such radical measures as relabeling to contain the negative effect of the problem and resolve the issue rapidly. They can use other less radical or pretentious options to rebrand themselves after such a crisis.

### 3.3 High Degrees of Governmental Centralization

High centralization of power refers to a system that political and fiscal authorities are concentrated in a national or federal government and thus sub-national governments, i.e. state or provincial, municipal governments, are not given much autonomy over affairs in their territorial units. The hierarchy between the levels of governments is strict in this system. In Caramani's terms, this system is characterized by political forces or stimuli located in the center through "vertical dislocation of issues, organizations, allegiances, and competences from the local to the national level" (Caramani 2004, p. 32). National issues form the major political agendas of candidates in all levels of elections and ideology and behavior of candidates under the same label are highly homogeneous across layers of governments. The electorate as well responds to national factors more or less uniformly across constituencies and territorial units.

In this arrangement, from the perspective of politicians and parties, holding national offices and being the ruling party in the national legislature is extremely important. The benefits from holding national posts considerably outweigh those emanating from local offices. As the national government exercise almost monopolistic power over all economic and political dimensions in this arrangement, the success of

parties is up to their performance at the national level. Therefore, the high centralization of power gives parties a strong motivation for winning offices at the national level vis-à-vis local offices. It provides a political environment that is conducive to vote-maximizing attitudes and thereby aggressive campaign strategies including party relabeling. Parties in this arrangement are more willing to employ relabeling if they believe that it will benefit them in national elections than parties in a decentralized, federal system. Losing national posts means the parties get stripped of the most crucial decision-making powers in politics in the former setting.

This does not mean that in a decentralized system sub-national offices are of the same value of national ones. This does not mean that political parties are neutral toward different layers of governments in federalism. In fact, national offices hold more prestige than local ones no matter how much a polity is centralized or decentralized. What I emphasize here is that the power gap between national and local governments is much wider in a centralized system than in a federal system. This huge disparity incentivizes political parties in the centralized system to stake their political fortune at winning the most important national offices, allowing room for rather aggressive and radical campaign strategies to take place. Here in this section, I clarify types of benefits from holding office and then discuss the factors that make the value of national office extremely high in a centralized political system. Finally, I conclude with their implications concerning the proclivity to party relabeling as an example of aggressive campaigning strategies.

### 3.3.1. Benefits of Office

There are various benefits one could get from holding office. In general, they include political prestige, access to political and economic resources beneficial for reelection, the ability to influence policy and to control budget, and the future career advancement potential, etc. Though seemingly numerous, the office benefits can be broadly categorized into two groups, electoral benefits and policy benefits. Electoral benefits are the ones that are related to facilitating a politician's chance for reelection and advancement in future political career in the hierarchy of career paths from the lower to the higher rung of the ladder. Policy benefits, on the other hand, are specifically those that affect a politician's ability to influence policy and enact his/her political beliefs and ideals. Granting that these two categories are not mutually exclusive but influencing each other, it is worth separating them conceptually and clarifying each of these aspects for our clear understanding.

#### 3.3.1.1. Electoral Benefits of Office

It is widely accepted in the literature that politicians are purposive and their behavior can be understood through the lens of their political ambition. This so-called "ambition theory" is manifested in Mayhew's well-known claim that politicians are "single-minded seekers of reelection" (Mayhew 1974b, p. 17). In light of ambition theory, holding office provides politicians with a tremendous amount of tangible and intangible benefits that increase their chances of reelection. The number one benefit of incumbency is that currently holding office itself increases the politicians' visibility in the electorate. Through numerous self-advertising opportunities given to the incumbents, they can present themselves to their constituencies by simply making themselves seen in

media or in person, giving speeches, having interviews, and cutting ribbons in ceremonies and so on (Fenno 1978; Mayhew 1974b). Fenno shows how cautiously members of the House of Representatives in the United States allocate their time and staff to make a physical presence to their constituents and heighten their visibility.

Applying this to a political party as a group of ambitious politicians, being a majority party in the legislature or having the presidency or prime ministership award heightened visibility to the party. An incumbent party by definition is more likely to be seen viable and competent than the opposing ones and has a better chance to construct some form of reputation or image associated with its label.[2]

Moreover, offices give politicians access to a wealth of political and economic resources that they can use for pork-barreling, casework, and particularistic policies. These are tangible benefits targeted to the specific constituencies and thus incumbents are keen to claim credit for them (Collie 1981; Cox and Katz 1996; Erikson 1971, 1972; Mayhew 1974a). Fenno claims that district service is "powerful reelection medicine" (Fenno 1978, p. 101). In the Japanese context, Scheiner (2005) emphasizes the

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[2] There is caveat to this argument drawn from the economic voting literature. The economic voting theory states that the economic status of a nation has a decisive impact on the support of the incumbent party: when the economy booms the incumbent gets credit for it whereas when the economy goes down the incumbent gets punished (M. S. Lewis-Beck 1988; Nadeau and Lewis-Beck 2001; Powell and Whitten 1993). According to the theory, incumbency could harm the party in an economic downturn. However, what I emphasize here is the name recognition and visibility advantages attached to the office.

importance of having access to resources for pork barrel in explaining the dominance of the Liberal Democratic Party during the postwar era. He argues that with the arsenal of carrots accumulated from its continuous electoral victory, the members of the LDP have been able to build strong clientele networks from the Diet to the lowest local level offices.

### 3.3.1.2. Policy Benefits of Office

Besides the electoral benefits, holding office also provides policy benefits to politicians. Elected to office, they have a chance to influence policies that affect not only their own constituents but the whole society. Given that policy goal is one of the primary goals that politicians and parties pursue, the policy benefits attached to holding office are important. Wittman even contends that parties are solely interested in policy and winning an election is a means to this end in stark contrast to Downs (Wittman 1973). Additionally, many researchers suggest parties could have a variety of goals such as ideology or policy maximization, office maximization, and goals concerning intraparty democracy and institutionalization besides mere vote maximization (Harmel and Janda 1994; Strom 1990). To certain parties, policy goal counts more than vote-, office-seeking goals. For instance, lots of studies suggest that niche parties, single-issue parties, and post-material, left-libertarian parties are the typical policy seekers whereas mainstream parties, catch-all parties and traditionalist parties are more concerned about vote maximization (Adams et al. 2006; Adams, Haupt, and Stoll 2009; Meguid 2008; Przeworski and Sprague 1986; Spoon 2011; Strom 1990).

Evidence that parties care for policy abounds, which indicates policy benefits offered by holding office are valuable to parties and politicians. In accordance with

partisan compositions of government, policy outcomes vary. For instance, left-wing governments tend to pursue low unemployment and high inflation policy while right-wing governments are more associated with high unemployment and low inflation policy (Hibbs 1977). Studying governmental welfare spending, Hicks and Swank (1992) find that a right- or center-led government with a leftist coalitional partner tends to spend more in welfare than it would have been the case without the leftist partner, which phenomenon they name the "contagion from the left". In addition, they also find that a left-led government with a rightist coalitional partner also tends to moderate their welfare spending, which they call the "left embourgeoisment effect".

This policy benefit has effect on the politicians' prospect for reelection and their reputation though it could be relatively indirect compared to the electoral benefits of office. Sometimes, the policy related factors play a significant role in determining a politician's electoral fortune when salient and controversial policy issues are involved. Mayhew and Fenno acknowledge the importance that policy issues bear on reelection by including "position taking" or "explanation of Washington activities" as one of the core strategies or homestyles that the members of Congress use to increase their likelihood of reelection.

President Obama's health care law passed in 2010 with the support of the Democratic Party is a good example. Obama and the Democratic Party were able to pass this controversial law in the face of fierce opposition from the Republicans thanks to the dominance of the Democratic Party in both the presidency and Congress. The incumbent party enjoyed the policy benefits of office. However, this policy position that the Democrats took also harm many of their electoral fortune in the 2010 midterm election.

The voters deeply divided over this law punished the Democratic Party in the elections and as a result it lost its majority status in both chambers. Although it is usual that the presidential party suffers in midterm elections, the 2010 election was largely considered to be a referendum on Obamacare (*The Washington Post*, November 7, 2010[3]).

In short, policy benefits attached to the office are important in that politicians and parties pursue policy objectives besides electoral ambition. The ability to influence and shape policies that affect their constituency, whether it is a district or a whole nation, is valuable privilege awarded to office holders.

### 3.3.2. Centralization vs. Federalism

The degree of office benefits varies across political offices along the ladder or hierarchy of career paths. For instance, national legislators are generally regarded to have more privileges than municipal legislators. A president or prime minister is the top-of-the-ladder office. The rule of thumb is that national offices are generally believed to be more prestigious than local offices. Although the hierarchy of offices in terms of benefits seems to be clear along the national-subnational division, the relative benefits among the territorial levels of offices may differ country by country depending on the degree of centralization or conversely, federalism (decentralization). If political power is highly concentrated in the national or federal government, then the power gap between national and subnational governments is considerably large. However, in a system where resources and political power are more evenly dispersed across the layers of offices then

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[3] "What effect did health-care reform have on election?" *The Washington Post*, November 7, 2010.

the relative benefits between national and local government get smaller. In short, centralization awards national offices with disproportionately more benefits vis-à-vis their subnational, local counterparts whereas federalism mitigates the strict center-periphery disparity.

Before further addressing this point, let us clarify the concept of federalism or decentralization. Decentralization is a transfer of authority towards subnational governments and away from national governments and federalism is a manifestation of decentralized political system. Although some contend that these two are conceptually different and thus they should not be used interchangeably (Rodden 2004), with the crux of both terms being the dispersion of authority cascading from the center to the periphery in the national territory, they are treated as synonyms in the literature. For instance, Chhibber and Kollman (2004) in their study on the formation of national party systems in Canada, Great Britain, India, and the United States define the term, federalism as an antonym of centralization by referring to it as a system in which authority is widely distributed across different levels of government. Also, Samuels (2003) considers federalism as political and fiscal decentralization as he shows how federalism shapes political opportunities and electoral politics in Brazil that are unique to the country. In line with the custom in the literature, I use federalism and decentralization interchangeably in this research.

According to Rodden (2004), federalism is comprised of three dimensions – fiscal, policy, and political decentralization. Fiscal decentralization is the most frequently used indicator of federalism. In fiscally decentralized systems, the central government gives local governments autonomy over finances concerning their own jurisdictions such

as freedom in taxation, expenditures, and funding local programs. Scheiner (2005a) examines the proportion of total governmental revenues and expenditures made up by the central government as a measure of fiscal centralization. Higher values indicate greater degrees of centralization. In addition to this measure, Chhibber and Kollman (2004) look at the size of public-sector employment at both federal and provincial levels and compare the trends. Measuring how much budgetary power the central government has over subnational governments, fiscal centralization is a direct indicator with respect to electoral benefits that different offices offer to politicians across various territorial levels. Particularly, it tells us much about economic resources that are given to each level of office including local projects, pork barrel, etc.

Further, fiscal centralization has spillover effect upon the other aspects of federalism, the degrees of policy and political (de-)centralization. Scheiner (2005a, 2005b), for instance, reveals that in Japan when more fiscal autonomy is given to local governments these local governments are able to launch progressive programs and implement innovative policy independent of the central government. He argues that it is because they are given more opportunities to experiment policy innovation with more financial resources at their discretion. This also allows a greater portion of local offices to be held by politicians who do not belong to the Liberal Democratic Party that dominates the whole central government posts.

Policy decentralization has been rarely addressed in empirical research owing to its difficulty of operationalization (Rodden 2004, p. 486). Henderson (2000) is one of few work that quantifies policy decentralization. Henderson creates a composite index of federalism using nine variables, three of which are about policy decentralization.

Focusing on three policy-related areas, primary education, infrastructure, and local policy provision, he investigates whether such provision is determined at the entirely central level, mixes of central, regional, and local levels, or entirely local level (Henderson 2000, pp. 21-22). Additionally, he examines whether there are any legal arrangements allowed for the central government to override the policy decisions of lower levels of government (quoted from Rodden 2004). In short, this aspect of federalism asks how much policy autonomy local governments have vis-à-vis the national government. Therefore, it is related to policy benefits that political office offers to office-holders. To reiterate, depending on the degree of policy decentralization, the gap of policy benefits between the national and subnational governments varies.

Lastly, political decentralization is often referred to as the opposite of the "nationalization of politics" that Caramani (2004) suggests. Caramani argues that the nationalization of politics occurred in Western Europe as socioeconomic functional cleavages – the left-right – supplanted the preexisting territorially, regionally based cleavages such as ethnic, linguistic cleavages. He calls this process "territorial homogenization" that homogenizes or standardizes political attitudes and behavior across regions. At the same time, important political issues were being vertically integrated from peripheries to the center, creating the national "core" of politics. Drawn from Caramani, many researchers operationalize political decentralization as whether there are subnational elections and to what extent regional voting patterns resemble those of the national level (Brancati 2008; Harbers 2010; Henderson 2000). For instance, if a country does not hold any elections for local government offices, then it is considered a high degree of political centralization. On the other hand, if a country holds elections for local

government offices and the vote share of each party in these regional elections displays a considerable difference from that of the national-level elections, then this country is considered political decentralized.

Based on the discussion of centralization vs. federalism above, one comes to a conclusion that the degree of centralization determines the office benefits of national posts relative to subnational ones, or vice versa. In a highly centralized system, on the one hand, the central government dominates access to economic and political resources and determines their distribution across multiple levels of government. In this system, local governments lack much of fiscal, policy, and political autonomy but administer decisions already made by the national government. For this reason, the office benefits that the national government offers exceedingly outweigh those that the regional governments provide to their office-holders. This leads politicians who are ambitious and political parties, coalitions of these ambitious politicians to almost blindly pursue national offices instead of local posts if they are serious about their political careers.

On the other hand, in a decentralized system, the disparity of center-periphery office benefits is less severe. With some degrees of autonomy over policy decision-making, for instance, politicians of local governments are given opportunities to influence policy that affects their constituencies. Also, with budgetary authority they can enjoy tangible electoral benefits of office through pork-barreling, local projects, and welfare programs for which they could claim credit in later elections. In short, federalism or decentralization does provide more access points to economic and political resources whereas centralization concentrates these resources into the national core of politics shutting down these potentials of the alternative access points.

Concerning this point, Tavits (2006) gives us valuable insights that the structure of opportunity to make and influence policy shapes the benefit of holding office and thus the likelihood of new party emergence in a system. If the opportunity structure is restrictive due to the system's majoritarian nature rather than being consensual (Hug 2001; Lijphart 1999), then only major parties in government have policy-making power and as a consequence, the benefits of holding office are high. Further, she claims that this high office benefit encourages a new party entry in the electoral arena. On the contrary, the permissive opportunity structure shaped by a consensual democratic model and corporatist arrangements decreases the policy benefit from holding office as it offers alternative opportunities to influence policy other than belonging to major parliamentary parties. The same logic applies to my centralization vs. federalism argument as well. A highly centralized system disproportionately increases the policy benefit of holding national office relative to subnational office by concentrating access points to influencing policy in the national center while closing alternative access points at the subnational levels.

To sum, centralization of power increases the benefits of national office, creating a huge gap between the central and local offices. Thus, it makes winning national elections such as national legislative and presidential elections extremely important for politicians and political parties. In a highly centralized system, winning a presidency or being a majority in the legislature is the number one priority for a party. The system works in winner-take-all institutional arrangements where winning national posts equates to dominating the overall political offices across multiple levels. Therefore, centralization

will lead parties to be extremely center-oriented and in turn render them to do whatever it takes them to win national political offices.

### 3.3.3 High Centralization of Power and Party Relabeling

The discussion in this section leads us to believe that high centralization of power concentrates the focus of politicians and parties to national elections. Their unchangeable priority is winning the most important national offices such as the presidency and national legislature. This situation leads the parties to be extremely vote-seeking at the national level and leads them to take any strategies that they believe will increase their likelihood of winning national offices. These strategies could be somewhat aggressive such as party relabeling. Overall, I argue that a high degree of centralization intensifies the severity of electoral contests at the national core and this reinforces the importance and role of prominent party leaders and the pressure the parties are faced with from public surveillance. In other words, the nationalization of politics reinforces the effects that personalistic party cues and hyper political interests in the electorate have on the likelihood of party relabeling by exacerbating the vote-motivating pressure that parties feel.

### 3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I develop a macro-level model that explains the causes of party relabeling. Specifically, I define three factors that make a party system vulnerable to frequent party relabeling: (1) the prominence of personalistic party cues, (2) strong levels of political interest in the electorate, and (3) high degrees of governmental centralization.

It is important to note that the model I offer to explain variation of the frequency of party

relabeling across systems is of necessary conditions. In other words, the three

components of my model lead to frequent party relabeling only when they are combined.

Therefore, each of the components, individually, does not create an impact on increasing

the likelihood of party name changes. Figure 3.2 summarizes the theoretical model

discussed in this chapter.

**Figure 3.2 Full Model: Explaining Party Relabeling**
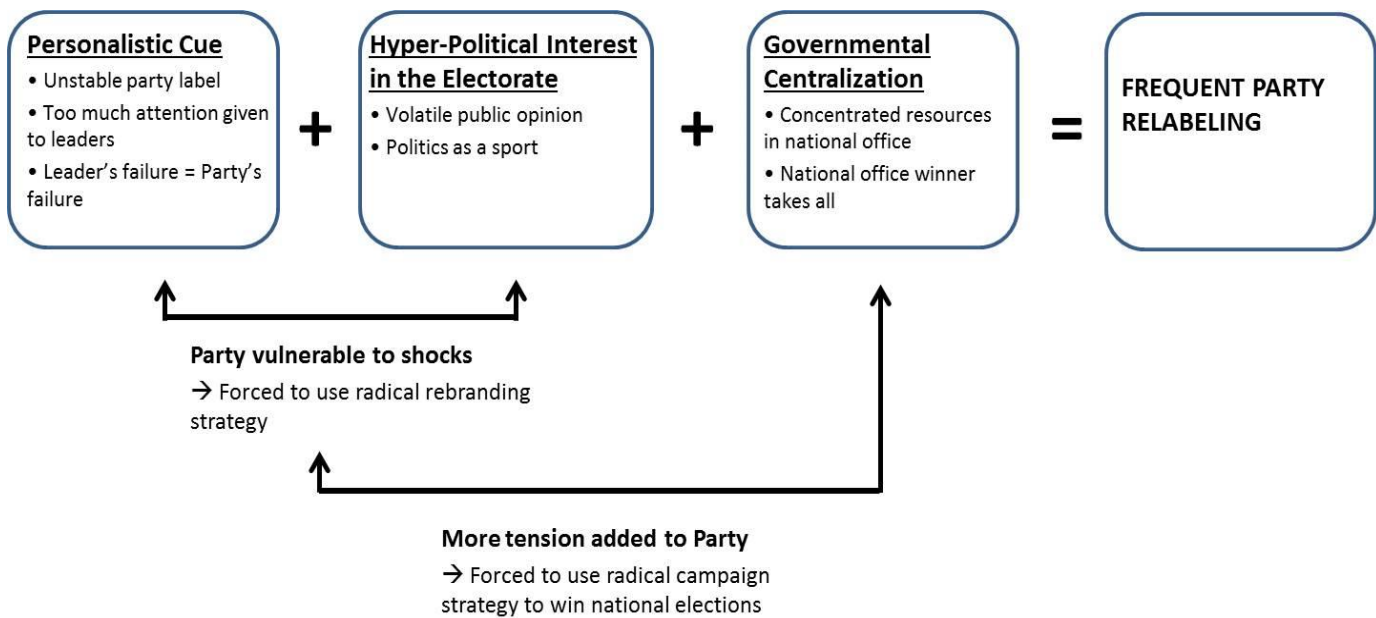
# CHAPTER 4 PARTY RELABELING IN SOUTH KOREA AND FRANCE:

## BACKGROUND AND EXPLANATIONS

In this chapter, I discuss the method to test the theoretical models presented in the previous chapters. Particularly, I provide rationale why South Korea and France were chosen to study along with Taiwan and the United States as shadow cases of the former. Then, I describe party relabeling in South Korean and French party systems, our dependent variable of this analysis. Some of the existing theories are applied to explain these cases but their limitations are pointed out as a way to justify the need for a macro-level model that addresses the phenomenon of our interest. To clarify the proposed model, I conduct brief comparative analysis by discussing different combinations of the three components of my model and emphasize that it is the combined impact of the three components that drive a party to relabel itself.

## 4.1 Methods

### 4.1.1 Comparative Historical Analysis

To test the proposed model, I conduct a comparative historical analysis by examining France, South Korea, the United States, and Taiwan. The first two cases represent the systems in which party relabeling is common while the latter cases represent the systems where party labels show a high degree of stability. Specifically, I compare South Korea with Taiwan and France with the United States. In addition, I

include mini-comparative analysis as a way to briefly test my theory in this chapter by including more cases besides these four.

Although this mini-analysis is nowhere near the in-depth historical analysis that I conduct for the four main cases, it strengthens the validity of the causality of my theoretical models. It is noted that the three parts of my theory are *necessary* conditions for the high likelihood of party relabeling. None of the three, taken alone, provides a sufficient explanation for the occurrence of party relabeling. I will revisit this point further later in this chapter. Douglas Dion using a Bayesian model proves that only five cases are necessary to gain a 95 percent confidence interval of a necessary condition (Dion 1998). Accordingly, investigating four cases in depth and adding more cases in analysis guarantees that the findings of my research reach statistical significance.

This method is appropriate to test my theory because it copes with the problem that party relabeling, my dependent variable, is rare and there are therefore few cases of it. Due to this, a large N, cross-national empirical analysis would introduce problems of contextual variance. Therefore, this mid-range comparative analysis can overcome this problem and yet it avoids the weaknesses of a single case study (Collier 1993; Lijphart 1971). My choice of cases provides variance while enabling me to control for the effect of system context, which I will discuss more in the following section (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994; Lijphart 1971). In short, this mid-range comparative analysis has the best of both worlds: a case study and a large N analysis. It is sensitive to multiple causations and offers rich explanation while it can "test" the proposed model and enables me to draw an arguably generalizable conclusion from it. In other words, this method will offer both internal and external validity to my research.

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**4.1.2 Why South Korea and France?**

An in-depth investigation of the two pairs of cases – South Korea & Taiwan and France & the United States provides us with various benefits in revealing the causes of party relabeling. First of all, these cases maximize the variance on the dependent variable, party relabeling. South Korea and France have parties that have changed labels a number of times whereas Taiwan and the United States represent cases where party relabeling is highly uncommon. Moreover, there are differences between South Korea and France in the frequency of party relabeling as well. South Korea displays more frequent and thus seemingly chaotic name changes of parties than does France. For instance, the *New Politics Alliance for Democracy*, the largest opposition party in South Korea has been relabeled so frequently that the average age of each label is about three years. However, its French counterpart is not that extreme. In other words, the four chosen cases can be ranked in order. Such variations make it possible for one to test the proposed model more accurately thanks to sufficient variation in the dependent variable (Geddes 1990).

Secondly, the pairs of comparative case studies – South Korea & Taiwan and France & the United States – control for other contextual factors that might affect party relabeling such as political institutions, democratic history, culture, economic development and so on. Firstly, all four cases share several features of political institutions that might have an impact on the likelihood of party relabeling. Most importantly, all of these systems are a presidential system instead of parliamentary system and their electoral systems are more or less similar, all of which can be safely grouped into a plurality system characterized by high disproportionality and restrictive

rule. Both institutions are known to have strong influence in shaping a party's electoral strategy and primary goals – whether vote-seeking, office-seeking or ideology-seeking. Therefore, it is crucial to control for these institutional effect in that I consider party relabeling as a kind of campaign strategy.

Secondly, in terms of political history, culture, and economic development, the cases within each pair share lots of commonalities. This aspect is discussed in depth in later chapters where empirical analysis is provided. For this reason, each pair can be regarded as a most similar systems design. However, at the same time the two pairs – the East Asian pair and Western democracy pair – themselves represent the most different systems design (Przeworski and Teune 1970). A most similar systems design is appropriate for testing the theory proposed in this research while eliminating other factors that might affect the dependent variable, party relabeling. However, what makes this research – its findings and implications – stronger is by use of a most different systems design. It reinforces the generalizability of my theory by showing that the theoretical models work in both pairs of cases, each of which is different in virtually every aspect, i.e., democratic history, socioeconomic features, culture, and the degrees of party system development. In short, this mixture of comparative analytic strategies offers leverage to testing the new theory and confirms that the findings and implications from comparative analysis are causally sound.

In terms of Brady and Collier (2004), this approach is a combination of cross-case and within-case analysis. Cross-case analysis focuses on instances of outcome in two or more cases and this is what my two-pair analysis serves: comparing South Korea and Taiwan and comparing France and the United States focusing on the variation of party

relabeling in each pair. Put differently, the logic behind this approach is similar to regression analysis and thus subject to bias with too few observations included. To overcome this weakness, it is crucial to combine it with within-case or no-variation-design analysis. This strategy allows a researcher to focus on more detailed causal mechanisms and to distinguish the impact of independent variables from that of error terms. For this reason, within-case analysis greatly increases the validity of the causal mechanisms provided by a theory.

## 4.2 Party Relabeling in South Korea and France

Parties in South Korea and France are notorious for habitual name changes. What makes these two cases interesting is that it is the mainstream parties that undertake relabeling. For instance, the two major parties in South Korea replace their labels every few years. Most recently, the *New Politics Alliance for Democracy*, the major opposition party got this label by replacing its older one, the *Democratic Party* in March, 2014. Since its democratization in 1987, a number of parties have risen and fallen but a majority of them could be considered as the same parties but merely under new labels. Referring to this phenomenon, many scholars in Korean politics categorize the Korean party system as a highly unstable or chaotic system. In France though relabeling is not as extreme as South Korea, *The Republicans*, customarily known as the Gaullist party has been renamed many times since its foundation in 1947. In fact, *The Republicans* is a brand new name that the party obtained on May 29th, 2015 by discarding its previous label, the *Union for a Popular Movement* (UMP).

In this section, I document the history of party relabeling in South Korea and

France since the late 1980s and the 1940s, respectively. This highlights the fact that the

parties in these systems are heavily dependent on relabeling as a rebranding strategy. I

discuss some existing explanations to this phenomenon but reveal limitations of each of

these conventional approaches. As a way to overcome the theoretical dissatisfaction that

the extant explanations have, I briefly re-introduce the model that is developed in Chapter

2 and apply it to the South Korean and French cases.

**4.2.1 Party Relabeling in South Korea since 1987**

***4.2.1.1 From February 1988 to February 1993: the Roh Tae-woo***

   ***Administration***

The 13th Presidential Election which was held in December, 1987 was the first

free and fair election by which the Korean voters directly got to elect president unlike the

way previous elections had been held where the position was indirectly elected. Roh Tae-

woo of the *Democratic Justice Party* (DJP) won the presidency. Established in 1981, the

DJP was the ruling party that dominated the government, both the executive and

legislative branches during the 1980s under the reign of President Chun Doo-hwan. There

were three major opposition parties, each named the *Party for Unification and*

*Democracy* (PUD), *New Democratic-Republican Party* (NDRP), and *Party for Peace and*

*Democracy* (PPD). Although these parties took positions that were quite disparate from

each other in the ideological spectrum, they acted in unison for the purpose of opposing

the DJP (The National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea 2009a).

In fact, after losing its dominance in the legislature, the DJP struggled in getting its legislative agenda through in government and faced with problems that incurred both internally and externally. The party carried out a series of intraparty organizational reforms in order to overcome such adversity but none of the attempts were effective and felt it desperately needed to coalesce with the opposing parties. On December 28th, 1989, a council member of the DJP, Jun-kyu Park in his interview with the *Donga Ilbo* (Donga Daily News) claimed the need to have a two-party system for the advancement of Korean politics (The National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea 2009, p. 72). On February 15th of 1990, the DJP and two opposition parties, the PUD and the NDRP agreed to form a party under the common label and thus a new large party, the *Democratic Liberal Party* (DLP) that dominated the seats in the legislature was born. Despite the fact that Korean political parties were far from devoted ideology maximizers, the merger of these three major parties is considered unusually catch-all in nature as this was the first merger of parties across the seemingly unpassable divide that defines Korean politics: between the conservatives, heir of the pre-democratic Korea's authoritarian regime and the pro-democratic opposition.

Being left out of the "grand" coalition, the *Party for Peace and Democracy* (PPD) was under pressure to unite all the small parties that remained to be an opposition block to the ruling regime (The National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea 2009, pp. 87-88). However, the grand coalition in the opposition bloc did not happen until September, 1991. Five months before the coalition, however, the PPD changed its name to the *New Democratic Alliance* (NDA) as its rebranding strategy. This label was extremely short-lived. As Kim Dae-jung, Chair of the NDA decided to merge with the

*Democratic Party*, a major opposition party among several on September 16th, 1991 the

NDA once again discarded its previous label but picked a new one, the *Democratic*

*Party*. Figure 4.1 summarizes party name changes during the Roh Tae-woo

administration.

**Figure 4.1: Party Relabeling under the Roh Tae-woo Administration[4]**

**(a) Democratic Liberal Party**

Democratic Justice Party

Party for Unification and Democracy → 1990 Merger → Democratic Liberal Party

New Democratic-Republican Party

**(b) Democratic Party**
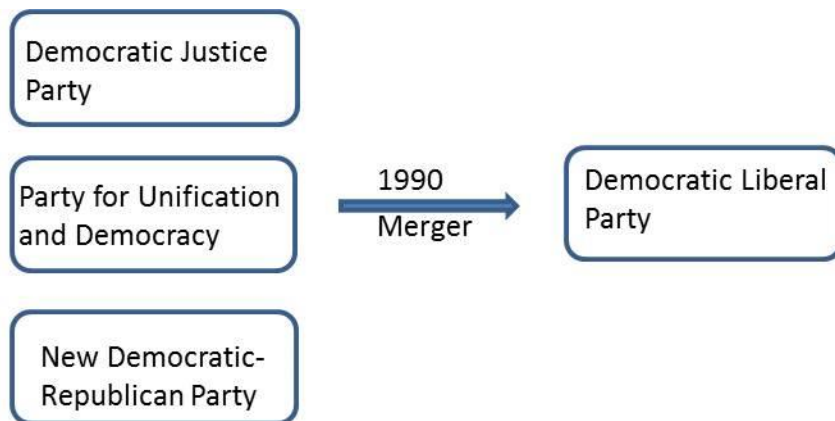
Party for Peace and Democracy → Apr, 1991 → New Democratic Alliance → Sep, 1991 → Democratic Party

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[4] Source: *The History of Party Politics in the Republic of Korea IV: From February 25th,*

*1988 to February 24th, 1993* (The National Election Commission of the Republic of

Korea, 2009)

### 4.2.1.2 From February 1993 to February 1998: the Kim Young-sam Administration

The *Democratic Liberal Party* (DLP) became an unrivaled ruling party with 216 of 299 total seats in the legislature as a result of the grand coalition of the DJP, the PUD, and the NDRP. However, the DLP failed to establish its brand name like other political parties in Korea but it was soon replaced by a new label, the *New Korea Party*. Given that the party is a loose coalition of the three disparate parties, the DLP had been faced with a series of challenges, particularly intraparty conflict, since its formation (The National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea 2009b). Of the challenges, it was the following two incidents that severely hit the party and triggered it to attempt to rebrand itself by relabeling it as the *New Korea Party* in 1996. The first incident was Kim Jong-pil's break-away from the DLP who had been the party's Representative Member and his formation of a new party, named the *United Liberal Democrats*. The second incident was the DLP's poor performance in the 1ˢᵗ National Local Government Election in 1995. Going through these internal and external hardships, the party carried out extensive rebranding effort and as a way it changed its name to the *New Korea Party* in 1996.

The new label, the *New Korea Party* lasted only for about one and a half year. Over the course of the campaign for the upcoming presidential election, its candidate Lee Hoi-chang's popularity dwindled due to several scandals he was involved in. That hit Lee the most severely was his two sons' alleged evasion of military duty. The Korean Constitution defines military duty as one of the four basic mandatory duties that the Korean people must serve alongside with duties of paying taxes, educating children up to

middle school, and being productive workforce. The constitution specifically stipulates

that all adult males fulfill 2-year military service with limited exceptions that are strictly

defined by laws. Therefore, the allegation over his sons was seriously damaging Lee's

reputation as well as his credibility as a presidential candidate. His approval rating

plummeted after this scandal broke out and he was not able to recover.

To make things worse, the East Asian financial crisis which had begun from

Thailand stroke the Korean economy and it caused people to blame President Kim

Young-sam and his party to which Lee Hoi-chang belonged to. In contrast, his rival Kim

Dae-jung was successfully shoring up support by forming a pre-electoral coalition with

the party Kim Jong-pil formed after his defection from the DLP. In an attempt to make a

turnabout in its ever decreasing public support, the *New Korea Party* undertook drastic

rebranding measures including relabeling and inviting the emaciated Democratic Party

whose majority of members left and formed a new party under the leadership of Kim

Dae-jung. As a result, the *New Korea Party* came to be re-born with its new name, the

*Grand National Party* in November 1997 shortly before the 15$^{th}$ Presidential Election.

The *United Liberal Democrats*, a new party that Kim Jong-pil formed after his

defection from the DLP in April, 1995 absorbed a small party, named the New

Democratic Party prior to the 1$^{st}$ National Local Government Election in June, 1995.

Based on the Chungchong region, the party garnered its support and did well in elections,

establishing itself to be the third largest party.

In the opposition block, the *Democratic Party* was created by the merger of the

New Democratic Alliance (67 seats) and the older Democratic Party (8 seats) as a pre-

electoral alliance before the 14$^{th}$ National Assembly Election in 1992. As a result, a two-

party system with the *Democratic Liberal Party* and the *Democratic Party* being the two mainstream parties was established during the early period of Kim Young-sam's presidency. The *Democratic Party* successfully emerged as an influential opposing party by adding a considerable amount of seats to what it used to have and preventing the Democratic Liberal Party from acquiring the majority number of seats.

Despite the party's initial success, after its Chair, Kim Dae-jung's bid for presidency failed in December of 1992, he announced retirement from politics and this thrust the party into a chaos. With the retreat of its charismatic leader, the *Democratic Party* tried to re-establish its leadership and its organizations but all of the effort proved to be unsuccessful. Eventually, in September 1995, Kim Dae-jung came back to politics revoking his earlier decision to retire and took over the chaotic Democratic Party and reshuffled it under a new label, the *National Congress for New Politics*. Technically speaking, the *Democratic Party* was not handed over to Kim Dae-jung as a whole but was split into two groups; one who left the party and joined Kim Dae-jung's new party, which was dominant in number and the other one who remained in the *Democratic Party* (The National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea 2009b, pp. 183-187). However, the latter was too few to be considered the *Democratic Party* it used to be whereas the former who joined was so overwhelmingly dominant that it is safe to view the *National Congress for New Politics* was a replacement or continuation of the *Democratic Party*.

In fact, the almost emptied *Democratic Party* was finally dissolved three months after the establishment of the *National Congress for New Politics*. And a new party, the *United Democratic Party*, was formed in an alliance with the *New Reformation Party*.

The *United Democratic Party* reclaimed its older banner, the *Democratic Party* in 1996 but in the following year a majority of the party members were finally fused into Kim Dae-jung's National Congress for New Politics. As mentioned above, the remaining members joined the New Korea Party and they formed the *Grand National Party* in 1997 in the face of the 15th Presidential Election. Figure 4.2 summarizes party name changes during the Kim Young-sam administration.

**Figure 4.2: Party Relabeling under the Kim Young-sam Administration[5]**

**(a) Grand National Party**



**(b) Democratic Party**



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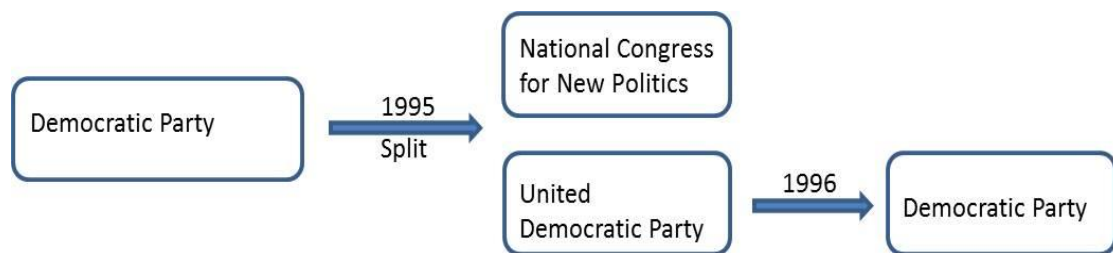
[5] Source: The History of Party Politics in the Republic of Korea V: From February 25th, 1993 to February 24th, 1998 (The National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea, 2009).

### *4.2.1.3 From February 1998 to February 2003: the Kim Dae-jung*

### *Administration*

The 15th Presidential Election in December, 1997 is a historic election in the history of South Korean politics. In fact, it was through this election that the all-time opposition party and its leader came to be in power for the first time in history. With a slim margin, Kim Dae-jung won presidency over Lee Hoi-chang signifying the first democratic power transition from the conservative to the liberal power bloc. Though Kim's victory was a great feat for Kim himself and his party, National Congress for New Politics, it was obvious that Kim was going to have a hard time in passing his agendas through with his party being a minority in the National Assembly with only 79 seats out of 299.

Acknowledging the need to make his party stronger, Kim Dae-jung as a chair of the *National Congress for New Politics* tried to rebrand it before the upcoming 16th National Assembly Election in 2000. First of all, he courted new figures with various backgrounds who could give the party a new image and add more power. They include a younger generation of politicians who were former pro-democratic activists, political tycoons who had held high office under previous administrations, local political bosses, and other small party members. Along with such personnel reinforcement, the *National Congress for New Politics* finally changed its name to the *Millennium Democratic Party* in January, 2000, three months before the 16th National Legislative Election. This name change can be considered "pure" relabeling without any significant organizational, ideological, or personnel changes inside the existing party.

Unlike the liberal camp, the conservative Grand National Party, then largest party in South Korea, kept its label during this five year period under the Kim Dae-jung administration. I believe that there are several reasons that led the party to stick with its label during this time even after its loss of incumbency status first time ever. First, its current label, the *Grand National Party* was just new. The party was relabeled right before the presidential election in 1997 as its rebranding effort. Second, although its presidential candidate, Lee Hoi-chang lost the election, the result was not a debacle to the party or Lee himself. Instead, the election was so close that none of the top two runners received majority votes but Kim Dae-jung won over Lee Hoi-chang by slightly less than 2%.[6] In short, the election result was not too catastrophic for the party to seek for drastic rebranding.

Lastly, probably the most important reason is that the *Grand National Party* was the largest party in the legislature with 139 seats of 299 when Kim Dae-jung came to power. Moreover, the 16th Legislative Election which took in April 2000 was a huge victory to the *Grand National Party* by winning 133 seats of 273, allowing it to retain its ruling party status in the legislature. This election resulted that President Kim Dae-jung suffered divided government with the opposition party controlling the National Assembly for his entire presidency. The *Grand National Party*'s continuous success in the legislative elections gave its label credibility as the most powerful party. This helped the party to keep its label, indicating the possibility of developing a brand name party label.

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[6] Kim Dae-jung won 40.3% of the total votes whereas Lee Hoi-chang won 38.7% in the 15th Presidential Election.

### *4.2.1.4 From February 2003 to February 2008: the Roh Moo-hyun*

### *Administration*

This period is characterized by two contrasting patterns shown by the *Grand National Party* (GNP) and its opposition, the Millennium Democratic Party. While the GNP had stability in terms of party brand management the *Millennium Democratic Party* experienced lots of upheavals – name changes, splits and mergers. In November 2003, the latter split into two and this created the *Uri Party*. As the 2004 legislative election approached, there arose disputes within the *Millennium Democratic Party* concerning rules over candidate nominations and general campaign strategy (*Munhwa Ilbo* November 10, 2003: p. 4[7]). One camp, the reformist camp, called for overall reform in the rules. For instance, they tried to hold primaries for candidate nomination instead of keeping the old style that a party boss handpicks his favorite candidates for each district. The other camp, the conservative camp, resisted such changes. The dispute between them escalated to the point that these two groups could not stay together under the common banner. Moreover, there were campaign finance scandals looming around high-profile members of the Millennium Democratic Party involved in the 2002 presidential election. Finally, more than 2/3 of the *Millennium Democratic Party* members left and created the *Uri Party* with a few of other reform-minded politicians from the other conservative parties.

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[7] "Uri Party officially launched tomorrow – pursuing 'clean politics'" *Munhwa Ilbo*, November 10, 2003, p. 4.

Upon the foundation of the *Uri Party*, all the rest of parties pitched their negative tone against it. They castigated that it is a party created just to serve the wishes of President Roh and just for the 2004 legislative elections and therefore, it will soon disappear after the election. However, the party was very successful in the 2004 election winning the majority of the seats in the National Assembly. The *Millennium Democratic Party*, the party abandoned by the vast majority of its members, fared so poorly in the election[8] that it was about to break down and in the following year it relabeled itself to the *Democratic Party*. For the rest of the 17th National Assembly, the *Democratic Party* remained extremely weak to the point that it was almost non-existent.

In 2007, as the party started preparing for the upcoming presidential election in December of the same year, the *Democratic Party* again rebranded itself to the *Centrist Reformist Democratic Party*. By around the same time, the *Uri Party* too undertook rebranding and it was replaced by the new label, "*United New Democratic Party*" for the same purpose. Unfortunately, despite these two split parties' effort to win the presidency this time so badly, it turned out the GNP candidate, Lee Myung-bak was the winner. This disappointing election was a reality check to both of them and moreover, each of their new labels that they recently took just before the presidential election seemed not attractive enough to be a keeper to them. As a consequence, these two divorced parties got remarried in February 2008 under the banner of "*United Democratic Party*," putting an end to their brief separation. Figure 4.3 summarizes the name changes during the 2003-2008 period.

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[8] They won merely 9 seats out of 299.

**Figure 4.3: Party Relabeling under the Roh Moo-hyun Administration**
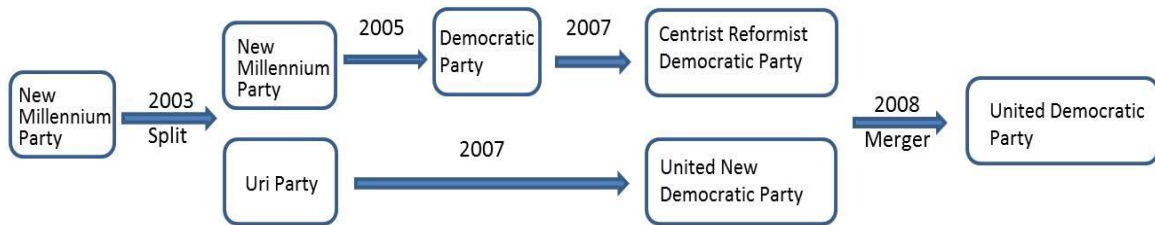


*4.2.1.5 From February 2008 to February 2013: the Lee Myung-bak Administration*

This period once again confirms relabeling is a commonly and favorably adopted strategy for the parties in South Korea. All three viable parties – the GNP, the ruling party, the *United Democratic Party*, the main opposition party, and the *Democratic Labor Party*, the third party – changed their labels. It seems that the two national elections held in this period, the 18th Legislative Election in 2008 and the 18th Presidential Election in 2012, was a driving force behind massive relabeling of the parties. Also, the previous election, the 17th Presidential Election held in December 2007 had an impact on losing parties.

The *United Democratic Party* actively engaged in relabeling again in this period. First, be reminded that this was the label that the formerly separated two parties – the *Centrist Reformist Democratic* and the *United New Democratic Parties* – jointly took as they re-united in February 2008. Being alarmed by a loss in the 2007 presidential election, they decided to combine their force and enter the upcoming legislative election scheduled in April 2008. Unfortunately, despite their efforts, the UDP again lost to the GNP after this election. After the consecutive electoral failures, the party once again

changed its name; to Democratic Party, their good old name after a series of experiments with other variations. It was August 2008, meaning that the *United New Democratic Party* lasted only half a year. Three years later, entering the presidential campaign period the party took a familiar strategy in a bid for victory. The *Democratic Party* got renamed to the *Democratic United Party* in December 2011.

The *Democratic Labor Party*, the only third party that holds a few seats, took a greatly similar pattern to what the largest party in opposition did during this time. After the 2007 presidential election, there arose dispute over the responsibility for the party's disappointing performance. As a third party, of course, they did not aim at winning the presidency. What they aimed at was do better, i.e., winning more votes than they did five years ago. However, the result showed that this goal was not met. Concerning this, the party was divided into two factions, the Equality Faction and the Self-Reliance Faction; the former calling for a intraparty reform and the latter not willing to make lots of change to the status quo. The dispute between the two factions was not resolved smoothly but the Equality Faction left the party and created their own, the *New Progressive Party* in March 2008 (*Kookmin Ilbo* March 3, 2008: p. 5[9]; *Kyunghyang Shinmun* March 3, 2008: p. 6[10]). However, the separated parties re-united in January 2012 as they began preparing for the legislative and presidential elections scheduled in May and December of the same

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[9] "Sang-jung Shim, Hoe-chan Roh: The New Progressive Party's opening ceremony – the members of the Democratic Labor Party announced a public apology address," *Kookmin Ilbo*, March 3, 2008, p. 5.

[10] "The New Progressive Party formed, "We will break out of the old practice"," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, March 3, 2008, p. 6.

year, respectively. This time they took a new intuitive label, the *Unified Progressive Party*, signifying their unification.

However, this reunion did not last long. During the primaries for the 19<sup>th</sup> Legislative Election, a scandal over primary fraud broke out and this shattered the party. The incident made the previous factional divide re-emerge and led the Equality Faction to leave the party and create their own in October 2012, the same pattern that was taken before. This new party was labeled, *Progressive Justice Party*.

In contrast to the parties in opposition, the *Grand National Party* maintained its label for a long time in South Korean terms. Since its birth in1997, it has survived 15 years. Its "longevity" was made possible mainly by their successful electoral performance. Except for the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Election in 2004, the GNP won all important elections both at the national and subnational levels. However, nearing the 2012 presidential campaign, they thought they needed to distance themselves from then extremely unpopular president Lee Myung-bak in order to win the presidency again. They assessed that everything must be changed, including the most obvious one, the label. Thus, the *Saenuri Party* (New Frontier Party) replaced the GNP in February 2012, ten months ahead of the 18<sup>th</sup> Presidential Election.

**Figure 4.4: Party Relabeling under the Lee Myung-bak Administration**

**(a) United Democratic Party**

| United Democratic Party | → 2008 → | Democratic Party | → 2011 → | Democratic United Party |

**(b) Democratic Labor Party**

| Democratic Labor Party | → 2008 Split → | New Progressive Party / Democratic Labor Party | → Jan 2012 Merger → | Unified Progressive Party | → Oct 2012 Split → | Progressive Justice Party / Unified Progressive Party |

**(c) Grand National Party**
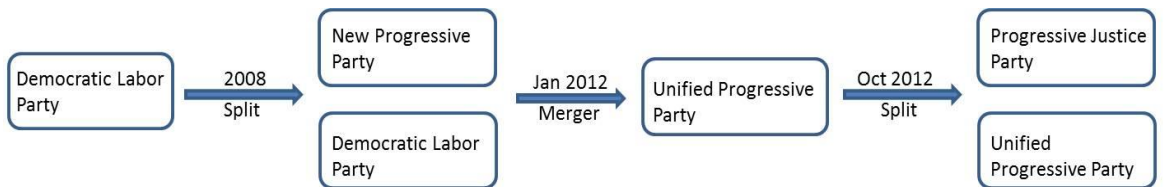
| Grand National Party | → 2012 → | Saenuri Party |

*4.2.1.6 From February 2013 to Present: the Park Geun-hye Administration*

With all major parties renamed as a campaign strategy for the 18th Presidential Election, the candidate of the *Saenuri Party* (formerly GNP), Park Geun-hye won surprising victory. It was considered surprising because President Lee Myung-bak of the GNP struggled a lot in his later phase of presidency. His approval rating remained in the 20% range in 2012 (*Gallup Korea Political Index*). This victory consolidated the *Saenuri Party* and President Park Geun-hye's power within the party. Many attributed the win to

the party's effective rebranding. In an interview with me, one chief of staff to a *Saenuri* legislator discussed the importance of the party's relabeling,

> Then GNP deeply felt we absolutely needed to change the party from A to Z, a total renovation. Otherwise, we would lose the election. The party hired one of the most renowned advertising copywriters in Korea and consulted him about making effective logos, symbols, colors, slogans, etc. I think that worked very well. For instance, we changed our symbolic color from blue to red, which was very radical. You know what red means in Korean politics[11]. We as a right-wing party it was a really radical change. Also, the name Saenuri was not something we made ourselves. To attract attention from the people and to pick the right name, we held a contest open to everyone for the people's ideas about the best name for the party. Then, finally "Saenuri" was picked. It is a pure Korean word, meaning a new world, a new age and it also sounds fresh and young, the very image that we were looking to have through rebranding. Inside the party, initially there were some who were skeptical about these changes because they thought it was just too much. But as it turned out, we think that was really successful rebranding. Of course, it was not just about the name change. We did make some radical changes in our platform. All these changes combined made us rebrand our party very effectively.

Parties in opposition, on the other hand, underwent thorny processes of restructuring their organization and leadership. The *Democratic United Party*, for instance, officially accepted Ahn Chol-soo, the pre-electoral coalition partner of the party's presidential candidate, Moon Jae-in. Ahn Chol-soo and a handful of his followers

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[11] Red is a color for communism and leftist parties in the South Korean context.

were absorbed into the *Democratic United Party* and Ahn was given a leadership position. Then, the party once again relabeled itself to the *New Politics Alliance for Democracy* in March 2014, heralding that it is a new party with different leaders.

The situation was worse for the two labor parties. The legitimacy of the *Unified Progressive Party* as a party of ideologues was seriously damaged due to the primary fraud that occurred during the 2012 legislative election. Another issue came up later and that finally put the party to an end. It was an allegation that some of the party leaders and members violated the National Security Law by praising the North Korean regime and founding underground organizations to promote pro-North activities. Due to this, the party was officially dissolved by the state authority in January 2015.

The *Progressive Justice Party*, a shootout of the *Unified Progressive Party* survived though electorally it was almost non-existent. The party changed its name to the *Justice Party* by dropping the adjective "progressive" in order to distance themselves from its collapsing former comrades, the *Unified Progressive Party*. As the latter was collapsing due to scandals over the primary fraud and the National Security Law violation, the *Progressive Justice Party* judged that it needed to dissociate itself from the word "progressive" which has so many negative associations now. Figure 4.5 summarizes the party name changes since 2013.

**Figure 4.5: Party Relabeling under the Park Geun-hye Administration**

**(a) Democratic United Party**
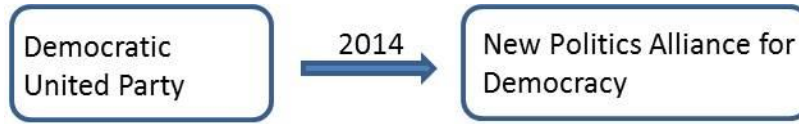


**(b) Progressive Justice Party**
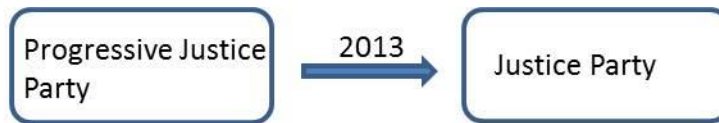


### 4.2.2 Party Relabeling in France since 1945

France is a multi-party system with approximately 3-4 effective parties[12]. There are more than ten parties that continually field candidates in elections and participate in French politics. This large number of parties makes it inappropriate to track party name changes by period of time, i.e. presidential administration, the approach taken for the South Korean case. To better understand the overall trend of party relabeling and the lineage of labels for each party in France, a party-by-party approach is more appropriate than the period-by-period approach.

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[12] This is a party system measure developed by Laakso and Taagepera (1979). Specifically, France has 2.8 ENPP (effective number of parliamentary parties) and 4.3 ENEP (effective number of electoral parties).

In order to give more structure to the analysis, I categorize parties into three groups in terms of ideological position: right, left, and center. This categorization is not randomly picked but has sound support from the literature that the myriad of parties in France can be neatly grouped into these three broad ideological camps (Cole, Meunier, and Tiberj 2013; M. Lewis-Beck, Nadeau, and Belanger 2012; Safran 2009; Wilson and Wiste 1976). Sauger (2009) even suggests a simpler categorization of parties by arguing that French politics have been bipolarized where the center depletes by being absorbed into the right and there remain two big camps, the right and the left. However, for the sake of more detailed description of relabeling of parties in France throughout the postwar period, I adopt the tripartite classification.

### *4.2.2.1 The Right*

**The Republicans (The Gaullist Party) and the Right**

The leading party in the right-wing camp is *The Republicans*, until recently known as the UMP. This party was established in 1946 by the charismatic leader, Charles de Gaulle and it was simply called the *Gaullist Union* (UG) or the Gaullists. As the label suggests, the party was centered around the ideals of de Gaulle which were nationalistic, calling for a national rally and a government with authority to overcome the aftermath of the war (Demker 1997). The Gaullist Union fared well in the 1947 local elections by winning almost 40% of the votes and de Gaulle and his followers were expecting to have similar victory in the national legislative elections in 1951. Before the elections, the party was renamed the *Rally of the French People* (RPF). This served two purposes (Haegel 2013; McHale and Shaber 1976; Safran 2009; Sauger 2009): First, it intended to remove the impression that the UG is a clique of some ambitious politicians centered around the

charismatic leader, de Gaulle; second, the new label was intended to create the image that they are the party for the nation. Unfortunately however, the RPF was not successful in the 1951 national elections, winning less than 20% of the votes.

The RPF's failure to achieve the majority position in the National Assembly debilitated the cohesion of the party members between de Gaulle's loyal followers and those who sought the party's independence from him. De Gaulle considered himself responsible for the disappointing electoral results and lost his influence within the RPF that he had previously exercised. Despite his fading power, the faction of dissidents against his overwhelming influence within the party was unwilling to clearly dissociate themselves from de Gaulle, which was a strong political brand in France during the period 1946-58 (Demker 1997, p. 409). Indeed in 1958, the RPF successfully consolidated political groups on the right under the leadership of de Gaulle and was renamed the *Union for the New Republic* (UNR). The re-establishment of the party was led by loyal Gaullists for the purpose of bringing de Gaulle to power.

Under this new label, the Gaullist party was able to appeal to a broader electorate and rose to its prominence in French politics rapidly (Safran 2009). While largely holding on to its previous ideology called Gaullism, the UNR was able to acquire a mass electoral base by successfully rebranding itself as a catch-all party (McHale and Shaber 1976). After this successful rebranding of the party, de Gaulle was elected president in 1958 and his party enjoyed great popularity in the public. In fact, his approval rating during his presidency reached 70% (Demker 1997, p. 409). The UNR enjoyed its dominance in French politics until the late 1970s as shown the party controlled the presidency from 1958 to 1974.

However, by the mid-1960s, the UNR was faced with political and economic instability and had to find a way to settle the unrest which was demonstrated in "May '68", a series of students' and workers' strikes throughout May of 1968. As France experienced rapid economic growth at an unprecedented pace during de Gaulle's administration, it created lots of social issues such as job dislocations in the traditional sector, particularly agriculture and increasing demands for individual liberty and post-materialist values (Bell 2000b). However, President de Gaulle did not take these sources of instability seriously and failed to address the issues appropriately by keeping his unidirectional "top-down" governing style. For instance, as students occupied university buildings and their demonstrations spread over to the whole society, de Gaulle in response sent in the police force to repress instead of listening to them or negotiating with them (Bell 2000b). The events in May 1968 eventually forced de Gaulle to step down from the presidency and helped Prime Minister Georges Pompidou emerge as the next president of France.

The UNR had to distance itself from its own creator, the crippling leader, de Gaulle while he was struggling with the domestic crisis, displayed his incapability to handle the situation, and revealed the outdated nature of his leadership. As a consequence, the party went through reorganization under the leadership of Pompidou over the course of the next several years. At the 1967 party congress, the party abandoned its old label, UNR and instead adopted the new one, the *Union for the Defence of the Republic*, which in 1973 was slightly changed to the *Union of Democrats for the Republic* but both were commonly abbreviated the UDR. Thanks to such a rebranding effort, the party was able to win the absolute majority of the seats in the National

Assembly in the 1968 elections, which was the first time that a single party won the majority on its own in history. In addition, Pompidou won the presidency as a successor to de Gaulle as well (Bell 2000b; Demker 1997).

However, the dominance of the Gaullist party came to an end in the late 1970s after the death of Pompidou. Valery Giscard d'Estaing from the center-right party, *Union for French Democracy* (UDF) was elected president in 1974. The UDR was led by Jacques Chirac and rebranded as the *Rally for the Republic* (RPR) in late 1976. This was the "neo-Gaullist" successor party that "evolved both as an instrument of Chirac's presidential aspirations and as a repository of Gaullism" (Demker 1997; Safran 2009, p. 92). Under this new label, the party maintained its prominence though not as dominant as it was in the previous decades often by forming electoral alliances with the UDF for legislative contests. Chirac, as charismatic a figure as de Gaulle, enjoyed loyal followership from his party members and this effectively evoked the nostalgia that the French public held for de Gaulle (Haegel 2013; Safran 2009).

Under the RPR banner, Chirac was elected president in 1995 and won his second term in 2002 but under the renamed label of the party, the *Union for a Popular Movement* (UMP). He rebranded the party successfully. The UMP won the presidency with landslide victory with Chirac garnering more than 80% of the votes in the second round of the presidential election in 2002 and in the following national legislative elections the party won 365 out of 577 seats. Furthermore, the UMP became the first party in the Fifth Republic that as a single party had a majority in the Senate (Sauger 2009). It also dominated a majority of local offices. The party's success continued as its leader as well

as new presidential candidate, Nicholas Sarkozy succeeded Chirac's presidency in 2007. However, Sarkozy failed to be reelected in 2012, which put the UMP to shock.

Sarkozy during his presidency was able to maintain his leadership position within the UMP since he became the party's president in 2004. He directly and indirectly kept interfering in the party's affairs even after he became President of the Republic and officially acted as the leader of the party (Haegel 2013). Even his defeat in the presidential election in 2012 did not prevent him from being the head of the UMP. In taking steps toward coming back to power, borrowing the styles of his predecessors, Sarkozy renamed the party *The Republicans*, which was announced on May 29th, 2015. This rebrand effort was made to revitalize the party image and electoral strength targeting the local elections to be held at the end of the year in the short run and to obtain the momentum that could help Sarkozy win the presidency one more time in 2017 in the long run. His decision to rebrand the party was endorsed exceedingly by the overwhelming majority of the members of the party, over 83% of them (*Euronews*, June 1, 2015).

To sum, the Gaullist party has been the main player in French politics with eight different names since its foundation in 1946. This frequent relabeling shows a great similitude to the two mainstream parties in South Korea. The figure below summarizes the name changes of *The Republicans* since 1946.

**Figure 4.6 Relabeling of *The Republicans***

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┌──────────────┐  1951   ┌──────────────────┐  1958   ┌──────────────────┐
│ Gaullist Union│ ──────> │Rally of the French│ ──────> │Union for the New │
│   (UG)       │         │  People (RPF)     │         │ Republic (UNR)   │
└──────────────┘         └──────────────────┘         └──────────────────┘

  1967  ┌──────────────────┐  1973  ┌──────────────────┐  1976  ┌──────────────────┐
─────>  │Union for the Defence│ ─────> │Union of Democrats│ ─────> │Rally for the Republic│
        │of the Republic (UDR)│       │for the Republic (UDR)│   │      (RPR)       │
        └──────────────────┘         └──────────────────┘         └──────────────────┘

  2002  ┌──────────────────┐  2015  ┌──────────────────┐
─────>  │Union for a Popular│ ─────> │ The Republicans  │
        │Movement (UMP)     │       │                  │
        └──────────────────┘         └──────────────────┘
```
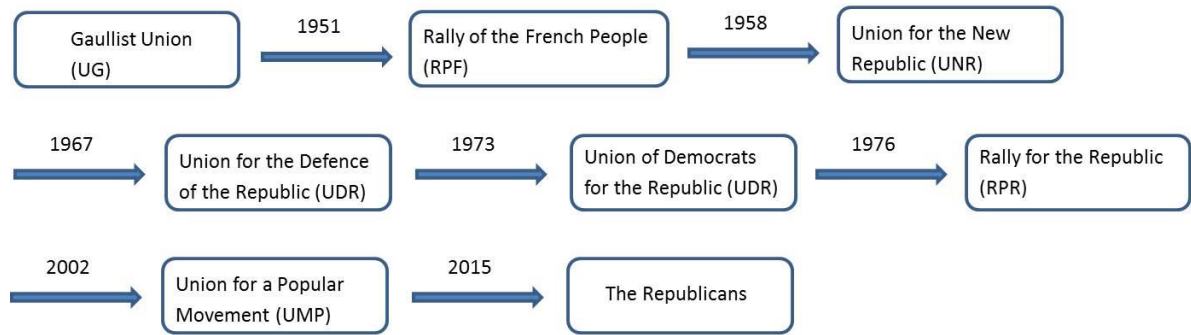
Besides The Republicans, the *National Front* (FN) is the only party on the right that is electorally viable[13]. The FN is a radical right founded in the late 1970s whose platform is strongly nationalistic, xenophobic, and anti-immigration. Based on the strong ideological identity, the FN has been able to develop information of its party brand. In the earlier period, the party was considered a party of ultra-racists similar to Neo-Nazi or Ku Klu Klux (*The Atlantic*, October 2013[14]). However, under the leadership of Marine Le

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[13] There was the National Centre of Independents and Peasants (CNIP) on the right whose previous name was the Moderates (M) for 1945-1946. However, the party disappeared after the 1962 election. Part of the party joined Independent Republicans (RI) and merged with the Gaullists and another subgroup of the RI joined the Union for the French Democracy (UDF) and later became part of the *MoDem*. There is a new party, the Movement for France (MPF) that appeared in the 2002 election but its performance in elections is too weak to be considered as a meaningful party.

[14] "The Devil's Daughter," *The Atlantic*, October 2013, Global.

Pen, a daughter of the founder of the party, Jean-Marie Le Pen, the party has been

growing so much that it is near to be considered as a mainstream party in France.

Marine Le Pen successfully rebranded her party by shedding its previous negative

images and appealing to the public with toned-down nationalistic agenda. The Atlantic

reports a rebranding package she undertook: purging the party of old-school diehards and

skinheads, promoting respectable young technocrats to management positions, and

taming its rhetoric. Unlike her father who denied the existence of the Holocaust, she

publicly condemned it. Through a series of modifications in identity and message but

without any name change, the FN has been successfully rebranded and enjoying its fruit

electorally. Unlike the Gaullists, the FN has a label with brand value.

### 4.2.2.2 Left

The parties on the left generally do not change their labels as frequently as the

Gaullist does. First of all, the *French Communist Party* (PCF) has never changed its name

since its foundation in 1920. The PCF was a well institutionalized and electorally strong

party from the 1930s to the mid-1970s as a party of working class (Sawicki 2013). Based

on its clear platform and strict party discipline, the PCF was the only viable party during

the time when the Fifth Republic was established (Bell 2000b; Cole 2008).

Besides the PCF, there are two more leftist parties to discuss. First, it is the

*Socialist Party* (PS), the current ruling party in France. In the earlier period of the Fifth

Republic, the PS was less viable than the PCF. In terms of organization, the PS did not

have well-structured organizations like many other parties on the right and the center and

in terms of ideology, it did not have clearly defined ideology yet. As mentioned above,

the party of the working class and proletariat was the PCF rather than the PS. The PS, instead, was considered to represent the public sector workers (Sawicki 2013). Signs of underdevelopment during this period are seen in the fact that the Socialist Party changed its labels a couple times. It was called the *French Section of the Workers' International* (SFIO) during 1945-1962, then the *Federation of the Democratic and Socialist Left* (FGDS) in 1967-1968, and finally the *Socialist Party* since then on.

Until the early 1970s, the relatively weak *Socialist Party* had to ally with the *Communist Party* in elections to take advantage of the organizational, ideological, and electoral strength of the *Communist Party*. However, things started changing since the 1970s after Francois Mitterrand took his leadership in the PS. Recognizing the party's necessity to change, he took thorough renovations in two important ways: one, internal organization and two, ideological frame (Sawicki 2013). Firstly, he officially allowed personal networks that each of the top PS members had as internal party organizations. Instead of letting the factional networks work behind the scenes, he institutionalized them and used them as campaign and collective decision-making tools represented at all levels of party operation (Gaffney 1990; Sawicki 2013). Secondly, Mitterrand rebuilt the party's ideology and redefined its core constituents that the party is committed to representing. The PS sought to expand the extent of its constituents by incorporating new interests of new groups of people in society that the PCF had failed to appeal to. These groups include the new salaried middle classes emerging from postwar socioeconomic changes, "new-proletariat" consisting of immigrants and their children, feminists, and ecologists (Safran 2009, pp. 97-100; Sawicki 2013, pp. 106-107). This organizational and programmatic renewal was so successful that the party came in to power in 1981 as

Mitterrand won the presidency and since then, it was the main party on the left that could compete against the Gaullists.

Lastly, there is the *Radical Party of the Left* (PRG). It began to enter elections in 1973 and has managed to earn less than 2% of the vote at the national level. Its original name was the *Movement of Radicals of the Left* (MRG) which lasted over 20 years since its foundation, 1973-1996. In 1997, the party discarded the original label and replaced it with the *Radical-Socialist Party* (PRS). However, after the 1997 legislative election the party undertook relabeling again and it got its current name then, the *Radical Party of the Left*. Figure 4.7 summarizes the name changes of the major parties on the left.

**Figure 4.7: Relabeling of the French Parties on the Left**

**(a) Socialist Party (PS)**

| French Section of the Workers' International (SFIO) | →1967→ | Federation of the Democratic and Socialist Left (FGDS) | →1968→ | Socialist Party (PS) |

**(b) Radical Party of the Left (PRG)**

| Movement of Radicals of the Left (MRG) | →1997→ | Radical-Socialist Party (PRS) | →2002→ | Radical Party of the Left (PRG) |
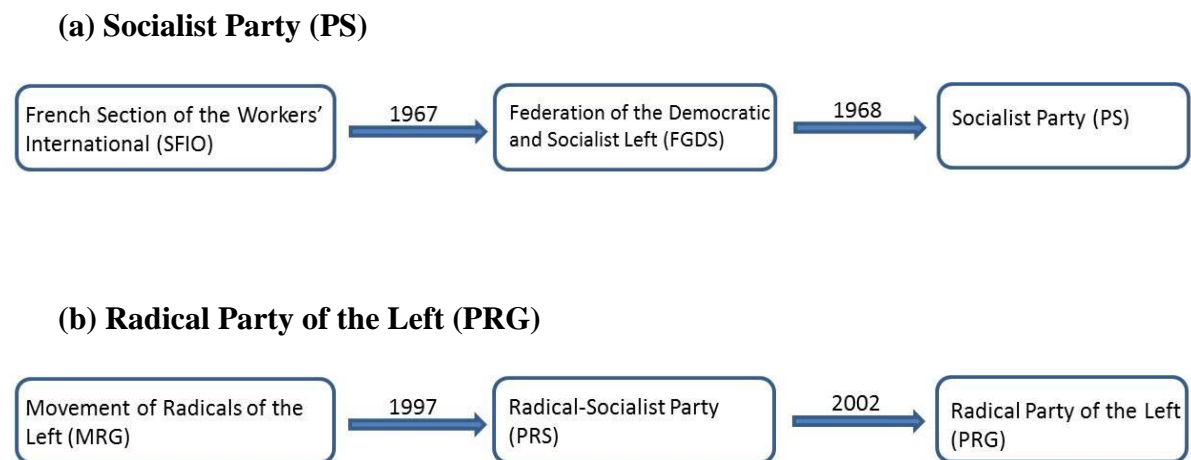
*4.2.2.3 Center*

By the end of the 1970s, the French party system got dominated by four major parties – the *Gaullist* on the right, the PS and PCF on the left, and the *Union for the French Democracy* (UDF) on the center. Since then however, the system evolved toward

a bipolar strongly represented by the *Gaullist* right and the *Socialist* left with the center

depleted (Sauger 2009, p. 82). The parties on the center went through several mergers

and splits and other organizational changes in order to survive the adverse circumstances.

For instance, the *Union for the French Democracy* (UDF) was formed in 1978 as

an "umbrella organization" representing several small centrist parties, including the

*Radical Party* (PR) and *Democratic Center* (CD) (Sauger 2009, p. 82). The UDF formed

alliances with the Gaullist right and other center-right parties throughout 1978 to 1997

elections. However, in the 2002 elections the party ran under its partially new banner, the

New Union for the French Democracy (New UDF). Then, five years later the party

undertook a wholesale name change and it obtained its current label, the *Democratic*

*Movement* (MoDem). Part of the New UDF elites who did not join the MoDem created

their own party, the New Centre (NC). The MoDem has re-emerged as a challenge to

bipolarization of the *Gaullist* right and the *Socialist* left along with other "anti-

establishment" parties such as the *Greens* (LV) and the far-right *National Front* (FN).

To provide a more accurate picture of party relabeling on the center, let us briefly

review how the two constitutive parties of the UDF – PR and CD – engaged in relabeling

prior to their joint-foundation of the UDF in 1978. The PR's first name was a long,

*Radical Party-Democratic and Socialist Union of the Resistance* (PR-UDSR) which

appeared in 1945. However, shortly after, it changed its name to the *Rally of Left*

*Republicans* (RGR) which was good for 1946 through 1958. After entering the Fifth

Republic, the party began to run under the new label, *Radical Party* (PR) but as joining

the creation of the UDF, the PR was put to an end. The *Democratic Centre* (CD) had a

shorter history than the PR. It first entered electoral politics in 1967 under the label,

*Progress and Modern Democracy* (PDM) but a few years later it was renamed to the

*Reforming Movement* (MR). Thus, before co-founding the UDF, the party experienced

two different labels for a short period of time. Figure 4.8 summarizes relabeling of the

parties on the center.

**Figure 4.8: Relabeling of the French Parties on the Center**

**(a) Radical Party (PR)**

| Radical Party-Democratic and Socialist Union of the Resistance (PR-UDSR) | →1946→ | Rally of Left Republicans (RGR) | →1962→ | Radical Party (PR) | →1978→ | Union for the French Democracy (UDF) |

**(b) Democratic Centre (CD)**

| Progress and Modern Democracy (PDM) | →1968→ | Reforming Movement (MR) | →1973→ | Democratic Centre (CD) | →1978→ | Union for the French Democracy (UDF) |

**(c) MoDem**
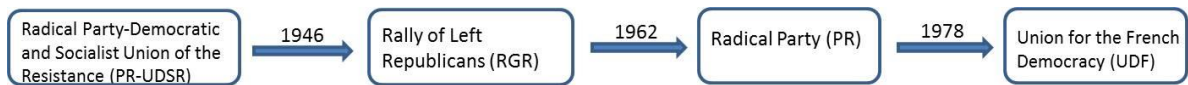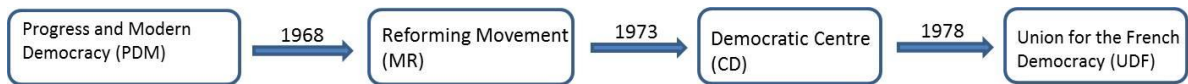
| Union for the French Democracy (UDF) | →2002→ | New UDF | →2007→ | Democratic Movement (MoDem) |

### 4.2.3 Taiwan and the United States

Taiwan and the United States despite a great deal of historical, institutional, and

cultural similarities shared with South Korea and France, respectively, have developed

parties with stable brand names. Taiwan has a stable two party system with the

*Kuomintang* (KMT, Chinese Nationalist Party) and *Democratic Progressive Party* (DPP)

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two leading parties and several other small parties. Taiwan, established by the KMT, has been dominated by the party throughout the authoritarian era and even after democratic transition with a brief interruption by the DPP. The DPP was created in the late 1980s and has been a strong party in opposition. It won the presidency twice through its candidate, Shui-bian Chen in 2000 and 2004 consecutively and it marked the end of the KMT domination in politics. However, the KMT has been managing so well that it has always been the majority in the Legislative Yuan and again in 2008 the party successfully returned to the presidency. In terms of party relabeling, neither of both parties has been relabeled even once. This goes the same to the other smaller parties. Unlike South Korean parties, those in Taiwan have built stable labels.

Similarly, the United States is a prototype of stable two-party system with the two major parties, the *Democratic* and the *Republican Parties*. As its effective number of parties in the system always stays in the 1.9-2.1 range[15], it is a system equally dominated by both parties characterized by no viable third party. In the earlier period of party system formation, the U.S. also experienced system instability caused by party reorganization, splits, emergence of new parties, etc. For instance, based on Aldrich (1995), there were two inchoate parties emerging in the first party system by about the Third Congress, the *Federalists* (or Hamiltonians) and the *Jeffersonian Republicans*. These parties evolved into the *Whig Party* and the *Jacksonian Democratic Party* as they underwent a profound organizational shift from the "cadre party" to the "mass party" (Duverger 1990). This was

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[15] Based on the 2012 Legislative Election results, the ENPP (Effective Number of Parliamentary Parties) is 1.98 and the ENEP (Effective Number of Electoral Parties) is 2.15.

the second party system that was settled around the 1840s. However by 1854, the two-party equilibrium broke down as the slavery issue surfaced. The *Whigs* collapsed and replaced by the *Republican Party* and a third party, *Know-Nothing Party* emerged. This unstable era was the third party system. However, later on the system resettled in a two-party system of the contemporary form with the *Democratic Party* and the *Republican Party*. With some programmatic modifications these parties have been leading American politics without any relabeling over one and a half centuries.

**4.3 How to Understand Party Relabeling in South Korea and France?**

Then, how do we understand frequent party name changes in South Korea and France and great stability of party labels in Taiwan and the United States? If we observe the patterns of party relabeling in both countries, it is revealed that the existing theories discussed in chapter 1 can explain a good deal of it. Firstly, the Weak-Party Hypothesis explains why the *Gaullist* party in France used to change its name more frequently in the earlier period of the Fifth Republic. As the French party system as a whole and the *Gaullists* were still in the inchoate stage by the late 1960s and the early 1970s, the *Gaullists* were more vulnerable to instability. Secondly, the Shock Hypothesis also explains many of the renaming incidents particularly well in South Korea. Much of the party relabeling was caused by disappointing electoral performances of the *Democratic Party* (with its so many variants).

I acknowledge that these existing theories perform quite well. However, there are still some limitations of these theories in explaining the stark differences between South Korea and Taiwan and France and the U.S. in their parties' engagement and

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disengagement in renaming. First, the Weak-Party Hypothesis cannot explain why it is the mainstream, large parties both in South Korea and France that keep changing their labels. The *Democratic Party* and its variants and the Gaullists are the ones engaging in a periodic label renewal instead of smaller, less viable parties in both countries. Moreover, at the system level the hypothesis cannot explain why France as an established party system has so many name-changing parties whereas the South Korean case can be understood with this theory given that it is a third-wave, new democracy.

Second, the Shock Hypothesis cannot explain some examples of name changes in the two countries. In many cases, the *Democratic Party* in South Korea and other parties as well undertook relabeling ahead of elections. It indicates that these parties *proactively* chose to change their name in a bid to win elections not merely as a *reaction* to poor electoral performance. By extending this theory to a system level, it reveals more serious weaknesses. It cannot explain why it is only French and South Korean parties that shed their old names and rebrand themselves in response to poor electoral performance given that in every system, in every election there are always winners and losers. In order for the Shock Hypothesis to hold, we should be able to identify name changes of those loser parties, especially those who have experienced catastrophic losses. However, as we discussed above, there is no single incident of such in Taiwan and the United States but only in South Korea and France. How do we understand it then?

The limitations of the existing theories altogether point to the need of a theory that sheds light on some macro-level factors that contribute to rendering a certain party system and its constitutive parties more vulnerable to shocks. Also, we need a theory that elucidates the factors explaining why parties in a particular system consider party

relabeling as an effective strategy, leading them to rely on it more heavily than those in other systems. I believe that the model that I proposed in chapter 2 satisfies this theoretical need quite well.

### 4.3.1 The Model in Brief

I argue that there are three system-level factors that lead a party to change its label frequently. These are the prominence of personalistic cues, hyper-political interest among the public, and high degree of centralization. Each of these factors individually does not have a force that is strong enough to drive a party to change its name. It is only when these three factors are combined that a party in such a system is put under huge pressure to relabeling. To recapitulate what was discussed in chapter 2, that is mainly because the first two factors tend to destabilize a party a lot when it is hit by internal and external shocks such as scandals and catastrophic electoral performance. Furthermore, a high degree of centralization aggravates this sensitivity or vulnerability of the party to shocks even more by making the political system as a whole winner-take-all. The national-election winners take all the benefits of the political system because subnational office does not matter in such a highly centralized system.

**Figure 4.9 New Model on Party Relabeling**

PERSONALISTIC PARTY CUE + HYPER-POLITICAL INTEREST IN THE ELECTORATE + CENTRALIZATION = **FREQUENT PARTY NAME CHANGES**

It is important to note that the three parts of the model proposed are necessary conditions for the high likelihood of party relabeling and therefore none of the three, taken alone, provides a sufficient condition for party relabeling to occur. To investigate the *combined* impact of personalistic party cue, hyper-political interest in the electorate, and centralization, I examine different combinations of these factors in a number of systems besides the four cases chosen for this research. There is one caveat in carrying out a brief comparative analysis. Unlike the first and the third factors, the "hyper-political interest in the electorate" is a particularly elusive concept to measure. For instance, it is arbitrary to put a threshold that determines high and low political interest in the electorate. Instead, similar to other political culture related variables, it makes more sense when it is measured in relative terms in comparison with other cases than in absolute terms. Therefore, in comparative analysis I will briefly provide here does not include this political interest dimension. Since my model stipulates that it is the combined impact of all the three elements that lead a party to carry out relabeling, this incomplete analysis can still provide valid implications. I will revisit this point shortly.

By including just two institutional elements of my model, we can have six different combinations, which is summarized in Table 4.1. As you can see in the table, the exclusion of "popular political interest" only matters in the shaded upper left cell. The rest of the cells lack at least one of the other requirements for frequent relabeling already and this makes the exclusion of the "political interest" variable not create any difference.

**Table 4.1 Typology, Predictions for Party Relabeling, and Examples**

| Level of Governmental Centralization | Party Information Cues | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Personalistic Cue | Ideological Cue | Clientelist Cue |
| Centralized | **Prediction** • Frequent party relabeling  **Cases** • South Korea, France | **Prediction** • No relabeling; stable system  **Cases** • U.K. | **Prediction** • No relabeling; stable system  **Cases** • Japan |
| Decentralized | **Prediction** • No relabeling but unstable system marked by frequent entry and exit of new parties  **Cases** • Spain | **Prediction** • No relabeling; stable system  **Cases** • U.S., Germany | **Prediction** • No relabeling; stable system  **Cases** • Taiwan, Brazil |

According to the table, it is noted that it is the type of political information cue that is prevalent in a system that is crucial in deciding the stability of party labels. All the four combinations – (1) Ideological cue & Decentralization, (2) Ideological cue & Centralization, (3) Clientelist cue & Decentralization, and (4) Clientelist cue & Centralization – are likely to result in stable party labels. It is because as discussed in depth in chapter 2 ideological and clientelist cues tend to accrue brand value to the party label unlike personalistic cues. From the perspective of a party, it is too costly and

inefficient a rebranding tactic to change its brand label, which is a long-term product. What makes a clear difference in the frequency of party relabeling is the prominence of personalistic cues. In this context, the second dimension – the level of governmental centralization – plays an important role.

Let us consider Spain as an example of a decentralized system with strong personalistic party cues. Spain is a highly decentralized system who is under chronic pressure of separatist movements and has a center-periphery cleavage to the fore of its politics. Thus, the prestige and benefit of subnational office is relatively high like other decentralized systems when compared to centralized political systems. Under this context, the intensity of politicians' motivation to win national office is weaker and sticking with a large national party is not a requirement for politicians to have access to diverse points of office benefit. Yet, the system's having strong personalistic cues give the political leaders lots of power, making the system vulnerable to entourage politics. However, what differs this system from the centralized, personalistic-cue-based system like South Korea and France is that the vortex of entourage politics is more diverse and diffuse across levels of government. This feature is more prone to party system instability characterized by chaotic entry and exit of new parties formed and dissolved by a handful of political bosses at their will (Colomé and López Nieto 1989). It is not necessary or viewed attractive for the parties to make rebranding effort. Simply leaving a malfunctioning old party and creating a new one takes much less effort than renovating and revitalizing through relabeling.

# CHAPTER 5 SOUTH KOREA AND TAIWAN

In this chapter, I apply my model to the South Korean and Taiwanese cases and test whether it works explaining them accurately. Using various types of data, I examine the differences between the two in terms of the prominence of personalistic party cues, levels of political interest in the public, and degrees of governmental centralization. In discussing each component of the model, I adopt a historical institutionalist approach, focusing on historical legacies and how they have led each country to the patterns that they took. My model predicts that South Korea scores higher in these three indicators than Taiwan and South Korea provides an environment where parties are encouraged to change their label more often than their Taiwanese counterparts. The findings of empirical analysis in this chapter generally support the proposed model.

## 5.1. Prominence of Personalistic Party Cues in South Korea

### 5.1.1 Entourage Politics

Of the three types of party information cues developed by Kitschelt – ideological, clientelist, and personalistic party cues, personalistic cues prevail in South Korea. A handful of charismatic politicians "represent" their parties. More accurately put, leaders themselves are parties (Geir Helgesen cited in Steinberg and Shin 2006). This characteristic enables political bosses to function as useful information cues in electoral politics; their partisanship *per se* provides voters with quite clear information on the parties' identity and organizational features. Their career path in politics such as history

of partisanship and experience in government accredit these charismatic leaders with some form of established reputation. This reputation is largely based on the leader's standing concerning the three most salient issue cleavages in Korean politics: democracy versus authoritarian regime, economic justice (distribution) versus development, and populist reunification versus conservative reunification (Choi 1993). As these three cleavages were products of authoritarian rule before its democratic transition in South Korea, they are closely related to each other. They are in fact correlated to the extent that an individual's stance on any one of the cleavages predetermines his/her positions on the other two. This point is addressed in the rest of this section in detail.

South Korea was under authoritarian reign for more than four decades after its liberation from the Japanese colonial rule in 1945. Until its democratic transition in 1987, South Korean politics were characterized by the lack of rule of law and continuous abrupt constitutional amendments and institutional changes at the sole discretion of dictators. During this period, the one and only ideology that governed the country was anti-communism. Anti-communism was a useful ideological tool that the authoritarian regimes utilized to build their legitimacy and stifle political dissensions which called for more democratic ruling. This ideology was so dominant in every aspect of society that the fear of communism or "red complex" and the resulting constant threat of national security legitimized the authoritarian rule and effectively hindered the emergence of leftist parties (Choi 1993; Kil 2001). For instance, from its beginning of the First Republic, Syngman Rhee's regime enacted the National Security Law that gave the government complete freedom to oppress any political opposition by using coercive

powers.[16] Another example is the enactment of the Political Purification Law in 1962 by which a number of pro-democratic activists and politicians were incarcerated, tortured, and any form of political activity was banned.

Despite harsh political repression, however, there always existed pro-democratic activists and parties in opposition to authoritarianism. Even democratic movements from citizens arose from time to time, often triggered by incidents of severe human rights violations committed by the government. For instance, the Democratic Revolution of April 19th or 4/19 Revolution occurred in 1960 where anti-government movements spread throughout the country in objection to fraudulent elections, illegal constitutional amendments, and harsh oppression of demonstrators in the streets by police force. The critical incident that mobilized a large number of students, professors, and citizens along

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[16] The National Security Law is still in effect in South Korea. The purpose of the law is to protect and preserve the democratic values of South Korean government particularly against the threat of North Korea and communism. It defines any activity that praises or defends the North Korean regime, communicates with North Korea, and defames the South Korean government as treason. Under this law, a tremendous number of pro-democratic and anti-government activists such as intellectuals, students, and workers have been arrested and persecuted. The recent example of the violation of the National Security Law is the nine-year sentence of Sok-ki Lee, former MP of the Unified Progressive Party and the party's disbandment for his alleged involvement in a rebellion conspiracy with pro-North Korean groups on January 22nd, 2015 (*Donga Ilbo* January 23, 2015: p. 5). The necessity and legitimacy of this law are one of the hotly debated political issues in South Korea.

the course of the revolution was the death of an innocent boy by the police force (*Donga Ilbo* April 17, 2010).

Along the course of struggle toward democratization there emerged a handful of charismatic politicians in the pro-democratic opposition that represent each of their parties and ideological blocs. Examples include the three Kims, Kim Young-sam, Kim Dae-jung, and Kim Jong-pil, the former two of whom were later elected to presidents after democratization. The so-called the "era of the three Kims" exemplifies the prominence of personalistic party cues in Korean politics. This refers to the 1980s-90s period when the three charismatic political leaders dominated Korean politics as competing and cooperating with each other (Hellmann 2011: 37-40; Heo and Stockton 2005). During this period, these figures each led the three most influential parties. Kim Young-sam was elected to president in 1992 and Kim Dae-jung in 1997 with his alliance with Kim Jong-pil. These leaders were so politically influential that small parties and factions besides the three major parties there was no chance they could win the most important political offices. These small parties called for the end of the era of the three Kims in unison, criticizing the situation as "boss" politics (The National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea 2009b).

The three Kims enjoyed strongholds in the regions where they were originally from. This is the origin of regionalism in Korean politics which largely characterizes Korean politics even today. For instance, Kim Young-sam had his regional bastion in the southeastern region of the country; Kim Dae-jung was supported strongly in the southwestern part of the country and Kim Jong-pil the central region below Seoul and metropolitan area. The regional divides represented by the Kims are shown in the uneven

distribution of the votes they and their parties received across regions in the legislative

and presidential elections in the 1990s.

**Table 5.1: National Assembly Election Results (1992-2004)**

| | 1992 | | | | 1996 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | DLP | DP | UPP | Others | NKP | NCNP | ULD | Others |
| Seoul | 16 | 25 | 2 | 1 | 27 | 18 | 0 | 2 |
| Busan | **15** | 0 | 0 | 1 | **21** | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Daegu | **8** | 0 | 2 | 1 | **2** | 0 | 8 | 3 |
| Incheon | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Gwangju | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **6** | 0 | 0 |
| Daejeon | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 |
| Gyeonggi-do | 18 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 18 | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| Gangwon-do | 8 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Chungcheongbuk-do | 6 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 1 |
| Chungcheongnam-do | 7 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 12 | 0 |
| Jeollabuk-do | 2 | **12** | 0 | 0 | 1 | **13** | 0 | 0 |
| Jeollanam-do | 0 | **19** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **17** | 0 | 0 |
| Gyeongsangbuk-do | **14** | 0 | 2 | 5 | **11** | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Gyeongsangnam-do | **16** | 0 | 3 | 4 | **17** | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Jeju-do | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| PR | 31 | 23 | 7 | 0 | 18 | 13 | 9 | 6 |

| | 2000 | | | | 2004 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GNP | MDP | ULD | Others | GNP | Uri | DLP | Others |
| Seoul | 17 | 28 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 32 | 0 | 0 |
| Busan | **17** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **17** | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Daegu | **11** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **12** | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Incheon | 5 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| Gwangju | 0 | **5** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **7** | 0 | 0 |
| Daejeon | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Gyeonggi-do | 18 | 22 | 1 | 0 | 14 | 35 | 0 | 0 |
| Gangwon-do | 3 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Chungcheongbuk-do | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| Chungcheongnam-do | 0 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 4 |
| Jeollabuk-do | 0 | **9** | 0 | 1 | 0 | **11** | 0 | 0 |
| Jeollanam-do | 0 | **11** | 0 | 2 | 0 | **7** | 0 | 6 |
| Gyeongsangbuk-do | **16** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **19** | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Gyeongsangnam-do | **20** | 0 | 0 | 1 | **15** | 3 | 2 | 1 |

| | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jeju-do | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| PR | 21 | 19 | 5 | 1 | 21 | 23 | 8 | 0 |

Source: Nemoto (2009), p. 207.

Note: DLP = Democratic Liberal Party; DP = Democratic Party; UPP = Unification People's Party; NKP = New Korea Party; NCNP = National Congress for New Politics; ULD = United Liberal Democrats; GNP = Grand National Party; MDP = Millennium Democratic Party; Uri = Uri Party; DLP = Democratic Labor Party.

## Table 5.2: Presidential Election Results (1992-2002)[17]

| | 1992 | | 1997 | | 2002 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Kim Young-sam | Kim Dae-jung | Lee Hoi-chang | Kim Dae-jung | Lee Hoi-chang | Roh Moo-hyun |
| Seoul | 36.41 | 37.74 | 40.89 | 44.87 | 44.95 | 51.3 |
| Busan | **73.34** | 12.52 | **53.33** | 15.28 | **66.74** | 29.85 |
| Daegu | **59.59** | 7.82 | **72.65** | 12.53 | **77.75** | 18.67 |
| Incheon | 37.26 | 31.74 | 36.4 | 38.51 | 44.56 | 49.82 |
| Gwangju | 2.13 | **95.84** | 1.71 | **97.28** | 3.57 | **95.17** |
| Daejeon | 35.19 | 28.73 | 29.17 | 45.02 | 39.82 | 55.09 |
| Ulsan | N/A | N/A | **51.35** | 15.41 | 52.87 | 35.27 |
| Gyeonggi-do | 36.33 | 31.97 | 35.54 | 39.28 | 44.18 | 50.65 |
| Gangwon-do | 41.51 | 15.51 | 43.19 | 23.76 | 52.48 | 41.51 |
| Chungcheongbuk-do | 38.26 | 26.04 | 30.79 | 37.43 | 42.89 | 50.41 |
| Chungcheongnam-do | 36.93 | 28.54 | 23.51 | 48.25 | 41.22 | 52.15 |
| Jeollabuk-do | 5.67 | **89.13** | 4.54 | **92.28** | 6.19 | **91.58** |
| Jeollanam-do | 4.2 | **92.15** | 3.19 | **94.61** | 4.62 | **93.38** |
| Gyeongsangbuk-do | **64.72** | 9.62 | **61.92** | 13.66 | **73.46** | 21.65 |
| Gyeongsangnam-do | **72.31** | 9.23 | **55.14** | 11.04 | **67.52** | 27.08 |
| Jeju-do | 39.97 | 32.92 | 36.59 | 40.57 | 39.93 | 56.05 |

Source: National Election Commission, Korea

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[17] Only top two candidates are included.

With the aura and solid regional support, these political bosses themselves were parties. With them at the apex of party organizations their followers and rank-and-file politicians are gathered to achieve their goals. Referring to this, Steinberg and Shin (2006) describe Korean party politics as politics of entourages. In fact, the fate of parties is largely contingent upon the decisions of the bosses. For instance, when the leader leaves the party and forms a new one, most of the time the abandoned one gets dissolved shortly after the leader's departure. This is because the majority of the party members are gathered and followed around the leader (Heo and Stockton 2005). Some critiques thus argue that parties in South Korea are merely functional vehicles that the political leaders use to gain access to power (See, e.g. Hellmann 2011a, 2011b; Heo and Stockton 2005; Stockton 2001). Ironically however, it also leads us to believe that although a number of parties have been formed, dissolved, and relabeled, there has been a considerable degree of continuity in party identity and organization because voters and supporters follow the leaders (Hellmann 2011, p. 37). It is mostly the same group of people who switches to the new party created by their leader, meaning that the same leader, same members remain but under the new label. This makes us come to a conclusion that the common critique on the Korean party system characterized by a chaotic exit and entry of parties is not reasonable (Stockton 2001).

How does it affect the voters in South Korea? Korean voters heavily rely on personalistic party cues, for instance, by locating where these charismatic leaders are when identifying parties and orienting the parties' ideological positions. This view was confirmed during my interview with a journalist that I had in South Korea in March 2014.

She pointed out the fact that historically political parties in South Korea used to be vehicles for a handful of well known, charismatic politicians to meet their political ambition. In addition, voters too tend to equate these figures with their parties.

> These leaders formed parties basically for their personal ambition. If we look carefully at the history of Korean party politics, we can find a pattern that parties were formed, dissolved and relabeled following leadership change as these charismatic leaders either entered or left the parties. In short, the life span of a party is completely up to the leader's decision. Voters also conform to this tendency of politicians. They identify parties with their leaders or vice versa. For example, people tend to think of the Saenuri Party as the Park Geun-hye Party, the Justice Party as the Shim Sang-jung Party, or the Progressive Party as the Lee Jung-hee Party and so on. What the general public is interested in is not what policies Saenuri Party or Democratic Party has recently promoted and on which points regarding a particular issue the parties converge and diverge. Instead, people are more interested in Ahn Chul-soo[18] said what or so and so did what, etc.

Additionally, because of the voters' heavy reliance on personalistic cues parties in South Korea are given few options in rebranding themselves. If they make some

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[18] Ahn Chul-soo was a strong presidential candidate during the 2012 presidential electoral campaign but later on he formed a pre-electoral alliance with Moon Jae-In, a candidate from the Democratic Party. The purpose of the alliance was to beat the candidate from the ruling party, Park Geun-hye by consolidating the support divided between Ahn and Moon who share common ideologies and programs.

programmatic changes to an extent that it could be considered as rebranding, it is often that these programmatic changes accompany other cosmetic or visual changes as well such as name changes, recruitment of new renowned figures into the parties' leadership position, or leadership change. These visual changes strongly signal there is considerable change within the parties. An interview with the official of the *Justice Party* corroborates this point.

> Parties in South Korea do not have many choices with which to be upgraded. It is embarrassing to tell you but it is an undeniable fact that the only two valid tools that we can use for upgrading ourselves are party relabeling and recruiting figures that are already well-known and well respected in the public. Besides these, I don't see any other options left to us. The interesting thing is such cosmetic touch-ups actually work in the electorate. People view these touch-ups mean something that is not only symbolic but also substantive.

### 5.1.2 Personalistic Cues on the Three Main Issue Cleavages

As mentioned above, South Korea's experience of dictatorship has created the three main issue cleavages: democracy versus authoritarian regime, economic justice versus development, and populist versus conservative reunification (Choi 1993). The confrontational relationships between the regime and pro-democratic opposition lasted until the end of the 20[th] century as discussed above. This in turn renders the "democracy versus authoritarian regime" still the most salient issue cleavage in current Korean politics (Choi 1993; Steinberg and Shin 2006). In today's politics, the "authoritarian" camp is composed of the parties that were the heirs of the traditional ruling parties or

ancient regime. Currently, the *Saenuri Party* represents this camp. They stand for conservatism representing the right-wing of Korean politics. The "pro-democratic" camp, on the other hand, is composed of parties that have been in opposition of the authoritarian regime prior to democratization and they are the left wing. Currently, there are the *New Politics Alliance for Democracy* and the *Justice Party* in this camp.

Although Korea has been successfully transitioned to democracy and furthering democratic consolidation since 1987, the division between historically opposing and ruling camps defines large portion of political debates during election campaigns. For instance, in the 2012 presidential election, the most debated issue was the legitimacy of Park Geun-hye as a presidential candidate of the Saenuri Party because of the fact that she is a daughter of Park Jung-hee, former president, a long-term dictator during the military authoritarian regime. During campaigns, the candidates of the other parties, Moon Jae-in and Lee Jung-hee questioned Park's legitimacy and raised lots of issues caused by human rights violations, political repressions, and corruption under late Park's authoritarian regime. Particularly, this "democracy versus authoritarianism" sharply divided the presidential candidates into two groups on the TV debates; Park Geun-hye in the authoritarian, right-wing camp versus Moon Jae-in and Lee Jung-hee in the pro-democratic, left-wing camp (*Hankyung* December 11, 2012; *Seoul Shinmun* December 11, 2012: p. 3).

The second cleavage, economic justice versus development draws a line between those advocating equitable distribution of the wealth and those emphasizing efficiency and growth at the expense of egalitarian values. This issue dimension is a direct product of state-driven economic development that South Korea undertook during the

authoritarian regime. Some refers to the Korean economic model as authoritarian

developmentalism (Choi 1993, p. 24). Its crux was the state-led economic planning and

implementing to achieve national security and economic prosperity through export-

oriented industrialization (see, Johnson 1987; World Bank 1993). Through the

interventionist model, South Korea achieved rapid economic growth at an average rate of

8-10% annually for almost three decades. Due to its miraculous development, South

Korea was celebrated as an exemplary model that developing countries were advised to

follow.

However, this success was not possible without sacrificing economic justice by

concentrating an enormous amount of resources on a few big business owners, later

known as *chaebols* (big conglomerates). *Chaebols* enjoyed preferential access to a variety

of financial, legal, and administrative benefits channeled through the authoritarian state.

A "development first" logic justified severe exploitation of the labor force and oppression

of the demands for better welfare, better working conditions, and redistribution of wealth

(Choi 1993, p. 30). As a result of the emphasis on development and efficiency against

just distribution, entering the 1970s there have occurred a number of workers' strikes and

labor groups closely collaborated with pro-democratic political parties and activists,

which often developed the labor-owner disputes into democratic movements (Koo 1993).

This implies the nexus of the "democracy versus authoritarian regime" and the

"economic justice versus development" cleavages.

In fact, the right wing subscribes to the development-oriented economic ideology

that is more market-oriented and liberal whereas the left wing supports equitable

redistribution such policies as universal childcare subsidies and more strict regulations on

*chaebols*. By comparing the manifestos of the three main parties in South Korea, one can easily note that this economic cleavage remains to be highly relevant in current politics. Interestingly in the 2012 presidential election all three parties converged to a left-leaning economic policy, emphasizing the importance of economic democratization and welfare provision. However, it is convention that there is a clear division among the parties along the "economic justice versus development" cleavage in South Korea.

**Table 5.3: Party Manifestos on Economic Justice vs. Development in the 16th-18th Presidential Elections in South Korea**

| | Saenuri Party | NPAD | Justice Party |
|---|---|---|---|
| 16th Presidential Election, 2004[a] | • Rapid economic growth through strengthening development potentials<br>• To create jobs as a way to narrow income gaps and enhance welfare | • To establish just market orders through *chaebol* reform and enhanced labor-business relations<br>• To create jobs through market expansion in Northeast Asian region (China, North Korea) | • Higher income tax rates on the wealthy<br>• To strengthen the domestic market through equitable redistribution |
| 17th Presidential Election, 2008[b] | • To provide friendly environment to businesses for job creation and welfare | • To aid small, medium-sized firms for creation of quality jobs | • Government guarantees stable employment |
| 18th Presidential Election, 2012[c] | • To establish just market orders by correcting abnormality in the market | • To achieve balanced development of big & small, medium-sized firms<br>• To aid local businesses | • To convert temporary employment to permanent employment<br>• To increase minimum wage |

Sources: a) Ahn (2004); b) Park and Jang (2008); c) Wee (2012) and various sources (websites of each party)

Now, let us turn to the last issue cleavage: Inter-Korean relations, populist unification versus conservative unification. Debates over inter-Korean relations are deeply imbedded in every aspect of Korean society, not to mention politics (Chubb 2014). The issue is so divisive that it often creates contentious reactions from the public. When it comes to North Korean-related issues such as national security imposed by North Korea's missile or unclear weapon threat, human rights in North Korea, and unification, the Korean politics diverge into two camps: more adamant approach or conservative unification approach versus more lenient or populist unification approach.

Similar to the economic cleavage discussed above, this issue cleavage is closely related to the democracy versus authoritarianism dimension as well. From the beginning, the South Korean government was established firmly based on anti-communism by defining North Korea as a major threat (Choi 1993; Kil 2001). This antagonism and ideological tensions between the two Koreas further intensified after the Korean War in 1950-53 domestically and as undergoing the Cold War internationally. As mentioned previously, anti-communism fused closely with authoritarian rule in South Korea prior to its democratic transition. The state used coercive powers under the name of protecting national security, which allowed the regime to oppress all political oppositions and dissidents effectively by labeling them as communists or the "Reds" (Chubb 2014, p. 18). This makes the oppositional movements driven by a set of interrelated beliefs: democratization, populist unification, and human rights issues in North Korea. For this reason, the right wing subscribes to conservative unification that takes a more uncompromising, hardline stance on North Korea whereas the left wing pursues populist unification with more lenient and engaging approaches.

The schism between the two camps results in the oscillation of the South's North Korean policy between the liberal and hardline poles depending on which party rules. For instance, between 1998 and 2007 when Presidents Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun were in charge they adopted liberal policy, named the "Sunshine Policy" toward North Korea. Both of them having background as long-time pro-democratic and human rights activists approached North Korea in a manner that is remarkably different than the previous right-wing regimes (see, Cho 2008; Chubb 2014). The Sunshine Policy is summarized as an effort to approach North Korea amicably in order to promote cooperation between the two and channel the North to open and engage with the world through aids and various programs (Kim J. 2003). However, the North Korean policy flipped back to a conservative approach as Lee Myung-bak from the right-wing party became president. His main policy frame was zero tolerance to nuclear weapons development by the North and containment of the North if they are not cooperative in close collaboration with the United States and Japan (Byon 2011).

In sum, the three main political cleavages in South Korea are closely interrelated as if they indicated a single overarching dimension. By definition, a handful of charismatic political leaders have high name recognition and their ideological stance on these three issues is clearly known to the public. Hence, by identifying to which parties these bosses belong voters can have a pretty accurate assessment of the parties' ideological orientation. In short, the leader' reputation is automatically transmitted to the party and coats, defines the party's image. For this reason, a party label per se does not contain much brand knowledge of the party but the personalistic cues that the leader of the party provides are meaningful in South Korean politics.

### 5.1.3 Underdevelopment of Ideological Party Cues

Parties in South Korea as one of the third-wave democracies have not fully developed clear ideological platforms that are distinct from one another. Some argue that the lack of clear ideological programs in parties is not limited to South Korea but is common among third-wave democracies (Hellmann 2011b). It is because while the first-wave democratization was a gradual process taking place over a stretched period of time the third-wave democratization was a sudden transition. This left parties not sufficient time to develop ideological platforms and create ties with a section of the electorate who they represent. This point is clear in the South Korean case as there is only one issue dimension that divides the political arena was the pro-regime or opposition. Although this dimension is composed of three sub-categories as discussed above, it is not sophisticated enough for parties to differentiate themselves from one another. Further, as democracy gets consolidated in South Korea after its transition in the late 20th century, this pro-regime versus opposition frame loses its relevance gradually. Unfortunately however, there is no alternative ideological cleavage that defines party politics in South Korea.

The underdevelopment of ideological cues across the parties in South Korea is well manifested in media criticizing the lack of meaningful ideological debates and pledges in election campaigns. For instance, on April 11, 2012 *Chosun Ilbo* reported that "in the legislative election campaigns this year, one can hardly find debates over party platforms and candidates but conflicts and meaningless quarrels over the vague ideological division between the left and the right."

Besides being a third-wave democracy, inter-Korean relations as a result of the Korean War and Cold War contribute to hindering the pluralism of ideology in Korea. Under the aegis of the National Security Law or the Ideological Purification Act, left-leaning ideologies or any oppositional ideas have been suppressed by labeling as communism (Choi 1993; Steinberg and Shin 2006). This results in extreme ideological rigidity, placing all parties on the right side of the ideological spectrum with the left side almost empty. Extreme leftist parties, communist parties, and their leaders were all purged earlier in the authoritarian regime. The "red complex" is still so palpable that the Justice Party, the only leftist party that has seats in the legislature is often stigmatized as "commies." Also, social democratic economic policy and generous redistributive policy easily get rejected because the majority of South Koreans view they are too "red."

One clear example that shows this ideological rigidity is recent debates over the free school lunch program that started since 2010. This program was to provide free lunches to all students in elementary, middle, and high schools. However, governor of Gyeongnam Province recently announced to stop this program due to the lack of funding to finance it. This decision sharply divided public opinion in that region. Those who opposed the government's decision were mobilized and campaigned against it but the provincial government and its supporters criticized them as pro-North Korea, communist mobs (*Hangyore* April 1, 2015: p. 31).

This same logic was also found in my interview with a member of the National Assembly, who is from the main opposition party, the NPAD. Addressing my question why parties so commonly change names in South Korea, he said:

Honestly speaking, there are not big differences across parties in Korea in terms of ideology. Of course, this does not mean that they are the same but what I am saying is the ideological spectrum of our party politics is very limited. Anything we propose that deviates from the norm of our society which is center-conservatism is labeled as communist or pro-North Korean. It is not only the right-wing politicians but also the majority of the people subscribe to this idea. So, for us to win votes we move slightly toward the right. And this results in less distinguishable policy from the Saenuri Party. It is not just us. All parties in Korea have not developed emblematic ideological programs yet on which they are anchored. Instead, they modify their platforms and electoral pledges from time to time accommodating public opinion – populist. You saw that in the 2012 elections, the Saenuri Party stole most of the welfare agenda that the Justice Party used to claim for… Thus, the party labels themselves are not very important because they don't provide clear information about the party's ideology. We change names when we see it is necessary. This lack of ideology is a big part of the story.

In sum, the prevalence of personalistic party cues combined with underdeveloped ideological party cues is responsible for frequent party name changes in South Korea. In the following section, I discuss the Taiwanese case where clientelist party cues are prominent rather than personalistic ones. I discuss the factors that lead to the prominence of clientelist cues in Taiwan and analyze how this feature leads to parties with stable brand names by comparing it with the South Korean case.

### 5.1.4 Taiwan: Prominence of Clientelist Party Cues

Unlike South Korea, Taiwanese voters resort more to clientelist party cues than personalistic cues. The *Kuomintang* (KMT) has dominated Taiwanese politics for the entire postwar era. Even after its democratic transition in 1991, the KMT has been mostly in charge with a brief interruption of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) winning the majority of seats in the Legislative Yuan. What makes the Taiwanese experience of democratic transition interesting is that it is the authoritarian regime, the KMT which led the country to democratization. The transition process of Taiwan was institutionalized through the channeling of the KMT whereas that of South Korea was radical and contentious led by citizens and political activists outside institutionalized channels such as parties (Hellmann 2011a, 2011b; Rigger 1999; Lee Y. 2014). This continuity of the KMT's dominance resulted in party-based politics rather than boss-based and this, in turn, made possible parties with strong, stable labels responsible for zero party relabeling in Taiwan.

The Taiwanese government was established by Chiang Kai-shek the leader of the KMT and his followers from the mainland China. Mao Zedong's Chinese Communist Party defeated the KMT in the Civil War that broke out in the 1920s and declared a communist state, People's Republic of China in 1949. This led Chiang Kai-shek and his KMT members to retreat to Taiwan and established its own government in exile, the Republic of China. These politicians from the mainland, thus called "mainlanders", dominated Taiwanese politics despite the fact that they were a minority in number over the native Taiwanese (see, Rigger 1999). For this reason, the KMT regime was based on

the "one-China" principle that their government on Taiwan is part of bigger Chinese state and the ultimate goal of the regime was to achieve peaceful unification with the mainland China (Chu and Lin 1996; Rigger 1999). This principle legitimized the dominance of mainlanders in politics. The members of the Legislative Yuan enjoyed life-time permanent seats; there were no elections until 1986 when the Legislative Yuan needed to fill some vacancies caused by deaths of some of the older members (Rigger 2014).

The dominance of the mainlanders came in at the expense of the Taiwanese natives. The Taiwanese were excluded not only from politics but also from the economy. Taiwan as one of the four East Asian Tigers[19] achieved miraculous economic prosperity at an unprecedented pace under the reign of the KMT party-state. In this process however, the Taiwanese natives were excluded. For fear of the growth of the Taiwanese natives in terms of political and economic influence, the KMT government intentionally concentrated its resources and energy on the hands of mainlanders who composed a mere fraction of the total population on the island. For this ruthless alienation of Taiwanese from the state, many Taiwanese natives viewed the "KMT-led government as an outsider regime imposed on Taiwan without regard for the preferences of the Taiwanese people" (Rigger 2014, p. 115).

This underlying tension between the ruling and the ruled gradually surfaced and got set as the most fundamental political cleavage in Taiwan (Chu and Lin 1996; Rigger 1999). A popular demand for democracy got intertwined with ethnic conflicts between Taiwanese and mainlanders, national identity between Taiwanization and sinicization, and economic redistribution (Chu 1992). The demand for political and economic reform

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[19] The East Asian Tigers refer to Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

in Taiwan was articulated in the opposition movement, named the *dangwai* (outside the party) movement, which later became the foundation the DPP. This division between the KMT and the DPP along the national identity, ethnic justice, and cross-strait relations remains to be extremely salient to this day. The salience of this cleavage is clearly manifested in Tables 3 through 5 which display correlations of ethnicity/national identity and partisanship in Taiwan.

**Table 5.4: Ethnicity and Partisanship in Taiwan**

| Party | Father's Ethnicity | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | Taiwanese | Mainlander |
| KMT | 358 | 78 |
| % of row | 81.55% | 17.77% |
| % of column | 55.68% | 96.30% |
| DPP | 285 | 3 |
| % of row | 98.96% | 1.04% |
| % of column | 44.32% | 3.70% |

Source: Rigger (2014), p. 117

Note: This is based on the Taiwan Elections and Democratization Study, 2008

Table 3 uses "father's ethnicity" as a measure of ethnic identity and how it has patterned relationships with an individual's partisanship in Taiwan based on the Taiwan Elections and Democratization Study, 2008 (Rigger 2014). It reveals interesting findings. First of all, the DPP has solid support from the Taiwanese as 98.96% of the supporters are Taiwanese whereas only 1.04% of the mainlanders identify themselves with the DPP. However, the KMT shows a quite different story. The party also enjoys strong support of the Taiwanese; over 80% of its supporters are Taiwanese. In fact, the more number of the

Taiwanese sympathize with the KMT (55.68%) than the DPP (44.32%). However, if we
look at the distribution of the mainlanders in partisanship, it clearly shows that the vast
majority of the mainlanders are affiliated with the KMT (96.3%).

**Table 5.5: Self-National ID and Partisanship in Taiwan**

| Party | Self-National Identification | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Taiwanese | Both | Chinese |
| KMT | 111 | 293 | 34 |
| | 25.34% | 66.89% | 7.76% |
| DPP | 224 | 56 | 6 |
| | 78.32% | 19.58% | 2.10% |

Source: Rigger (2014), p. 127

Note: This is based on the Taiwan Elections and Democratization Study, 2008; Chi-square score = 205.0871, p = .000.

**Table 5.6: Unification-Independence and Partisanship in Taiwan**

| | Immediate unification | Unification later | Status Quo | Independence later | Immediate independence |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| KMT | 17 | 86 | 307 | 19 | 4 |
| | 3.93% | 19.86% | 70.9% | 4.39% | 0.92% |
| DPP | 4 | 18 | 121 | 87 | 44 |
| | 1.46% | 6.57% | 44.16% | 31.75% | 16.06% |

Source: Rigger (2014), p. 128

Note: This is based on the Taiwan Elections and Democratization Study, 2008; Chi-square score = 205.0871, p = .000.

Table 5.5 shows a pronounced relationship between national identity and partisanship in Taiwan. The DPP supporters predominantly responded they regard themselves as Taiwanese whereas the KMT counterparts turn out to have more ambiguous, dual national identity considering themselves as both Taiwanese and Chinese. The findings in Table 5.6 corroborate the similar implications. The KMT supporters are more skeptical about the idea of being independent from the mainland China than the DPP sympathizers. On the contrary, the former group is more comfortable with having unification with the mainland than is the latter.

In short, the ethnic cleavage defines Taiwanese politics just as the pro-regime versus opposition dimension characterizes party competition in South Korea. However, there are several factors that allowed Taiwan to develop clientelist party cues rather than personalistic cues. First, it lies in the fact that Taiwan had perfect authoritarianism, which is often referred to as the "White Terror" (Rigger 1999). The White Terror is the period of martial law from 1946 to 1987 during which political opposition was almost completely suppressed. Second, the uninterrupted exercise of local elections since the establishment of the Republic of China provided local politicians with incentives to build their personal clientelist networks.

Unlike South Korea, the KMT party-state enjoyed perfect authoritarianism. Neither did it face any serious opposition in the political arena nor dissention from the citizens after several aborted anti-regime movements in the late 1940s and early 1950s. It was only entering the 1970s when a popular demand for political and economic reform emerged (Rigger 2014). Further, under the shadow of the White Terror no political

parties and activity were allowed to form. This left not enough room for influential

figures to grow out of dissidents and made political mobilization extremely unlikely. In

short, political opposition was completely stifled. This leaves a legacy that political

culture of Taiwan is much less contentious than that of South Korea (Lee Y. 2014).

This does not mean that there was no opposition at all. As briefly mentioned

above, there was the *dangwai* movement which was composed of non-KMT activists. It

gained momentum; its political influence grew entering the 1970s and finally it formed

the DPP in 1986. However, with no national elections where parties could compete with

one another, the *dangwai* or later the DPP was not a real threat to the KMT regime.

Additionally, from the perspective of citizens the opposition was not a viable alternative

vis-à-vis the KMT regime. Simply put, the absence of elections for the most important

political office in Taiwan did not allow a fertile ground from which influential political

figures could grow at the national level.

Second, the fact that the KMT party-state allowed local elections facilitated the

development of clientelist party cues. As mentioned previously, the KMT politicians

were able to maintain their power over a long period of time although they were a

minority ethnic group. Of course, this was possible because Taiwan was an authoritarian

state. However, Taiwan's having local elections created some unexpected consequences

that were conducive to the development of clientelist party cues. The local elections were

mainly contests within the KMT; there were no opposition parties and very few

independent candidates competing but these individuals were not viable (Rigger 1999).

Furthermore, its electoral system, the single non-transferable voting (SNTV) system,

intensified the KMT's intraparty competition. In the SNTV system, voters are allowed to cast a vote for a single favorite candidate in a district whose magnitude is two or more.

As the district magnitude is large under this system, it is common that large, mainstream parties field more than one candidate per district, which leads to competition within the party. This mechanism is infamous for fostering intraparty factions and intraparty competition (Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1997). Since multiple candidates from the same party compete within a district, they are encouraged to build their own clientelist networks and divide up votes from the district. Japan is the most well-known example of the SNTV system, and its political consequences include as institutionalized factions within the party, their relations with the bureaucracy, and policy making (see, Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1997; Scheiner 2005).

The same mechanism worked in Taiwanese politics. The KMT candidates developed extensive clientele-patronage networks and these networks were mobilized for votes. Taiwanese clientelism is highly institutionalized as seen in the *tiau-a-ka* (or vote broker) system and the Responsibility Zone system that were at work (Liu 1999; Rigger 1999). The electoral success of a candidate rests on the *tiau-a-ka*'s ability to manage voters. These vote brokers are responsible for searching for potential supporters in the neighborhood, promoting the candidate using methods similar to relations marketing, and monitoring their "own" voters (Rigger 1999). Based on the *tiau-a-ka* system, the KMT politicians developed the Responsibility Zone system (Liu 1999). This system dictates the KMT candidates to divide up the district into several geographical zones and to campaign only within the zone each of them is in charge. This highly institutionalized clientelism links the hierarchy of networks from local levels all the way up to the national level

(Bosco 1992; Hellmann 2011b). Through these clientelist networks, the mainstream faction of the KMT, the mainlanders was able to maintain their supremacy at all levels of offices. The members of the Legislative Yuan provided pork to local elites and co-opt them and these local politicians, in turn, feed their own Responsibility Zone and *tiau-a-ka*. In exchange for the national leaders' provisions, these local politicians mobilized grassroots and provided electoral support for the KMT. Hellmann (2011b) attributes the continuation of the KMT as a ruling party after Taiwan's democratization largely to these well-developed clientele-patronage relations.

In their fight against the KMT, the *dangwai* activists attempted to develop clientelist networks by coordinating opposition movements outside the party institution while the ban on parties was in effect. However, their effort was not successful. This failed attempt later led them to turn their gear toward developing more programmatic appeals to the public. The party of *dangwai* activists, the DPP, tried to appeal to the public by focusing on a wide range of policy issues and attacking the KMT's vote-buying practices (Hellmann 2011b, p.70). With various effort, the DPP won the majority status in the 2001 Legislative Yuan elections for the first time since the establishment of Taiwanese state. However, with a brief interference (less than a decade) the KMT came back to power. The dominance of the KMT even after democratization suggests that the influence of clientelist remains. This is interesting to note that this continuation of single party dominance in Taiwan is similar to the LDP's die-hard supremacy in Japan whose party system is the epitome of highly stable and institutionalized clientelism (Scheiner 2005a).

In sum, Taiwanese parties have developed different types of party cues than personalistic cues unlike South Korea. The KMT has developed strong clientelist cues and the DPP though not fully has built some ideological cues. As discussed in Chapter 2, these two types of cues are conducive to the development of party labels with brand value, resulting in no or less frequent relabeling. In fact, there is no single party that has been relabeled in Taiwan to date. Concerning this, many East Asian specialists praise Taiwanese party system assessing it is institutionalized to the point that it is similar to those of Western democracies (Hellmann 2011a, 2011b; Stockton 2001)

### 5.1.5 Evidence

In order to test the hypothesis that the prominence of personalistic party cues is more conducive to party relabeling than is of ideological or clientelist party cues, I present evidence that shows the heavy usage of personalistic cues in South Korea in comparison to Taiwan. First, using the newspaper analysis dataset that I create for this research, I gauge the degree of reliance on personalistic party cues in both countries and compare them. For this dataset, I conduct content analysis of the *Chosun Ilbo* (Chosun Daily News) for South Korea and the *Liberty Times* for Taiwan, respectively. These two newspapers are one of the most representative national newspapers for each country. Both the *Chosun Ilbo* and the *Liberty Times* rank the 1st place among other newspapers in each of the countries in terms of circulation and sales.

The South Korean dataset compiled for this research contains all front-page and politics-section stories in the *Chosun Ilbo* from January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012: a total of 5244 stories. The Taiwanese dataset contains the same content from the

*Liberty Times* covering February 1, 2011 through January 23, 2012: a total of 9103 stories. I pick these particular time windows because both South Korea and Taiwan had legislative and presidential elections during this period. Examining news agenda during the election year offers lots of benefit for the purpose of this research. It is the election year when the vast majority of news stories are focused on parties, candidates, campaigns, and public opinion, all of which are important elements relevant to gauging the prominence of personalistic party cues.

I only examine the headlines of news stories on the front page and the politics section, not the text of the articles. Journalists put lots of effort in making the headline meaningful, succinct, and yet "sexy" to grab the scant attention of the reader. Therefore, every single word in the headline is not a random choice of words but a product of deliberate thinking. These features of the headline make us believe that the headlines contain the most concise form of information about political cues that are prevalent in the society. This assessment is supported by one of the interviews that I had with some journalists in South Korea in March 2014. While explaining why South Korean parties keep changing names, she said:

> Party name changes are basically cosmetic modifications. Interestingly however, parties in Korea keep doing it and more interesting the voters respond to it in a meaningful way. This tactic seems to work, seems to mean something to the people. This superficiality is so prevalent in our political culture. Related to this, I am telling you one secret that we journalists have. When it comes to news headlines, we intentionally insert some stimulating or provocative words. For instance, we commonly quote directly what the President said instead of describing the policy that she proposed or talked about. It is because if we put the

boring information about the policy in the headline, nobody is going to read it.

Not so many people are actually interested in the content of the policy but most

folks are attracted to the stories about who said what and who reacted how to

whom…gossipy stories. Particularly, nowadays when everybody reads news

stories online, how many people actually click on your story really matters to us.

That is directly related to our performance.

Therefore, the story suggested in the headline could not match to the real content

of the story. However, for the purpose of this research that does not raise any concern as

what I attempt to measure is how heavily personalistic cues are used in the society, which

is reflected in the headlines of news stories. What the actual story is about is not

important.

I choose to look at the front page and politics section only for different reasons.

The reason behind choosing the politics section is simple and straightforward. Since we

are interested in the usage of political cues, it makes sense to examine the articles in the

politics section. However, there are more interesting and nuanced motivations behind

focusing on the front page. Following  Boydstun's (2013) rationale for focusing on the

front-page stories of the *New York Times* in her research, I believe that the stories on the

front page represent the most important stories of the day. These are the stories that get

read first and received the most attention. Thus the headlines of the front-page stories are

the ones that contain the most dominant form of political cues utilized in the society.

The last thing to note is that I choose the print edition of the newspapers instead

of the digital version. This was mainly driven by the motivation for examining the front

page; by using Internet news search engines, it is impossible to figure out which stories

were from the front page. Also, the volume of the stories online is overwhelmingly greater than that in print edition. This makes it too daunting to complete content analysis. In fact, the stories printed in paper are the main ones online and there are more subsidiary stories related to them.

Using this dataset, I calculate the percentage of headlines that contain "names" of individual politicians versus the percentage of headlines that contain "party names" for both South Korea and Taiwan. Then, I compare the results to see whether there are any discernable patterns that define the differences between the two countries. My theory expects there are more headlines of news stories that contain individual politicians' name in South Korea than Taiwan. The results are displayed in Figure 5.1. The x-axis is time; each point on the x-axis represents seven days combined. The y-axis is % of headlines that contain individual politicians' names and that contain party names out of total headlines included in the dataset.

**Figure 5.1: Ratio of Individual Politician and Party Mentions in News Headlines**
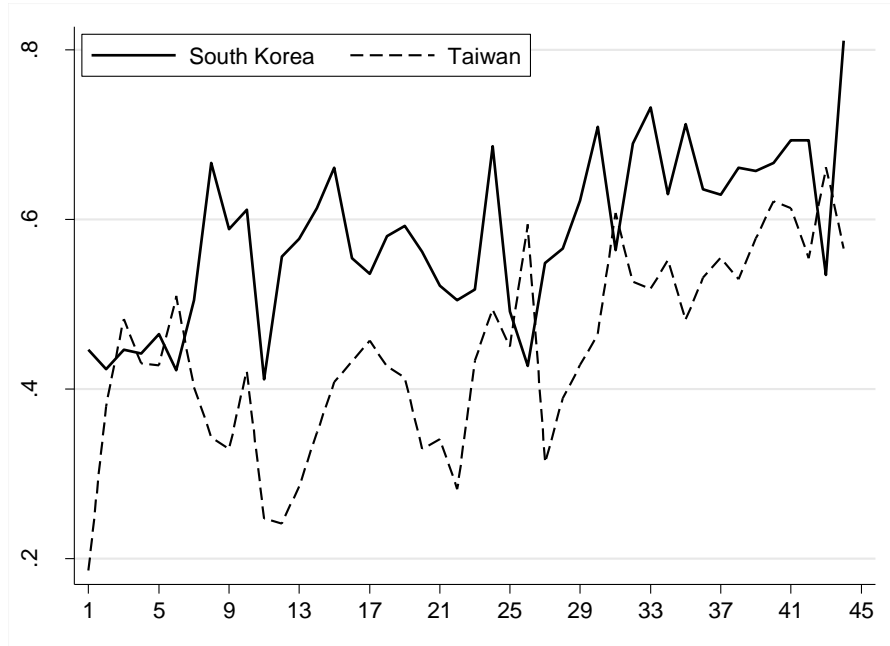
**(a) South Korea**
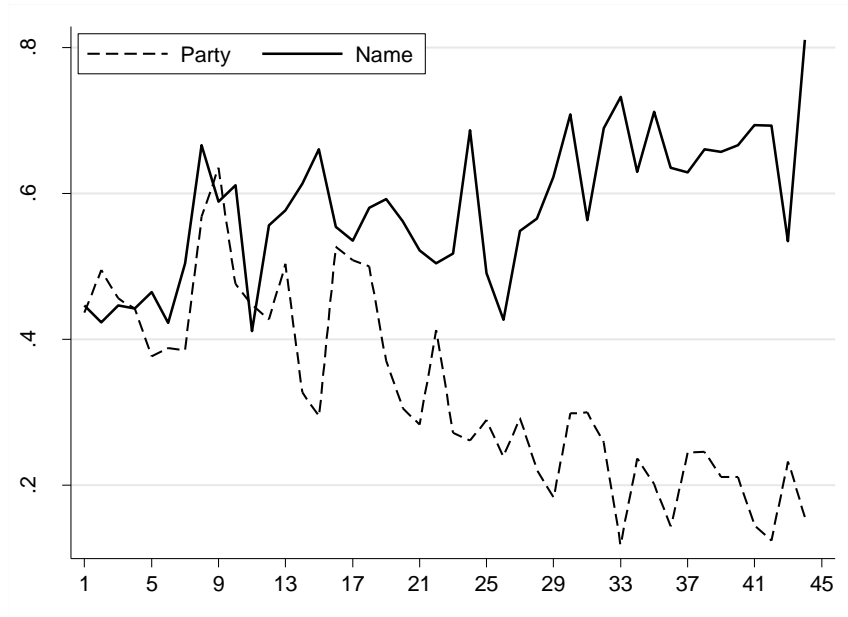


**(b) Taiwan**
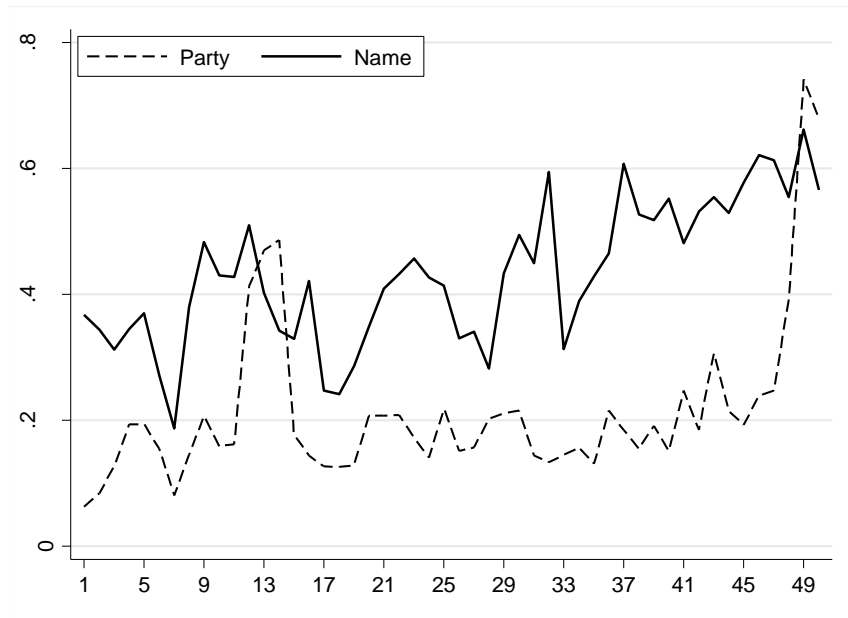
The graphs show that in general both South Korea and Taiwan make use of personalistic cues a lot in newspapers. In both, individual names are more frequently mentioned in the headlines than party names. However, we can still find differences between the two countries. First, more individual politicians' names are mentioned in South Korean news headlines than its Taiwanese counterparts. Second, as the elections neared, the number of the mentions of individual politicians kept increasing whereas that of parties decreasing in South Korea. However, Taiwan shows a steadier increase in both personal and party cues and interestingly, at the end time point, the use of party cues skyrocketed.

In order to gauge each system's reliance of "leader cues", a subset of personal cues, I calculate the % of leader cues out of the total news stories. The results are in Figure 5.2. The graph again confirms that South Korean politics are more dominated by leader-based personalistic cues than Taiwanese politics. What is interesting about this

graph is that the numbers indicate that most of the personal cues used in headlines are

leader cues. If we compare Figure 5.2 to Figure 5.1, then it is easily found that there is a

slight difference between % of total personalistic cues and that of leader cues. However,

even in these figures, South Korea is shown to utilize leader cues more heavily than

Taiwan does.

**Figure 5.2: Ratio of Political Leader Mentions in News Headlines**
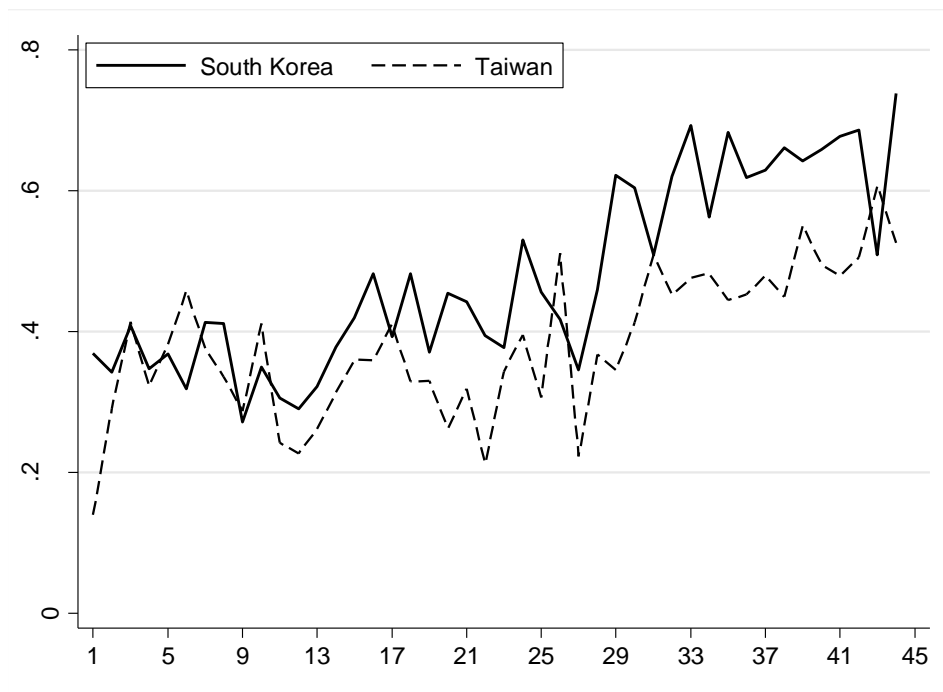


There is one more finding that supports the results of Figure 5.2 that in general

both countries are reliant of leader cues. Using the Comparative Study of Electoral

Systems (CSES), I examine leader effects on an individual's decision to vote for the

party. The dataset has a question that asks respondents to give scores to both the party

they voted for and the leader of the party (presidential candidate in this context).  Using

this data, I calculate the proportion of respondents who scored higher on the leader than the party of the leader and also the proportion of those who evaluated the party more favorably than its leader. According to my calculations, Kim Dae-jung, a presidential candidate of the *Millennium Democratic Party* in the 1997 South Korean presidential election and Lee Teng-hui, a presidential candidate of the KMT in the 1996 Taiwanese presidential election turned out to be vote gatherer. Put differently, there were lots of voters who cast their vote for the MDP and the KMT not because they liked the parties but because they liked these leaders. The percentage of those who said favored Kim Dae-jung more than his party was 42.33% vis-à-vis that of who favored the party more was 15.42%. The similar pattern applies to Lee Teng-hui; his personal favorability score was 40.08% against party score, 14.17%. This brief analysis confirms that these two leaders were strong personalistic party cues in these East Asian third-wave democracies.

## 5.2 Strong Levels of Political Attention in the South Korean Electorate

The political culture of South Korea is characterized to be more contentious and amenable to mobilization than that of Taiwan. This difference can be explained by distinct patterns of authoritarian rule and democratic transition that these countries experienced. As I discussed in the previous section, democratic transition in South Korea was led by citizens and activists and the overall process toward it was contentious and violent. Taiwan, on the other hand, was democratized under the subtle guide of the KMT. There were several violent conflicts between the opposition and the KMT in the late 1940s and the early 1950s, but during the most of the White Terror era the opposition was simply not able to be mobilized. Entering the 1970s when the demand for reform

arose, the KMT government undertook a series of significant political reforms to accommodate the demand from the public (Huang 1996; Rigger 1999; Tien 1996). This resulted in a more gradual and peaceful progress toward democracy in Taiwan.

This historical background has left legacies that remain to be still relevant today that Korean citizens often vocally mobilize in the streets while the Taiwanese are more muted in terms of protest activities (Lee Y. 2014). South Korean citizens are easily mobilized for a political cause. Their demonstrations last longer and the size of those activities is bigger than their Taiwanese counterparts in general. Yoonkyung Lee (2014) contends that the channels through which political demands are processed are different in these two countries. The process of Taiwan is more party-centered and institutionalized whereas South Korean citizens tend to represent their interests and demands themselves not through parties as a medium that brokers the citizens and the government. One example that illustrates this contrasting pattern is the Anti-U.S. Beef Protests that occurred both in South Korea and Taiwan in 2008 and 2009, respectively.

### 5.2.1 A Brief Case Study: Anti-U.S. Beef Protests

#### 5.2.1.1 South Korea in 2008

On April 18, 2008, South Korea decided to resume imports of U.S. beef, which was stopped in 2004 with lessened restraints. In reaction to this governmental decision, nation-wide protests broke out because of the allegation that the American beef was not safe and thus loosing restraints over the imports was the government's irresponsible decision (*Money Today* May 2, 2008). The protestors demanded an immediate

withdrawal of the decision and renegotiation with the U.S. government. Intertwined with nationalist and anti-U.S. sentiments, it led many people ranging from several hundreds to hundreds of thousands to come out in the streets every day for over 100 days, starting from May 2, 2008 (*Segye Ilbo* May 10, 2008). The protests were largely based on individuals who voluntarily joined with no clear associations with political activists or parties. Non-traditional protesters such as housewives, high school students and senior citizens were the main actors in the protest events holding candlelight in their hands. Because of it, these protests were called "candle light demonstrations."

Later on, these protests evolved into a full-blown anti-government, anti-President Lee movements putting tremendous pressure upon President Lee Myung-bak and the ruling party, then the *Grand National Party* (*Saenuri Party*, now) (M. Ho and Hong 2012). The approval rating of President Lee was 52% prior to the protests but right after this upheaval it plummeted to 21% (*Gallup Korea* October 12, 2012). Figure 5.3 graphically shows the volatile public opinion during Lee's presidency. His approval rating fluctuated a lot during his presidency. Particularly, this anti-U.S. beef protest gave him hard time that occurred soon after his honeymoon period. Later, he regained some of popular support but was not able to fully recover his popularity that he had enjoyed as a presidential candidate in 2007.

**Figure 5.3: Approval Rating of President Lee Myung-bak**
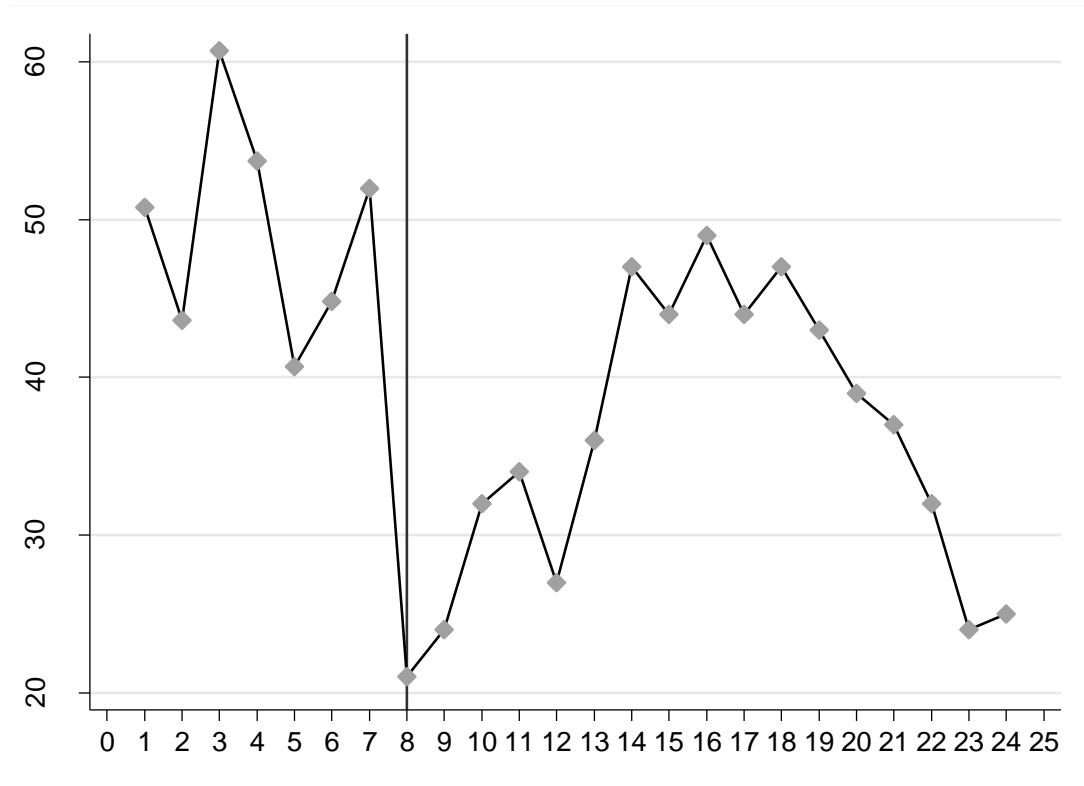


Source: Gallup Korea Political Index

Note: The x-axis is time; each data point represents the value taken every three
       months. This dataset covers Jan 2007 through Dec 2012. The first five data
       points are Lee's approval rating during his campaign while he was a candidate.
       The vertical line indicates the breakout of the 2008 anti-U.S. beef protest.

President Lee issued public apologies over the wave of protests, initiated

renegotiation over part of the deal between Korea and the U.S., and reshuffled his cabinet

(M. Ho and Hong 2012). In fact, he issued public apologies to the nation twice over this

period, one in May 22, 2008 and the other in June 19, 2008. Particularly, his second

official apology reflected the gravity of the issue that his government felt. He used strong

expressions like "blaming myself" and "having painful remorse" and added pledges that

he would listen more carefully to the opposition and walk together with the people of

Korea (The *Kyunghyang Shinmun* June 20, 2008). This swift and dramatic change in

public opinion is evidence that the public in South Korea is highly interested in politics,

thereby quickly responds to a political event in a visible way. Further, they are easily

mobilized posing a threat to the government, which oftentimes forces the government to

resolve a crisis with radical resolutions such as cabinet reshuffling.

### *5.2.1.2 Taiwan in 2009*

Similar to South Korea, Taiwan once banned U.S. beef imports due to the raised

concerns about Mad Cow Disease in 2003 and announced its plan to lift the ban in

October 2009. This announcement also stirred a vehement reaction from the Taiwanese

society, especially from farmers. Many interest groups, farmers and members of the DPP

and the Non-Partisan Solidarity Union formed protest movements and engaged in anti-

U.S. beef demonstrations. Due to the similar popular reactions between Taiwan and

South Korea, news media in both countries paid close attention to the movement in

Taiwan and made speculations over how it would unfold. South Korean news media

cautiously anticipated that the Taiwanese version of the "anti-U.S. beef candlelight

protest" would take place soon (*Hangyore* October 29, 2009: p. 15; *Kyunghyang Shinmun*

October 30, 2009: p. 8). However, it turned out that the Taiwanese version was not

comparable to what happened in South Korea a year ahead. Its political reverberations

were limited and the movement itself was much smaller and less visible.

There are several defining differences of these similar-looking protests between

Taiwan and South Korea. First, Taiwanese movement activists defined the "controversy

as purely a health risk issue" and the movements did not escalate into an anti-government movement (Ho and Hong 2012: 643). Second, the protests in Taiwan were largely mobilized by political parties whereas it was the citizens who initiated and mobilized the demonstrations in South Korea. Also, the DPP and its allies in the legislature actively engaged in resolving the controversy with the government by proposing a new plan and a referendum on it (*Hangyore* March 15, 2010: p. 18). As many East Asian politics researchers suggest, it displays the contrasting patterns of interest representation in the two countries; South Korea is more mass-based, contentious while Taiwan is more party-based and institutionalized (Ho 2003, Ho and Hong 2012; Lee Y. 2014). Third, the Taiwanese version of the beef protests did not spread over to the public. The public interest in this controversial issue did not last long and its intensity fell short of a big national issue. Instead, the issue was contained within the political arena.

### 5.2.2 Evidence

In this section, I provide evidence that the general level of political interests in South Korea is higher than its most comparable country, Taiwan. For instance, let us examine how much portion that political news takes up in the front page of each the *Chosun Ilbo* and the *Liberal Times*. I expect higher proportion of political news stories in the front page of the *Chosun Ildo* than that of the *Liberal Times*.

**Figure 5.4: Proportion of Political News in the Front Page of Newspapers**
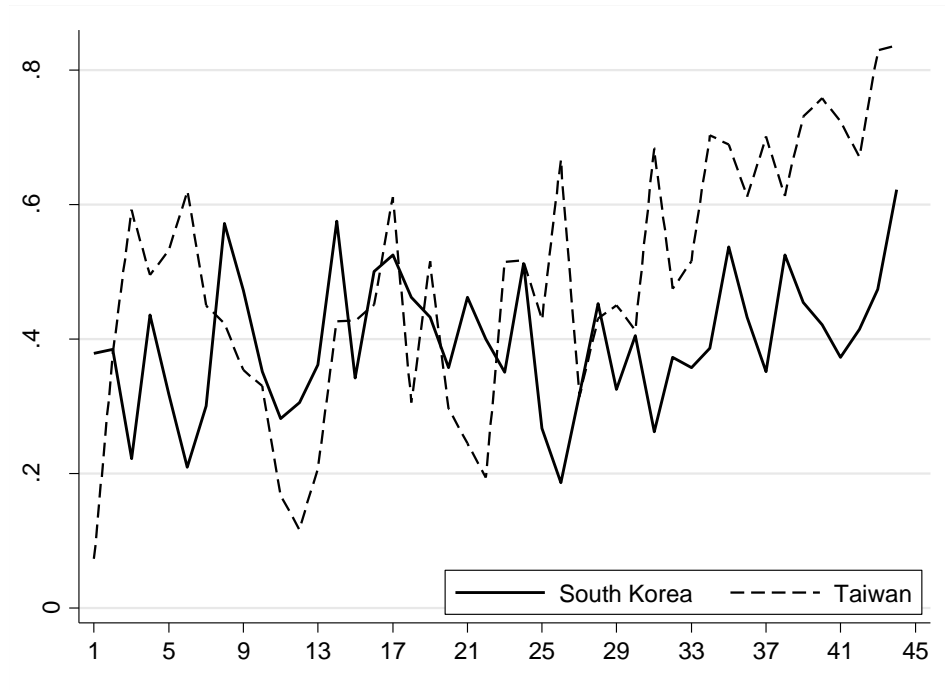


Figure 5.4 does not conform to my expectation; on the contrary, it reveals that the

Taiwanese newspaper contains more political stories in the front page than does the

South Korean newspaper. The general tendency shown in this graph is that the two

newspapers that are representative of both countries offers relatively huge space to

political news. These numbers are remarkably high if we compare them to those of *Le*

*Monde* and the *New York Times* that I will discuss in the following chapter. To quickly

give you an idea how big these numbers are in fact, it is helpful to preview some of the

findings for France and the United States. These renowned French and American national

newspapers do not pay a lot to political stories; the proportion of political news stories in

the front page in either of them never exceeds 20%. Given that the two third-wave East

Asian democracies have high levels of political interest, let us consider an interview that I

had with one party official in South Korea. His view about political interest of the Korean

people provides us some contextual information about South Korean political culture.

It seems like Korean people do not have many other alternative things to do than

politics. They enjoy watching what is going on politics as pastimes and they

seem to vent their stress or despair through it. They follow political news very

closely, get easily frantic with political scandals or rumors involving high-profile

politicians like party leaders or president, and eager to see how they are resolved

at the end. Politics to South Koreans is a sport.

**Figure 5.5: Importance of Politics in South Korea and Taiwan**
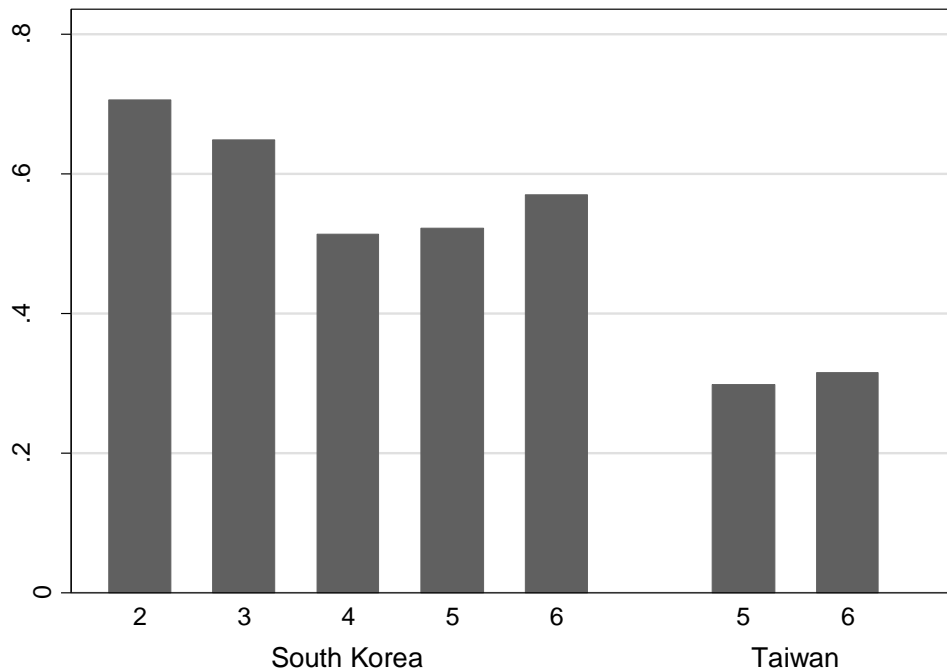


Source: The World Values Survey Wave 1-6. The Y-axis represents the % of

individuals who said politics are very and somewhat important in their life.

Note that Taiwan was included in the study starting from the wave 5 survey.

**Figure 5.6: Level of Political Interest in South Korea and Taiwan**
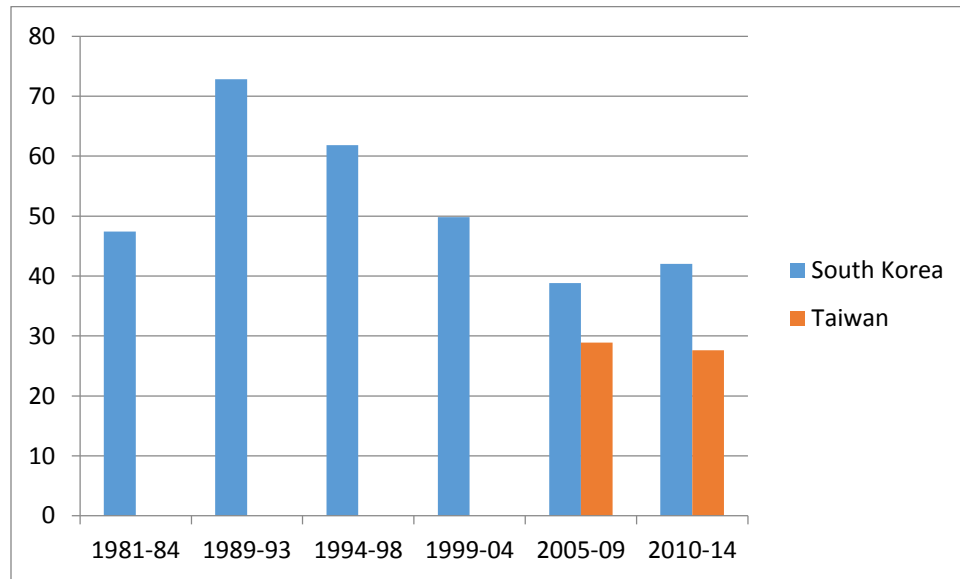


Source: The World Values Survey Wave 1-6. The Y-axis represents the % of individuals who said they are very and somewhat interested in politics. Note that Taiwan was included in the study starting from the wave 5 survey.

Figures 5.5 and 5.6 show the proportion of respondents who answered politics are important in their life. As Taiwan was included in the later series of the World Values Survey, the graphs do not have full coverage of the Taiwanese case. However, from what is seen in Figure 5.6, one can safely come to a conclusion that the South Korean public is more interested in politics than its Taiwanese counterpart. Particularly, the numbers during democratic transition and initially after transition are remarkably high, outnumbering by large margin the world average during that time, which was in the range of the 40s. However, Figure 5.6 also describes that the South Korean public has been dramatically detached from politics although it backed up a little bit lately. Nonetheless, the level of political interest in South Korea is considerably higher than Taiwan.

Another indicator that is commonly used for political activism is voter turnout. The voter turnout for presidential and legislative elections is reported in Table 5.7. In contrast to my expectation, there is no discernible difference between South Korea and Taiwan. In fact, Taiwan scores higher than South Korea for both elections. Similar to the front-page political news ratio, voter turnout in both countries indicate that the general levels of political participation in South Korea and Taiwan are relatively high. To look at the South Korean data more closely, one can notice that the overall trend in voter turnout is gradually in decrease since its first democratic presidential election in 1988 and legislative election 1992. Again, this trend suggests that South Korean public has been detached from politics. Taiwan, on the other hand, maintains a high level of voter turnout over a decade. Although we see some setback in the 2008 Legislative Yuan Election, the country picked quickly in the following election. Part of the factors that explain Taiwan's such a high level of voter turnout is that it has been less than two decades since they directly elected president for the first time.[20] They are still in a honeymoon period of enjoying democratic elections. It could be that we need more time to truly evaluate and compare levels of political activism between South Korea and Taiwan.

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[20] The first direct presidential election was held in 1996, which elected Lee Teng-hui from the KMT.

**Table 5.7: Voter Turnout in South Korea and Taiwan**

| South Korea[a] | | | | Taiwan[b] | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Presidential | | Legislative | | Presidential | | Legislative | |
| 2012 | 75.8 | 2012 | 54.2 | 2012 | 77.13 | 2012 | 74.33 |
| 2007 | 63.03 | 2008 | 46.1 | 2008 | 76.33 | 2008 | 58.5 |
| 2002 | 70.83 | 2004 | 60.6 | 2004 | 80.28 | 2004 | 66.16 |
| 1997 | 80.65 | 2000 | 57.2 | 2000 | 82.69 | | |
| 1992 | 81.89 | 1996 | 63.9 | | | | |
| 1988 | 89.2 | 1992 | 71.9 | | | | |
| Average | 76.9 | Average | 58.98333 | Average | 79.1075 | Average | 66.33 |

Source: (a) South Korean data: National Election Commission; (b) Taiwanese data: Election Guide: Democracy Assistance & Election News

The evidence provided in this section so far is mixed suggesting it is hard to determine that the South Korean public is more political active and involved than the Taiwanese public. Some data seem to support the proposition but there is some other evidence that question its validity. Now, let us move to another dimension of my theory regarding consequences of intense political interest of the public. I argue that a political system where the vast majority of the people feel strongly about politics suffers highly volatile public opinion. This forces politicians and parties when they are in trouble to do something radical to change the atmosphere and turn public opinion favorable toward them. How can we measure this causal dimension somehow quantitatively?

Before turning to more quantitative tests of this proposition, I discuss cabinet reshuffling under President Lee Myung-bak during his administration from 2008 to 2012 as an example that touches on the part of my proposition. Generally, a government reshuffles its cabinet members as a way to boost its credibility toward the public.

Considering the significant amount of political costs that this incur, "cabinet reshuffling represents a last ditch effort to rehabilitate the government's image in general" (Yap 2005, p. 137). Therefore, when a government is in crisis of reputation or credibility it undertakes cabinet reshuffling. However, cabinet reshuffling is commonplace in South Korean politics. The South Korean government replaces cabinet members when there are scandals or policy failures that stir up public opinion and popular threats are exerted on the government just as the 2008 anti-U.S. beef protests.

Due to the similar logic behind frequent cabinet reshuffling to relabeling of parties, looking at it helps us to understand the mechanism in which hyper-political interest or too much democracy in South Korea becomes serious threats to politicians. More important, it sheds light on how these popular threats often lead to radical decisions made by the governing authorities. In short, this is arguably a more direct test of my theoretical model as to the relationship between hyper political interest and party relabeling that the analysis presented above in this section.

During his presidency, President Lee Myung-bak undertook seven times of cabinet reshuffling. There were several replacements made at each time of reshuffling. For instance, in the aftermath of the 2008 beef protests, he launched his first reshuffling plan which involved the replacement of three ministers: the Ministry of the Education and Science Technology, the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and the Ministry of Health and Welfare (*Money Today* July 14, 2012: p. 1).

**Table 5.8: Cabinet Reshuffling under Lee Myung-bak's Presidency**

| | The Number of Reshuffling | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | : 2 ministers (2008-12) | : 3 ministers (2008-12) | : 4 ministers (2008-12) |
| Number, % | 3, 17.6% | 9, 52.9% | 5, 29.5% |
| Name of Ministry | (1) Foreign Affairs and Trade; (2) Environment; (3) Land, Transport, and Maritime Affairs | (1) Prime Minister; (2) Strategy and Finance; (3) Education and Science Technology; (4) Unification; (5) Justice; (6) National Defense; (7) Gender Equality and Family; (8) Government Administration and Home Affairs; (9) Culture, Sports, and Tourism | (1) Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; (2) Knowledge Economy; (3) Health and Welfare; (4) Employment and Labor; (5) Special Affairs |

Source: Various newspapers and government documents

Table 5.8 displays the high frequency of cabinet reshuffling during Lee's presidency. However, as discussed above, this is not limited to this particular presidency but commonly found in any other presidencies in South Korea. It indicates the average duration of ministerialship during 2008-2012 was approximately 1 year and 8 months. Many of the changes were caused by popular threats and pressure that political scandals or policy failures generated as in the case of the 2008 anti-U.S. beef protests. For instance, Myung-hwan Yoo, Minister of the Foreign Affairs and Trade was stepped down after an allegation that his daughter got employed at the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs and Trade preferentially due to her connection with the Minister of the same department (*Maeil Business Newspaper* September 6, 2010). Another example is Tae-young Kim,

Minister of National Defense who was replaced with Kwan-jin Kim to assume responsibility for two huge military conflicts initiated by North Korea: the Sinking of Cheonan, a South Korean navy ship and Yeonpyeong Bombardment.

By applying the findings to party relabeling, the extremely high level of political awareness and interest in the South Korean public generates pressure that forces parties to change their names. Moreover, this political culture enables the public to keep track of these name changes. This significantly reduces the risks of name changes that the parties might have. This point was affirmed in my interview with the chief staff member of one of the Saenuri legislator. I asked him a question whether there was no risk of the loss of reputation that was felt among the Saenuri Party members and legislators when the party undertook its name change from the Grand National Party (GNP) to the Saenuri in 2012. He said,

> There were disagreements over the new suggested name, Saenuri but almost
> everyone agreed that we needed to rebrand our party during that time. President
> Lee Myung-bak was so unpopular and our then presidential candidate, Park
> Geun-hye started distancing herself and her party from him. In that situation, a
> name change was considered fit. We never worry too much about the loss of
> reputation because Korean voters know the Saenuri is the GNP almost
> immediately. One, there are not many parties that are electorally viable, just
> three, right? Two, being the majority party, the process to market and promote
> our new label does not take much effort. However, interestingly there appeared a
> new party with the label, Grand National Party right after we changed our name.
> Probably, that might have caused some confusion among older people in rural
> areas. But we didn't sense any harm caused by this probable short-term
> confusion.

Now, let us measure the causal mechanism described above using the newspaper dataset that I created for this research. I measured the ratio of news headlines that contain explicit information about valence issues of parties, candidates and politicians. Against this, I also measured the ratio of news headlines that explicitly talk about policy issues including policy debates, blaming or praising of policy-related issues. The underlying assumption that I have is that in a political system whose culture is that its public watches politics as a "sport," there tend to be many gossipy political news stories compared to more substantive, policy news. In line with this assumption, I expect that South Korea tends to have more gossipy, valence-related news headlines than Taiwan. The results are shown in Figures 5.7 and 5.8.

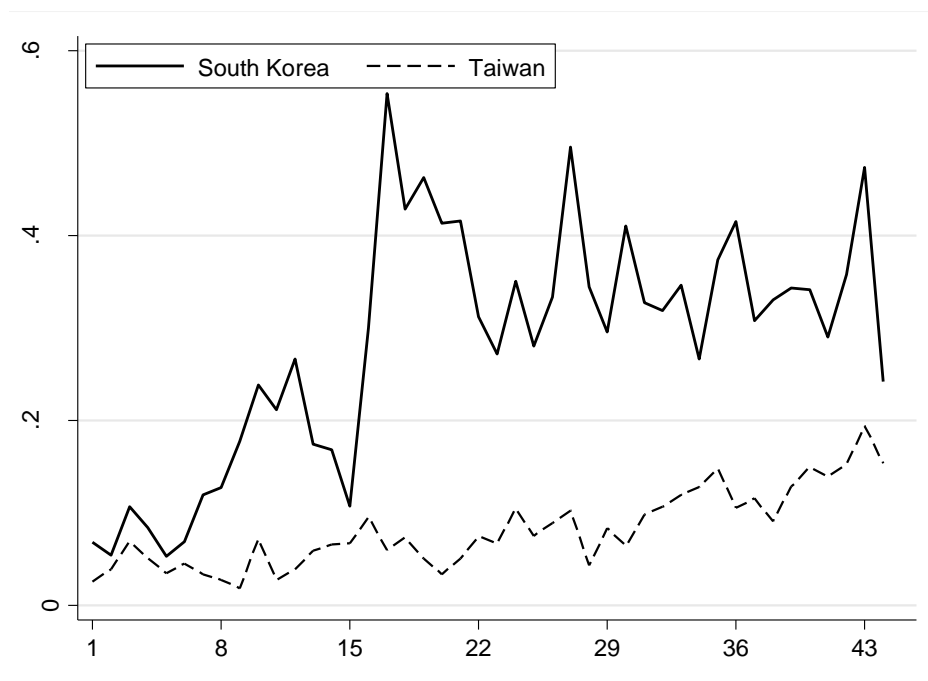**Figure 5.7: Ratio of Valence-Issue Headlines**

Figure 5.7 conforms to my expectation. It indicates that the *Chosun Ilbo* has

remarkably more headlines that contain valence-issue words and messages than the

*Liberty Times*. It means that the South Korean news media as well as public give lots of

weight to non-policy, personal character-related and sometime gossipy aspects of

politics; moreover, they are interested in these stories. If we look more closely what kinds

of stories compose the valence stories in the *Chosun Ilbo*, then we can find more

compelling stories that support my causal mechanism. Figure 5.8 records the ratio of

political scandal news headlines reported by the *Chosun Ilbo*. By comparing the curve

with that in Figure 5.7, one can easily notice that a great deal of valence-issue stories

were in fact political scandal news.

Here, before we move on, let me clarify what I mean by a "scandal" and how I

operationalized it. I defined a scandal as a valence issue that harms the reputation and

credibility of the person AND the party seriously. A straightforward characteristic of

such an issue is that normally there is a great explosion and sustainability of news stories

regarding such issues. Some examples of scandals reported by the *Chosun Ilbo* in the

year of 2012 are the primary fraud of the *Democratic Labor Party* that broke out in

March, 2012 and the allegation that the party's violation of the National Security Law

that ensued shortly after the primary scandal. These hit the party so seriously that it was

shattered completely and split into two parties. Being the third party always, this split

gave them fatal outcomes in the 2012 legislative and presidential elections.

It is interesting to note that the publications of scandal stories hit the peak

sometime during the legislative election (9 through 21 along the X-axis) and the ratio of

scandal news stories out of total political news was above 60%. As it approached the

presidential election in December 2012, the volume of scandal stories subsided gradually with some short-term fluctuations. This suggests that such non-policy issues play a critical role in defining the main debate points during the campaign and shaping public opinion and their vote choices.

**Figure 5.8: Ratio of Political Scandal News Headlines in the Chosun Ilbo**
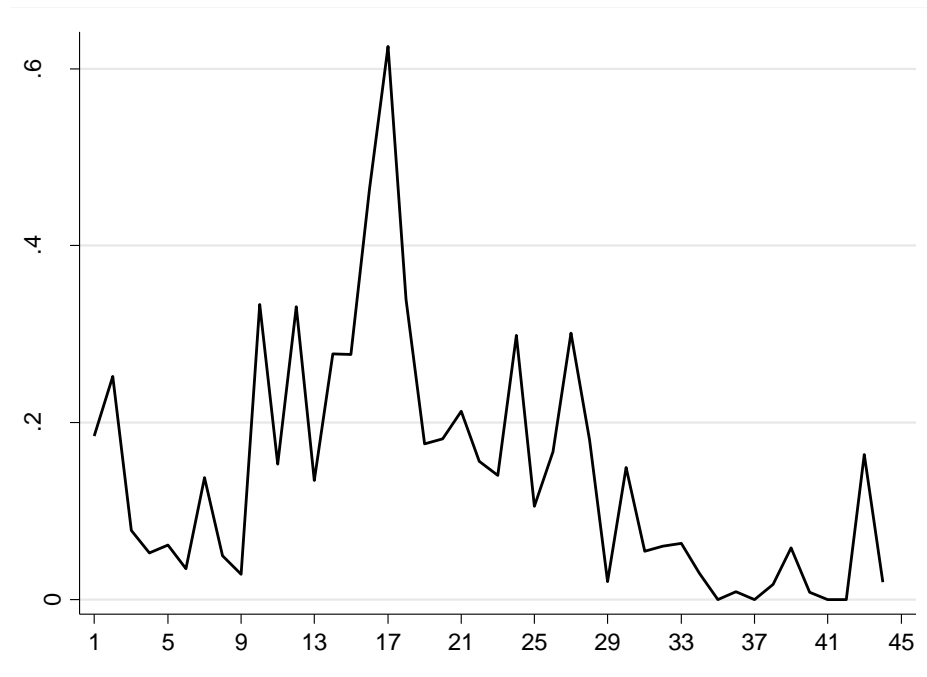


Let us examine the nature of political scandals in South Korea more in depth. Figure 5.9 displays the frequency of scandals that involve political leaders defined by president, ex-president, current and former prime ministers, current and former cabinet members, and party leaders. According to Figure 5.9, the majority of the political scandals in South Korea involve political leaders although there are some fluctuations. There are few scandals that happened around rank-and-file politicians. The pattern of corruption centered around top politicians has something to do with South Korea's concentration of power and resources in the central government, particularly presidents

and high-profile party leaders. In other words, this result is an example of evidence that shows the prominence of personalistic cues and centralization of power in South Korea (C. H. Park 2008; Yoo and Lee 2009).

**Figure 5.9: Ratio of Political Scandal Involving Political Leaders**
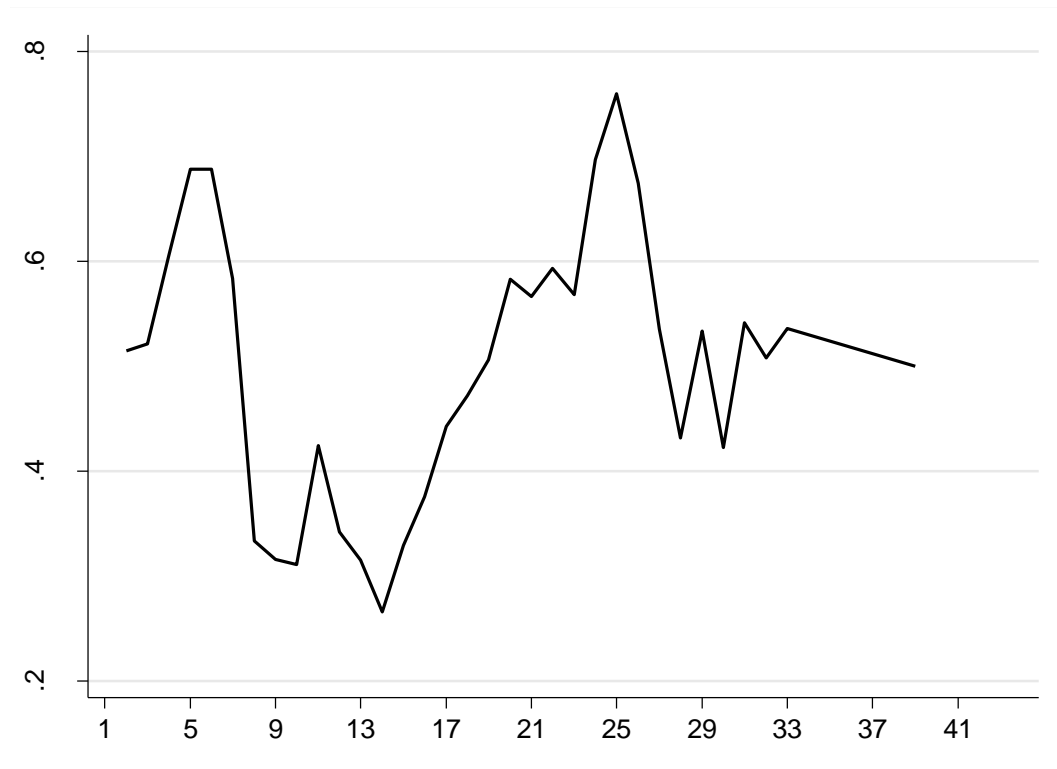


Note: The line represents 3 weeks moving average to smooth out the line.

## 5.3 High Centralization in South Korea

There is one Korean saying, "People must go to Seoul to succeed and horses to Jeju[21]". This implies that political, socioeconomic, and cultural resources are disproportionately concentrated on Seoul and its neighboring regions. South Korea is one of the most centralized states in the world with a long history of political and economic centralization through strictly hierarchical bureaucracy[22] (H. Kang and Huh 2006). South Korea furthered centralizing of authority during the state building process under the authoritarian rule in order for the state to manage resources efficiently and implement economic policies for achieving rapid economic growth (Vu 2007). However, increased administrative efficiency brought by strong centralization did not come without any problems. Most notably, it caused urban congestion of businesses and politics centering around Seoul and its neighboring metropolitan area. This led to considerable imbalances of development between the center and the periphery of the country, harboring a number of social and political issues (H. Kang and Huh 2006).

Recognizing these problems, the South Korean government began to make an effort to shed some of the highly centralized authority entering the 1990s (Soh 2011). For

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[21] Jeju is an island located in the southern-most part of South Korea. This island is historically known for raising lots of horses.

[22] Kang and Huh (2006) argue that the origin of strong centralization in South Korea can even trace back to the Koryo Dynasty (10th-14th centuries). They argue that due to this long period of centralization and its embeddedness, South Korea introduced decentralization policy late compared to other countries.

instance, it started the first municipality elections in 1991 and held the first full-scale regional elections for various offices including gubernatorial, mayoral, provincial legislative and municipal legislative offices in 1995. Despite the governmental effort, there is general consensus that South Korea still remains to be highly centralized and there is a long way to more even distribution of power and resources (Soh 2010, 2011).

Taiwan, on the other hand, has achieved more equal distribution of power across various levels of government. In the middle of rapid economic growth, around the 1960s, the Taiwanese government recognized the importance of decentralization in attaining sustainable development and changed its policy direction accordingly (Amsden 1991). Moreover, as discussed earlier, Taiwan has a long history of holding local elections. Rigger (1999) claims that the practice of local elections enabled local politicians to develop their own vote mobilizing machine and sophisticated clientele-patronage networks manifested in the *tiau-a-ka* and the Responsibility Zone systems. The KMT allowed local elections as a way to maintain their legitimacy and power by setting a buffer between the national and local governments. Similar to the principle of subsidiarity, the KMT party-state let the local governments absorb local issues and contain local and ethnic grievances within their own jurisdictions.

In this section, I argue that the high degree of centralization in South Korea is responsible for leaving its political parties vulnerable to relabeling. The concentration of authority in Seoul makes the value of national offices extremely high vis-à-vis local offices and thus winning the national offices becomes the primary goal of the parties. Under such circumstances, parties become sensitive to public opinion and vulnerable to shocks of scandals and reputation risks. They are willing to do anything that helps them

restore their reputation and refresh their image once harmed including relabeling. In short, my argument is that a high level of centralization in combination of the prominence of personalistic party cues and hyper-political interest in the public causes frequent party relabeling.

To test this argument, I discuss the diverging models of the center-periphery power distribution in South Korea and Taiwan focusing on the historical factors that are responsible for the differences. Then, I provide evidence for the varying levels of centralization or decentralization in both countries. In addition, I present and analyze data that suggest Korean parties are much more national-election oriented than their Taiwanese counterparts.

### 5.3.1 Developmental State of South Korea: Highly Concentrated Model

Until the East Asian Financial Crisis severely hit the economies of the region in 1997-8, the stories of rapid economic growth in East Asia had been praised as the "East Asian miracle" (World Bank 1993). The economic model characterizing the miraculous development of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan is termed, the "Developmental State" model (Johnson 1987). Johnson describes the four main structural elements of the developmental state model as (1) stable rule by a political-bureaucratic, (2) cooperation between public and private sectors under the guidance of the government, (3) heavy and continuing investment in education, and (4) the government's use of market-conforming economic intervention (Johnson 1987, p. 145). The core of this model is the leading or intrusive role of the government in planning, guiding, implementing, and monitoring the

economy. The World Bank (1993), an ardent proponent of neo-liberalism, acknowledged the successful intervention of the government, more specifically elite bureaucrats.

Although South Korea and Taiwan share lots of similarities in their strategies of economic development under the label, "East Asian Developmental State" model, as their economies developed further they took diverging trajectories. Under the regime of Park Jung-hee throughout the 1960s-70s, South Korea intensified the central government's control over the whole society and its administrative control penetrated down into the village level (Vu 2007). In contrast, Taiwan shifted a gear toward decentralization of economic development (Amsden 1991; S. Ho 1979).

The prime example of South Korea's power concentration and extension of the state power to the local levels is the *Semaul Undong* or the New Community Movement (Ban, Moon, and Perkins 1980; Vu 2007). The goal of this movement was to improve the infrastructure of rural areas and beautify the physical quality of villages through voluntary participation of the residents. This movement was designed to encourage the public-spirited mindset, the "spirit of cooperation, self-help and frugality" (Vu 2007, p. 39). With the nation-wide campaign and excessive coercion of the state, villages were strongly encouraged to voluntarily upgrade outdated facilities, i.e., thatched roofs of houses, broken bridges, etc., and in exchange for their work, the state awarded them with pork-barrel. Kihl (1979) contends that "these efforts were built on an existing nation-wide system of communication, control, and surveillance – centralized at the top in the Ministry of Home Affairs and assisted by the police that extended down to every village" (Kihl 1979 quoted from Vu 2007, p. 39).

At the national level, President Park Jung-hee also concentrated more power in the government by launching three series of Five-Year Economic Plans. Each one set target industries to develop within the five year period, which meant that all governmental resources would be poured on these targets. In doing so, a small number of big enterprises, *chaebols*, were given a host of preferential benefits from the government. They include governmental subsidies, loan allocation through government-controlled banking system, and administrative, regulatory benefits (Haggard 2000; D. Kang 1995). Based on these exclusive benefits, *chaebols* were able to actively invest and extend their businesses to the extent that they integrated diverse industrial groups both vertically and horizontally (Johnson 1987). The vertical integration refers to having a complete set of industrial groups of their own that covers the complete operations from importing raw materials to exporting final products. For this purpose, *chaebols* established the so-called general trading companies that specialize in these processes. The horizontal integration refers to participating in and extending to many different businesses that are not related to each other. For instance, Samsung Group owns 40 enterprises across over ten different industries including electronics, construction, chemical, finance and hotel, to just name a few.

The concentration of private economic power through vertical and horizontal integration is well manifested in the term, "The Samsung Republic." It is a satiric expression that the South Korean government is held hostage of Samsung, the largest *chaebol* in the country. Table 5.10 suggests that this concern is not an exaggeration. It clearly tells us that economic power is concentrated in a few big conglomerates.

**Table 5.9: Chaebols' Proportion of South Korean Total GDP (%)**

| | | 1987 | 1990 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Asset /GDP | Top 30 chaebols | 55.1 | 61.9 | 69 | 75.8 | 88.8 | 93.4 | 79.6 | 72.3 | 58 | 54.9 |
| | Top 5 chaebols | 29.9 | 34.1 | 39.1 | 43.2 | 54.5 | 62.5 | 51.5 | 42.3 | 35.8 | 34.6 |
| | Samsung | 5.8 | 7.3 | 9.6 | 10.5 | 12.9 | 12.4 | 12.2 | 10.9 | 10.3 | 10.5 |
| Sales /GDP | Top 30 | 66 | 61.7 | 73.1 | 78.6 | 83.9 | 88 | 72.4 | 78.8 | 67.5 | 65 |
| | Top 5 | 41.9 | 37.6 | 48.7 | 52.6 | 57.8 | 66.9 | 54.6 | 56.5 | 44.1 | 44.6 |
| | Samsung | 10.9 | 10.7 | 12.6 | 12.6 | 13.6 | 15.4 | 15.7 | 17.5 | 14.9 | 15.8 |
| Value Added /GDP | Top 30 | 10.8 | 12.1 | 14.2 | 12.8 | 11.6 | 13.4 | 11.4 | 10.9 | 9.8 | 11.4 |
| | Top 5 | 6.1 | 6.7 | 8.7 | 7.6 | 7.5 | 7.6 | 9.1 | 7.6 | 6.7 | 8.2 |
| | Samsung | 1.4 | 1.9 | 2.6 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 2.1 | 2.5 | 3.3 | 2.3 | 3.1 |

Source: Kim S. (2005)

These numbers indicate that the economic concentration in South Korea is severe although the general trend is in decline after the East Asian Financial Crisis (1997-98). To sum, the cooperative government-business relationship enabled rapid growth in South Korea; the government guaranteed the stable provision of resources to the business and the business innovated and grew in exchange. For having this win-win situation, administratively the government chose to have a big, strong centralized national government to manage resources efficiently in the country.

### 5.3.2 Underdevelopment of Autonomous Local Government System

South Korea has a relatively short history of local governments. In fact, South Korea had local elections after its government was established in 1948. However, while

the system was still embryonic, it was abolished by President Park Jung-hee as he took office through the military coup in 1961. After three decades of no local elections, local legislative elections resumed in 1991 under President Roh Tae-woo. Thus, South Korea has had local governments for slightly over two decades. During this period, lots of achievements have been made in terms of redistribution of authority from the center and balanced relationship between the center and local governments. However, it is pointed out that the national government still plays the major role in redistributing power and setting up the local government system, limiting opportunities for local governments to participate more actively in the process (H. Kang and Huh 2006). Moreover, there is still room for the national government to intervene in the operations of local governments and local governments cannot enjoy full autonomy (Kim S. E. 2003).

Roh Tae-Woo was the first directly elected president in Korea as a consequence of democratic transition in 1987. He accepted many of the popular demands for more democracy and opened up local legislatures – both provincial and municipal. However, with the lack of experience and institutional framework that the local government system could start from, many of President Roh's decentralization policy effort remained limited. Referring to this, Soh (2011) evaluates this period (1987-1992) as a passive decentralization period.

It was under Roh's successor, President Kim Young-sam when the local government system was more fully set up. Local government elections at a fuller scale were held in 1995 and voters were to elect for four different local offices: provincial and municipal legislators, governors, and mayors.  It was a leap from its previous version in 1991 given that there were only two offices to be filled, provincial and municipal

legislators. Nevertheless, the government's attitude remained to be passive toward decentralization and its passivity was seen in the fact that it changed the original plan of four-year term given for local offices to three years (Soh 2011, p. 48).

Scholars generally agree that it is only after President Kim Dae-jung that the meaningful improvement in the local government system was made as he started enacting a series of decentralization laws from 1998 (Soh 2010, 2011). President Kim was resolute about enhancing the feeble local government system and developing regions across the country more evenly to reduce the preexisting regional economic disparity. For example, he launched the Decentralization Committee under the Administrative Decentralization Act in 1999 (Soh 2011, pp. 49-50). Representing *Cholla Province*, the southwest region of the country that had been alienated from economic and political benefits from the government, President Kim, however, focused more on balanced economic development across regions than political decentralization. His local policy, therefore, was limited to the redistribution of economic resources. Further, his policy intensified the leadership role of the central government ironically in redistributing wealth to locality and harmed local autonomy (Soh 2011).

Kim's successor, President Roh Moo-hyun realized decentralization at a fuller scale. In fact, decentralization of power and giving autonomy to local governments were part of his main pledges during his presidential electoral campaign. His decentralization policy had three main principles: (1) Decentralization first and correction later, (2) subsidiarity, and (3) comprehensive decentralization (Soh 2011: 52-53). Under these principles, Roh undertook major programs. For instance, Jeju Island was bestowed the status of the Special Self-Governing Province in 2005. Also, he proposed a bill to move

government administration and organizations from Seoul to Chungnam Province, which was blocked by the Supreme Court's decision that it is unconstitutional (*Donga Ilbo* October 22, 2004: p. 28; *Hankyung* October 23, 2004: p. 1).

Lastly, Lee Myung-bak's administration mostly continued the policies and projects of his previous administration (Kim S. E. 2010). However, decentralization was not emphasized during his presidential campaign; it was not included in his major pledges. The major achievement during his presidency was that the Local Education Autonomy Act was amended and began direct elections for superintendents and board of education in 2007.

### 5.3.3 Taiwan: a Decentralized System

Taiwan is more decentralized than South Korea. First, Taiwan's economy is not concentrated in large companies like the Korean *chaebol* but is based on fine networks of small- and medium-size enterprises (SME). Second, Taiwan has a long history of local elections and local governments. I argue that the higher degree of decentralization in Taiwan minimizes the gap in the value or benefits of office that exists between the national and local governments. This, in turn, has an effect that alleviates the political parties' too much obsession with national-office goals and thus prevents them from employing radical campaign strategies to win national elections. As a result, party relabeling as an example of radical party strategy is uncommon in Taiwan.

Amsden (1991) characterizes the Taiwanese economy as an SME-centered and regionally decentralized economy. Taiwan like South Korea has achieved economic

development through export-driven strategy and indeed more than half of its economy is accounted for by exports (Hsieh 2011). Manufacturing is the main part of exports, which takes up more than 90% of total exports. However, diverging from the *chaebol*-dominated Korean economy, over 65% of the total manufacturing output in Taiwan is from SMEs (Hsieh 2011). Taiwan's early economy during 1953-1973 was led by big companies too but the scale of the big business domination was not comparable to the case of South Korea.

There are some factors that contribute to the development of SME-based economy in Taiwan. First, the KMT, a government in exile from China did not have close ties with local elites, which enabled the government to design and implement economic policy independently of indigenous capitalists (Hsieh 2011). Second, the KMT was not comfortable with the idea of having big capitalists like the Korean *chaebol* or Japanese *zaibatsu* (Hsieh 2011; Johnson 1987). In order to maintain their political and economic dominance in Taiwan, the KMT, or mainlander elites repressed economic activities of Taiwanese natives and prevented them from growing too much. Third, the KMT developed lots of state-owned companies and concentrated financial benefits to the public sector industries not the private sector (Haggard 2000; Hsieh 2011; Johnson 1987; D. Kang 1995). This limited loans or other financial benefits given to the private sector industries and made a formation of *chaebol*-like big companies almost impossible. Fourth, ethnic cleavages in Taiwan favored fragment business and disperse economic power. Fifth, some suggest that family-centered small business and fine division of labor are part of Chinese culture (Johnson 1987; Redding 1993). Within this context, Taiwan developed fine networks of the SMEs.

Besides the dispersion of economic power between SMEs and big companies, Taiwan also pursued regional decentralization of economy. Whereas the industries of South Korea are concentrated Seoul, Busan and other big cities, Taiwan's industrialization has followed a more decentralized trajectory (Doner and Hershberg 1999; Hashiya 1996; S. Ho 1979). This created employment opportunities in rural areas and urban congestion is not as serious as South Korea. The population in rural areas kept increasing. These growing farm households could support themselves by combining farming with part-time or full-time employment in non-farm activities, which was possible because of spatially decentralized industrialization that Taiwan took (S. Ho 1979).

Concerning the local government system, Taiwan held local legislative elections since 1950 as Chiang Kai-shek accepted the growing demands for local autonomy from the wide sectors of society. With ethnic cleavages that are one of the most salient political issue dimensions in Taiwan, holding legislative elections help mediating the potential ethnic disputes, center-periphery conflicts, and legitimacy crisis of the government. Although these elections were not truly competitive elections among parties but they were mainly contests within the KMT, they created unexpected consequences that contributed to smooth democratic transition in Taiwan (Rigger 1999, 2014). These include providing opportunities for the KMT in Taipei to gauge public opinion toward them, enabling to formulate policy that satisfies local demands, and thus maintaining their legitimacy. This political and administrative decentralization went hand in hand with industrial decentralization in Taiwan.

### 5.3.4 Evidence

The most commonly used indicators for governmental centralization are fiscal-centralization indicators (Chhibber and Kollman 2004; Scheiner 2005a). Although, rigorously speaking, political centralization, policy centralization, and fiscal centralization are not the same it is conventional wisdom that fiscal centralization measures are used as comprehensive measures for governmental centralization (see Rodden 2004). That is mainly due to practical issues of measuring political and policy centralization. As recognized by some scholars, it is extremely hard to quantify these two aspects of centralization. For this reason, I also adopt the conventional way of measuring centralization in this section focusing on fiscal centralization measures.

To gauge the degrees of centralization of South Korea and Taiwan, I employ several indicators that are provided by the OECD Fiscal Decentralisation Database. Unfortunately however, since statistical data on Taiwan are not provided and collected by any of the international organizations, it is impossible to compare South Korea and Taiwan using the same dataset. Using the OECD database, I measure centralization of authority for South Korea and some other OECD countries to show where it stands along the centralization and federalism scale. Then, I use other sources of data for the Taiwanese case.

I use three indicators: (1) tax autonomy of subnational governments, (2) tax revenue as a share of total revenue, and (3) intergovernmental transfer revenue as a share of total revenue. First, "Tax autonomy" is defined as the freedom that subnational governments such as state, local and municipal governments have over their own taxes including their rights or authority to introduce or abolish a tax, to set tax rates, etc.

(OECD Fiscal Decentralisation Database). Second, "Tax revenue as a share of total revenue" captures how much portion that tax revenue makes up of the total revenue at each level of government. For instance, if a local government scores high in this indicator then it indicates that it is financially more or less independent and thus this political system as a whole is considered a fairly decentralized system. The third indicator, "Intergovernmental transfer revenue as a share of total revenue" measures how much portion funds transferred from another level of government makes up of the total revenue at each level of government. Higher values at the local level indicate lower autonomy of local government and thus higher centralization of authority as a political system.

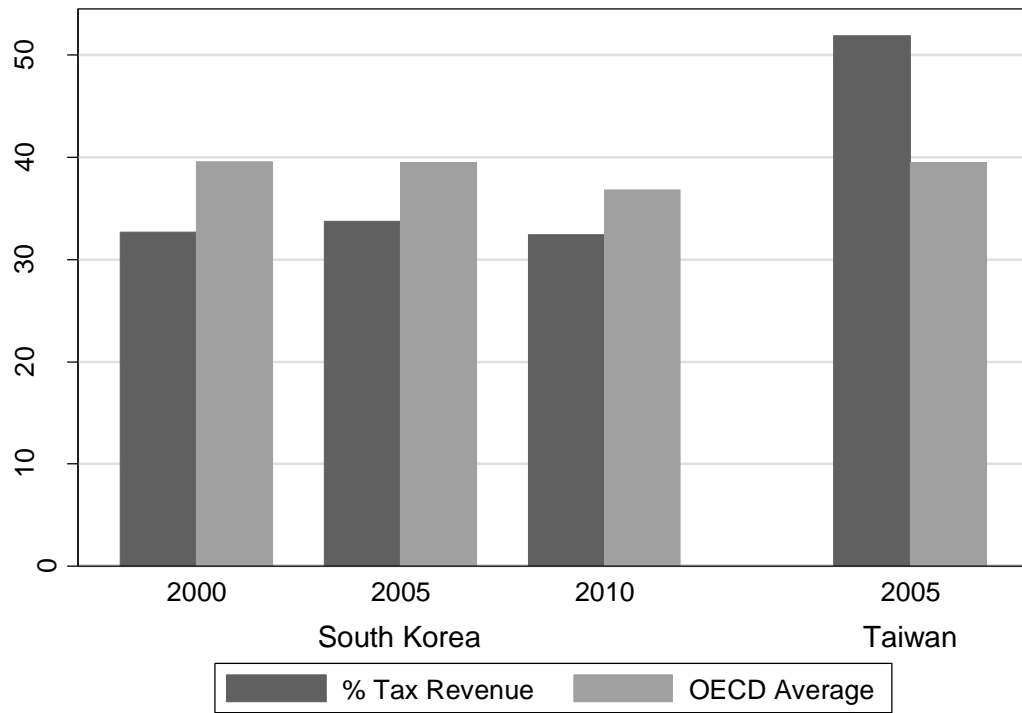**Figure 5.10: Tax Autonomy of Subnational Governments in South Korea**
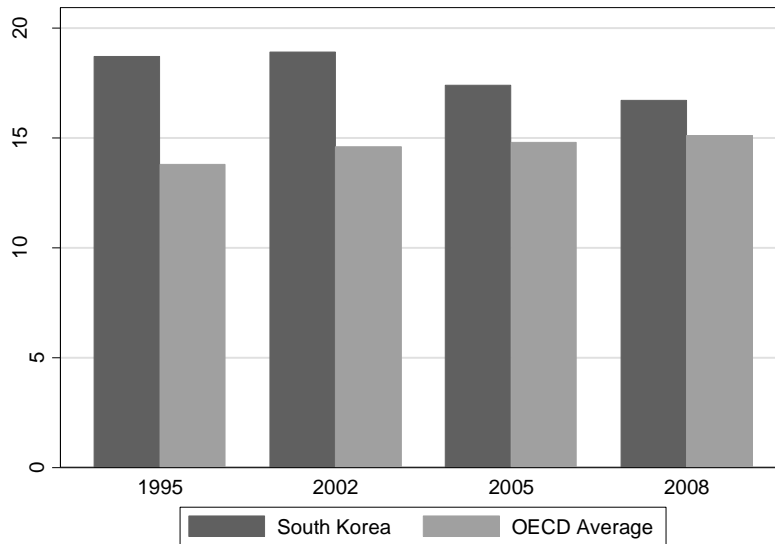


Source: OECD Fiscal Decentralisation Database. The unit of X-axis is %.

Figure 5.10 shows tax autonomy of subnational governments in South Korea and its comparison to the OECD average. According to Figure 5.9, tax autonomy of South Korean subnational governments stands above the average of OECD countries. However,

this does not mean that South Korean local governments indeed enjoy lots of autonomy. In fact, South Korea is in the mid-range of this scale; compared to Japan, one of the most comparable cases besides Taiwan, South Korea is a highly centralized political system as on average its autonomy score is 10 points lower. Figure 5.10 illustrates tax revenue as a share of total revenue at subnational governments. South Korea is situated in the lower rung of this decentralization ladder, indicating that South Korea has a quite highly centralized political system as the OECD average suggests. Compared to Taiwan, South Korea has a much higher degree of government centralization. Finally, Figure 5.11 indicates the % of intergovernmental transfer of total subnational government revenue. Higher values in this measure indicate higher fiscal dependence of local government on central government, meaning higher centralization of political power. These figures conform to my expectation that South Korea is more highly centralized than Taiwan.

**Figure 5.11: Tax Revenue as a Share of Total Revenue at Subnational Government in South Korea and Taiwan**



Source: OECD Fiscal Decentralisation Database. The unit of X-axis is %. Taiwan data is from (Fang 2006)

**Figure 5.12: Intergovernmental Transfer Revenue as a Share of Total Revenue at Subnational Governments in South Korea and Taiwan**
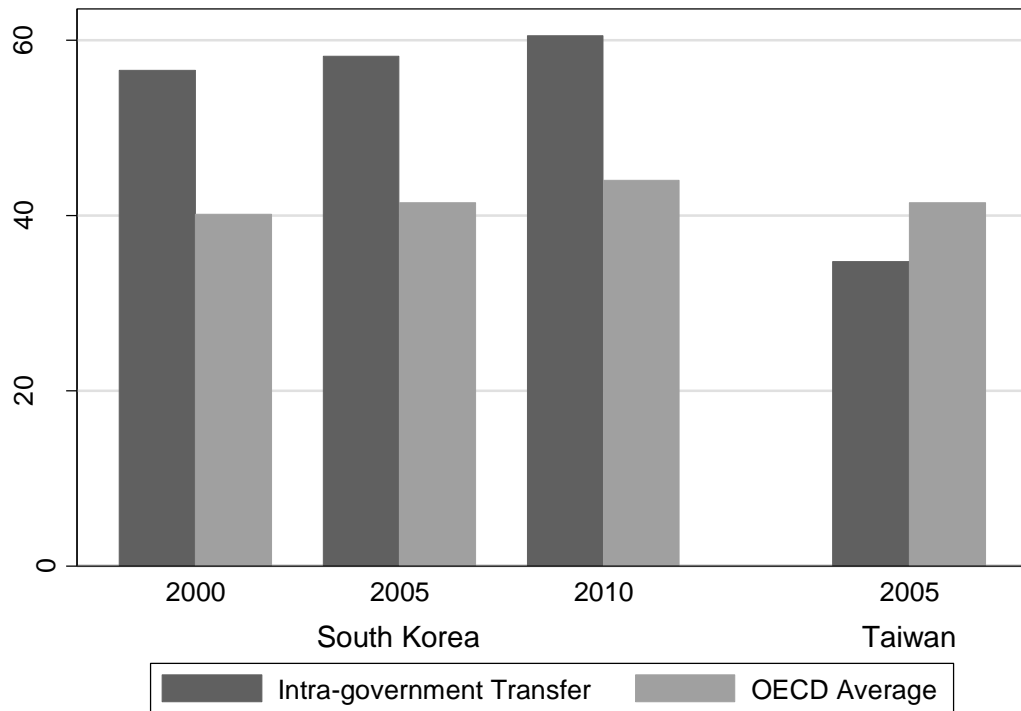


Source: OECD Fiscal Decentralisation Database. The unit of X-axis is %. Taiwan data is from (Fang 2006)

Now that we have examined the degrees of governmental centralization using fiscal indicators, let us consider some consequences of centralization on party behavior. In South Korea as its political and economic authority is disproportionately concentrated in the national government, winning national office is a primary goal for politicians and their parties. It is not only government resources concentrated in the center but party organization as well is strictly hierarchically structured. The national party organization controls every party activity. Moreover, many of the important party official positions are taken by members of the National Assembly, particularly those high-profile politicians.

South Korean parties do not select candidates through primaries but party leaders and top officials have incredible power over candidate selection processes.

All these features of party organization in South Korea suggest that from the perspective of individual politicians and parties, winning national office and winning a majority in the National Assembly and moreover winning the presidency mean almost everything in Korean politics. If you win these important national offices, then you and your party can exercise lots of power and influence virtually at all levels of government throughout the country. In contrast, if you do not have access to these national offices and thus benefits then you and your party get stripped of any meaningful access to political and economic resources. Therefore, under this setting South Korean parties are mainly national-office-oriented. In order to win more seats in the National Assembly and presidency, the parties are willing and indeed forced to do anything that is believed to brighten their electoral fortune. In line with this logic, frequent party relabeling in South Korea can be understood.

## 5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I tested the model on party relabeling by applying it to South Korea and Taiwan. Using various types of data, I tested diverse dimension of causal mechanisms involved in my model. The empirical findings provide decent support for my theory. In short, they suggest that South Korea's heavy reliance on personalistic party cues, strong levels of political attention in the public, and centralization of power encourage their parties to relabel themselves. Taiwan, on the other hand, lacking all these features does not develop this pattern among its parties.

# CHAPTER 6 FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES

In this chapter, I apply my model to the French and U.S. cases and test whether it works explaining them accurately. Using the same framework adopted to test South Korea and Taiwan in the previous chapter, I examine the differences between France and the U.S. in terms of the prominence of personalistic party cues, levels of political interest in the public, and degrees of governmental centralization. In discussing each component of the model, I adopt a historical institutionalist approach, focusing on historical legacies and how they have led each country to the patterns that they took. My model predicts that France scores higher in these three indicators than the U.S. and it provides an environment in the former where party renaming is encouraged for electoral victory. The findings of empirical analysis in this chapter generally support the predictions of the proposed model.

## 6.1 Prominence of Personalistic Party Cues in France

Similar to South Korea, the French party system is characterized by the prominence of personalistic cues. Those in leadership position including president, prime minister, cabinet members, and party leaders have high name recognition in the public and strong influence in their parties. Inside parties, there are multiple factions formed around prominent figures and they have their own network and organizations. These features of the French party system indicate that it is personalized and thus the French voters easily adopt personalistic party cues. This trend has been reinforced since presidentialization of politics took place.

This does not mean that ideology does not matter in French politics. Instead, parties in France stand for clear ideological platform and voters are aligned to them accordingly. In fact, ideology instead of party ID is the number one factor that explains the French voter's choice (Bélanger et al. 2006; M. Lewis-Beck and Chlarson 2002). The left-right division in French party system is salient and plays a determinative role in its operation although the center on the French ideological scale has somewhat lost its significance that it used to have vis-à-vis the Left and the Right (Brouard, Appleton, and Mazur 2009; Cole, Meunier, and Tiberj 2013; Safran 2009). The prominence of personalistic cues that is used here, therefore, is relative terms, not absolute terms. There is no party that provides only one type of cue among the three developed by Kitschelt (2000). However, the relative prominence or strength among the three could vary depending on system-level and party-level characteristics. In this light, I argue that parties in France provide strong personalistic cues to voters by which the voters quickly process information of the party brands, associating certain policy images and valence reputation with a given party.

In this section, I discuss the emergence of de Gaulle as a charismatic leader at the dawn of the demise of the Fourth Republic as a proximate "origin" of personalized party politics in France and its impact on French party system and leadership style of parties and politicians. Then, I analyze highly fragmented parties in France as a consequence of the dominance of personalistic party cues within the system. Finally, I discuss the U.S. case as an example of a system in which ideological party cues are prevalent. Its historical background for the emergence of ideological cues and consequences on the party system are examined.

### 6.1.1 Emergence of Gaullism as a Founding Philosophy of the Fifth Republic

Charles de Gaulle as a founder of Fifth Republic France made profound impact on current French politics. The term, "Gaullism" is a political ideology on which the Fifth Republic was founded. Though it is vague to be properly considered an "ideology," it is clear that it is composed of nationalistic elements such strong leadership, the enhancement of national power, and aggrandizing France's global role (Demker 1997; Safran 2009). This is why the Gaullists which have appeared under a variety of labels, currently labeled *Les Republicans*, are categorized as the Right. A frequent use of such terms as Gaullism and Gaullists suggests de Gaulle's prominent status in the Fifth Republic. His personal prestige as a political leader left a lasting legacy in French party politics that defines its main characteristic: the prominence of personalistic party cues.

His ascendancy to the status he enjoys in French politics can be traced back to the Algerian problem in 1958. First occupied in 1830, Algeria officially became France's colony in 1848. However, as many of the colonies got liberated throughout the world after the end of the World War II, the Algerian issue naturally emerged. In 1954, the Algerian insurgent movement of the *Front de Liberation Nationale* (FLN) arose and fought against the French colonialist to gain independence from them. Metropolitan France sent more military force to Algeria and repressed the movement but hardly was the violence quenched. A couple years passing, the movement evolved into urban terrorism and never-ending guerrilla combats, which drained an enormous amount of economic and political resources from France.

As the situation got worse and the atmosphere of the international community turned against France's keeping the colony, a division occurred in French politics. The Communists and Socialists criticized the government and supported the independence of Algeria while the rightists held on to the idea, "*L'Algerie Francaise*," Algerian France, that is, Algeria is an integral part of France (Thody 1989, p. 127). Although the top decision makers including Prime Minister Pierre Pflimlin in metropolitan France recognized Algerian independence was unavoidable, they were too weak to solve the issue (Bell 2000, p. 37). There were great divisions not only in France but also in Algeria between those who supported Algerian independence and those who opposed it. Under this context, the charismatic general, de Gaulle was invited to politics as he was believed to be the only person who could solve the problem.

He realized his priority was to unite people from all groups and to bring France behind him. In order to achieve this difficult goal, he tried to keep his intentions unrevealed and vague enough so that all groups of people believed that de Gaulle was on their side (Bell 2000, pp. 38-39). The tactic he adopted to maintain ambiguity of his intentions was using his personal network. His loyal followers met important figures, learned about their views regarding the Algerian issue, and persuaded them as if they were spokespersons of de Gaulle but he himself never expressed his thoughts in public (Bell 2000, pp. 38-39). Further, he was backed by solid support from the French public. His charisma and legitimacy coming from it enabled him to push his agenda through and finally, he announced independence to Algeria and put an end to the Algerian war through Evian agreements in 1962.

Prior to the announcement of an "Algerian Algeria" dissents from the military tried assassinating de Gaulle but failed. This incident added him more political capital as the French rallied around him and the military came under his influence (Thody 1989, pp. 133-136). How much he was supported by the people is shown in the fact that the referendum held on the "Algerian Algeria" passed by 75% "Yes" on January 8, 1961 (Thody 1989, p. 135). Indeed it was powerful enough to enable de Gaulle to claim that the independence of Algeria is the will of the people. In addition, the later referendum on the Evian agreements was a bigger success to him as over 90% of the voters cast "Yes" (Thody 1989, p. 138). With popular support, he was able to establish the presidency as the most influential office vis-à-vis the legislature and prime minister, paving the way to "presidentialization" of French politics (Poguntke and Webb 2007). This has further reinforced the salience and importance of personalistic cues in France such as de Gaulle as the strongest cue ever.

Without the Algerian crisis, it would have not been possible that de Gaulle ascended to the national hero status. It did open the opportunity through which he could exercise his charismatic leadership. However, there are other factors that made the opportunity work out for him. First, the party system prior to de Gaulle's return to power was highly fragmented. In metropolitan politics, the Center and the Right were composed of multiple weak parties; the only viable political force was the Communist Party (Bell 2000b; Cole 2008). Local politics were dominated by notables rather than parties. With a power void on the Right and lack of institutionalized party system, de Gaulle was able to set himself as the most influential party quickly and garner lots of support from the

people. In other words, he institutionalized his personal appeal and succeeded in displacing the non-Gaullist Right (McHale and Shaber 1976).

Second, the nature of that time was conducive to his leadership. The World War II devastated France, leaving nothing from which the state could restart and rebuild what had been lost including economic and political institutions. The people wanted strong leadership in the "state-rebuilding" process, which was the major reason that they were disenchanted by the Fourth Republic. The need of the era was met by de Gaulle. Third, relatedly de Gaulle's lack of clear ideology facilitated his winning broad support from the society. Referring to his lack of commitment to being an ideologue, Bell (2000) argues that "Gaullism was a blank space onto which people wrote their own manifesto" (p. 38).

His leadership left legacies that set a trajectory in which French politics has taken. The most important one is that his charismatic legitimacy is an origin of strong personalistic party cues which define the characteristics of French party system. As he was such a charismatic boss that even after he left politics, personified frames have been commonly used in party politics such as "anti-*Gaullists*," "*Sarkozian*" and "*Hollandism*" to name a few. To put differently, de Gaulle is a strong reference point which later politicians, particularly party leaders are compared to and framed or labeled against.

Such cues were not limited to the Gaullists; the *Socialist Part*y (PS) also developed personalistic cues. For instance, in the late 1980s, there were several influential factions or currents inside the PS, a result of members' rallies around potential leader candidates. They include the "*Mitterrandist*" faction, the "*Mauroy*" faction, and the "*Rocardian*" faction (Gaffney 1990). These leader-based factions have become an important intraparty institution where these influential figures assess and signal power

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relations in the party and make strategic decisions. These personal networks involve all the current and former national leaders such as ex-ministers and ex-prime ministers. Each of the groups has its own offices, personnel and internal meetings as if they were like an individual party (Gaffney 1990, pp. 72-73). This snapshot illustrates how personalistic cues are prevalent in the French party system.

### 6.1.1.1 The French Leadership Style

De Gaulle also contributed to the development of a leadership style unique to France. His strong statesmanship institutionalized in the French public a notion that power prevails over right and those in authority should have privileges (Bohn and de Jong 2011). Strong presidency that he established forces French politicians, particularly those in leadership positions to be seen men of action. The leaders are expected to push ahead with their agendas; persuasion- or compromise- seeking attitudes get punished because these are seen a sign of weakness. The high level of tolerance to the prevalence of power over right and the admiration of macho-style leadership have made the French more in favor of a "mercurial revolutionary" than a "methodical scientist" or a charismatic and domineering leader than a cautious and compromising one (Bohn and de Jong 2011, p. 10).

In sum, the institutional arrangements that de Gaulle established – strong presidency, charismatic leadership, and centralized government structure (versus federalism) – created a particular leadership style favored by the French. Interestingly, these two have mutually reinforcing effects: the given institutions shape the French leadership style but the leadership style also reinforces the features of the institutions in a way that both functionally fit better. Following is Bohn and de Jong's description of the

different leadership styles of Sarkozy and Merkel, the leaders of France and Germany, the two countries believed to fairly different political cultures. It provides us a clear picture of the French leadership style.

> He (Sarkozy) likes pushing his peers [EU leaders] towards 'less talk and much more action' according to The Economist. Merkel, in contrast, is not only cautious by temperament, some even accuse her of trying to sit out problems, but she is also vigorously opposed to putting forward a vision for the EU 'because I believe that defining long-term goals sometimes makes it more difficult to take the necessary next political steps' (Bohn and de Jong 2011, p. 10).

**6.1.2 Fragmented Party System: Too Many Hopeless Parties**

France uses a two-round electoral system for both legislative and presidential elections. The members of the National Assembly, the lower house, are elected from a single member district using a two-round plurality rule where the threshold for a candidate to advance to the second round is 12.5% of votes[23]. In presidential elections, only the top two vote-earners are eligible to move on to the second round and whoever of the two finalists wins a more number of votes in this stage gets elected to president. However, for both offices if there is anyone who wins an absolute majority of the votes, then that person becomes a winner; there is no second-round election. Although the French electoral rule is unique in that the run-off is used for the two most important political offices, the mechanical essence of the rule is fairly similar to the first-past-the-post (FPTP) rule. In fact, there are some studies that find little or almost no different

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[23] The Senate, the upper house, is not directly elected.

effects between simple FPTP and the French run-off system (Blais 2010; Blais et al. 2007; Blais and Indridason 2007; Blais and Loewen 2009). In other words, the French two-round electoral system is as disproportional as FPTP, rewarding large parties at the expense of smaller parties. If that is the case, then the French party system poses an interesting puzzle: Why are there so many small parties under such a restrictive rule?

According to the well-established Duverger's law and its modification Cox's "M+1" formula, the French electoral rule effectively winnows out weak parties and leaves two to three viable ones who have a chance of winning (Cox 1997; Duverger 1963). The mechanisms at work are the mechanical and psychological effects. The former refers to the restrictive effect that FPTP as a mathematical formula creates while the latter captures the voter's perspective that he or she does not want his/her vote wasted. This is the essence of strategic voting against sincere voting. Voters choose a lesser evil or second best if their favorite party does not have a chance of winning. Given the mechanical and psychological effects of electoral rules, how can we understand France's highly fragmented party system? Why are there so many hopeless parties?

Table 6.1 shows some indicators by which one can evaluate the degree of party system fragmentation in France. The indicators include: (1) the number of parties that won more than 5% of the vote at each election, (2) the number of races won in the first round, (3) the effective number of electoral parties, and (4) the effective number of parliamentary parties.

**Table 6.1: Number of Parties by Legislative Election**

| Year | Parties > 5% | Races won in first round, % | ENEP | ENPP |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1958 | 7 | 8.4 | 7.29 | 4.85 |
| 1962 | 7 | 20.6 | 5.38 | 3.51 |
| 1967 | 5 | 16.4 | 4.79 | 3.71 |
| 1968 | 5 | 33.6 | 4.42 | 2.49 |
| 1973 | 5 | 10.9 | 6.04 | 4.42 |
| 1978 | 4 | 12.0 | 4.96 | 4.08 |
| 1981 | 4 | 32.7 | 4.08 | 2.54 |
| 1988 | 5 | 20.7 | 4.39 | 3.23 |
| 1993 | 5 | 13.0 | 6.84 | 2.87 |
| 1997 | 6 | 1.3 | 7.01 | 3.42 |
| 2002 | 3 | 9.7 | 5.15 | 2.16 |
| 2007 | 3 | 19.8 | 3.37 | 2.29 |
| 2012[a] | 5 | 16.0 | 4.36 | 2.84 |
| Pre-1980 | 5.50 | 17.0 | 5.48 | 3.84 |
| Post-1980[b] | 4.43 | 16.17 | 5.03 | 2.76 |

Source: Blais and Loewen (2009) except for the 2012 election[a] and Post-1980[b]
accordinlgy. The data for the 2012 election are from the author's calculations
based on Manuel Álvarez-Rivera's "Election Resources on the Internet:
Presidential and Legislative Elections in France".

Given that there are well over 15 parties all the time on average, the number of
parties that got at least 5% of the vote indicates the majority of them are far from being
viable candidates. Although it is not very clear the overall trend of party system
fragmentation is in decrease, suggesting that the number of weak parties is in increase.
The number of races won in the first round suggests that there were so many fluctuations

that it is hard to tell a pattern. The rest of the indicators do not present us any clear trends either but it seems that party fragmentation decreased a little bit in the three most recent elections. Nonetheless, what Table 1 indicates unambiguously is that the French system is quite fragmented. As discussed above, the institutional approach cannot explain this phenomenon. Then, what are some possible alternatives?

There are two other theories that are relevant to explaining party systems, namely Chhibber and Kollman's (2004) "centralization versus federalism" argument and Ordeshook and Shvetsova's (1994) "social cleavage" approach. The centralization argument says if a polity is highly decentralized – meaning, political and economic authorities are evenly distributed across levels of government, then its party system could be more fragmented than predicted by the electoral system. Although this approach provides an excellent insight to understanding some of the exceptions of Duverger's law, it fails to explain the French case as France is a highly centralized country, which will be addressed in depth in the latter part of this chapter.

Then, what about the social cleavage approach? It states that if a polity has many salient social cleavages, i.e., ethnic, linguistic, or religious cleavages, etc., then it tends to have more number of effective parties than predicted by its electoral rule. Unfortunately however, France does not have particularly more cleavages than many of its European neighbors. The single most definitive cleavage is the traditional left-right ideological one and recently, immigration and other post-material issues have emerged (Bell 2000a; Brouard, Appleton, and Mazur 2009; Cole, Meunier, and Tiberj 2013; Safran 2009). However, these are not unique to France. In fact, these issue cleavages are generally shared by other Western European democracies.

One might claim that the persistence of hopeless parties in France can be explained by European elections. This additional layer of elections provides small parties motivations to hang on and try. This new opportunity could allow them to practice their skills, get their names out, and earn credibility which they could not otherwise. However, this does not seem to hold either. If there is this incubating or nourishing effect provided by European elections, then we expect to see more fragmentation after 1979 when the first European Parliamentary election was held. If we compare the last two rows, we see little difference or slightly more consolidation effect rather than fragmentation.

To date, there is no satisfactory theory that successfully addresses the case. Here, I suggest high fragmentation of the French party system is attributed to the prevalence of personalistic party cues or leader-oriented politics. From the perspective of the leaders of the small parties, it is better to be the head of their party and accumulate brand value than be devoured by a larger party and lose their leader status. It is humiliating for them to be absorbed into the stronger host and forced to be subject to the internal rules already set there. However, if they stay on their own they have total autonomy over what they are to do. Whether it is advantageous or disadvantageous is not a primary concern for them because they recognize the importance of personalistic cues in their system. Instead as a strategy for these weak party leaders to survive or increase the chance to win more votes, they commonly form pre-electoral coalitions with bigger parties. According to Golder (2006), the frequency of pre-electoral alliances in the Fifth Republic is 22.5%. This number is strikingly high given that the average of the rest 22 European democracies included in her data is merely 5.3%.

Obviously, the proposed argument that a heavy usage of personalistic cues is responsible for party system fragmentation in France needs more rigorous testing. However, this is out of the scope of this research. The main purpose of discussing this issue was to provide an example that could possibly understood as an impact of the prominence of personalistic party cues in France. I leave it for my future research.

### 6.1.3 The United States: Prominence of Ideological Party Cues

The U.S. party system boasts its stable bi-partism with clear ideological party cues and fairly stable loyalty from the electorate. In this section, I discuss the origin and historical background of the emergence of ideological party cues in the U.S. as the most dominant form of the three – ideological, clientelist, and personalistic cues – based on Aldrich's outstanding work on the development of American political parties (Aldrich 1995). In doing so, I focus on the pattern of party organizational development that arose in the U.S. and how it was intertwined with the prevalence of ideological cues.

The core argument of Aldrich (1995) as to why parties emerged in the U.S. despite the apprehension about factions or parties that the Founding Fathers generally shared and publicly expressed is that parties help to meet the ambitions of politicians. His famous line captures this aspect clearly: Parties are "endogenous institutions" shaped and altered by the actions of political actors over time (Aldrich 1995, p. 19). Parties are the product of ambitious office seekers created to solve collective action, social choice, and electoral mobilization problems. Aldrich argues that parties are a stable long-term coalition of groups and individuals with diverse interests that create a stability-induced equilibrium (SIE). The SIE in turn effectively overcomes the collective action, social

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choice and electoral mobilization problems, which are impossible through issue-by-issue compromises and vote trade.

Using this theoretical framework, Aldrich describes the emergence of parties in the U.S. by about the Third Congress – the *Federalists* (or Hamiltonians) versus *Jeffersonian Republicans* – and their evolution into the current two-party system. Party formation took place out of a necessity to form more stable and institutionalized voting blocs felt necessary by the leaders in Congress such as Hamilton, Jefferson and Madison. Gradually legislators engaged in debate by group and voted along party lines. Similar to France and South Korea, one might note, the leaders played a critical role in party and party system formation and they indeed were the nucleus of the process in this initial phase. However, the U.S. parties diverged from the French or South Korean leader-oriented models. Instead, they invested in developing strong party organizations and stable decision-making institutions within the parties. What made them take this trajectory requires more in-depth research but as this is not within the scope of my dissertation I move on without discussing why.

What we are certain of is the fact that these early parties relied on institutions rather than giving in to the whims of prominent leaders of the parties. Aldrich confirms this point as he mentions that no specific men's ambition prevailed in this system (Aldrich 1995, p. 99). He claims that this was because the main motivation behind party formation was to institutionalize the SIE that help all ambitious politicians to win elections and solve social choice problems. For this reason, he argues, there were no specific principles or personal agendas put forward by the members of both parties (Aldrich 1995, p. 100).

As the party system further developed, the parties extended both in terms of organization and issue dimensions by forming broad, intersectional alliances, and thereby embracing a variety of interests. The second party system that appeared around the late-1820s and settled in the 1840s was characterized by the rivalry between the *Jacksonian Democratic Party* and the *Whig Party*. These new parties reinforced their party organizations and intraparty rules as collective decision-making mechanisms instead of turning to developing clientelist networks or leader-oriented mechanisms (Aldrich 1995, pp. 106-112). The Jacksonian Democratic Party as its name suggests put Jackson to the fore as its face. However, this was different from the way the French Gaullist Party was formed; the Gaullist was an entourage party that its members rallied around the charismatic leader, Charles de Gaulle. Instead, ambitious office and benefit seekers deliberately chose Jackson as their face because they believed that Jackson had a high chance of winning the presidency in 1828 (Aldrich 1995, pp. 108-109). They believed that Jackson's electoral victory would benefit them as well through spoils of office. In fact, Jackson enjoyed unparalleled popularity among the public and this made him a desirable asset to the party from the perspective of the party founders.

This does not mean that there was no ideological platform at play in the second party system. Of course, the "great principle," strong national government versus state autonomy was so profound a political cleavage that it divided the two parties (Aldrich 1995, p. 109). Further, this cleavage placed an ideological boundary in each party by which other issue positions are constrained within the parties. What I emphasize here is that personal ambitions of a particular leader were not a prevailing factor in the formation and development of parties in the U.S. This is what makes the U.S. system distinct from

the French system. The grand ideological position defined the reputation of the parties but there was no particular interest prevailing in the parties including the leader's. Instead of giving the leader tremendous power to make decisions, the parties developed sophisticated institutions that deal with conflict-management and decision-making. Regarding this, Aldrich puts it,

> Jackson's ambiguous policy stance made it possible for those in the new party (Jacksonian Democratic Party) to run on whatever platform they wanted to, perhaps taking the opposite position from those running in the same party elsewhere in the nation. His personal popularity was a tide that would lift all Democratic boats without committing them to anything in particular, only to Jeffersonian principles in general…Jackson's lack of public definition of any real policy platform was crucial in part because many of these state organizations would enter the party already constrained on policy. (p. 109)

In sum, the U.S. parties realized the need for collective decision-making mechanisms and developed strong party organizations accordingly from the beginning. Through highly institutionalized mechanisms, the parties have been able to keep their grand ideological principles from any particular ambitions or interests of individual members, especially those with a high profile. Institutionalized decision-making mechanisms provide stability in party operation in general and ideological identity in particular, which in turn contribute to accruing solid brand value to the party and its label. Thus, ideological party cues prevail over personalistic or clientelist cues in the U.S.

This view is supported by Hellmann (2011) that there is selective affinity between each type of party cue[24] and that of intraparty decision-making mechanisms. Both clientelist and personalistic cues do not require any specific institutional mechanisms to resolve intraparty conflict but for different reasons. First, the party with a clientelist cue does not have to invest in the formal organization because many of the party functions can be performed by the clientelist machine. As long as the party allocates resources to its members so that they can make their clientelist machine keep working, intraparty conflict will be resolved. This is exactly what Ramseyer and Rosenbluth (1997) describes the intraparty dispute resolution mechanism of the Japanese *Liberal Democratic Party* (LDP), one of the world's most successful clientelist parties. There is a highly sophisticated institutionalized give-and-take relationship between backbenchers and leaders inside the LDP. Backbenchers are to practice political entrepreneurship and yet be loyal to the party and leaders raise the party's funds and bankroll each of the factions inside the party in exchange. This mechanism effectively works for maintaining strong discipline of the LDP which consists of many factions that compete against each other.

Second, the party with a personalistic cue does not feel compelled to build collective decision-making mechanisms simply because "decision-making authority will flow naturally from the leader's personality and charisma" (Hellmann 2011, p. 25). The

[24] Olli Hellmann refers to a party cue as an electoral strategy. Specifically, he classifies electoral strategies into three: programmatic, clientelist and charisma-based strategy. Each of the terms corresponds to my terminology, ideological, clientelist, and personalistic party cues. He further specifies a programmatic strategy into two types, which are catch-all and club goods strategies.

charismatic leader's will is the mechanism that regulates the decision-making process and resolve issues within the party.

Third, it is only the party with an ideological cue that invests in the development of internal decision-making mechanism. It is because if the party is to establish an ideological cue as a reliable cue to the electorate, then it must speak with a single collective voice. This requires institutions as a collective decision-making tool which is more stable and reliable in nature than clientelist machines or charisma of a party leader. The U.S. party system that I discuss in this section has great resemblance to it. The early American parties developed strong party organizations to regulate diverse interests of ambitious members and as a result they made ideological cues as confident measures to voters, which prevail clientelist and personalistic cues. This explains how and why the U.S. party system took a different trajectory from its French counterpart that developed personalistic cues.

### 6.1.4 Evidence

In order to test the hypothesis that the prominence of personalistic party cues is more conducive to party relabeling than is of ideological or clientelist party cues, I present evidence that shows the heavy usage of personalistic cues in France in comparison to the United States. First, using the newspaper analysis dataset that I create for this research, I gauge the degree of reliance on personalistic party cues in both countries and compare them. For this dataset, I conduct content analysis of *Le Monde* for France and the *New York Times* for the U.S. Similar to the South Korean and Taiwanese

newspapers used in my analysis, these two newspapers are one of the most representative national newspapers for France and the U.S.

The French dataset compiled for this research contains all front-page and politics-section stories in *Le Monde* from May 1, 2011 through May 9, 2012 with a total of 5487 stories. The U.S. dataset contains the same content from the *New York Times* covering January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012 with a total of 7217 stories. I pick these particular time windows for the same reason for the analysis of South Korea and Taiwan. France and the U.S. had both legislative and presidential elections during this period; France in May 2012, the U.S. in November 2012. Both countries using open primaries for candidate nominations, news agenda during the election year offers lots of stories on parties, candidates, campaigns, and public opinion. This allows one to investigate the type of party cue extensively used in both systems and many other characteristics of each system. I examine the headlines of front-page and politics-section stories only as I do for the *Chosun Ilbo* and the *Liberty Times*. Again, I choose the print edition of the newspapers instead of the digital version.

**Figure 6.1: Ratio of Individual Politician and Party Mentions in News Headlines**
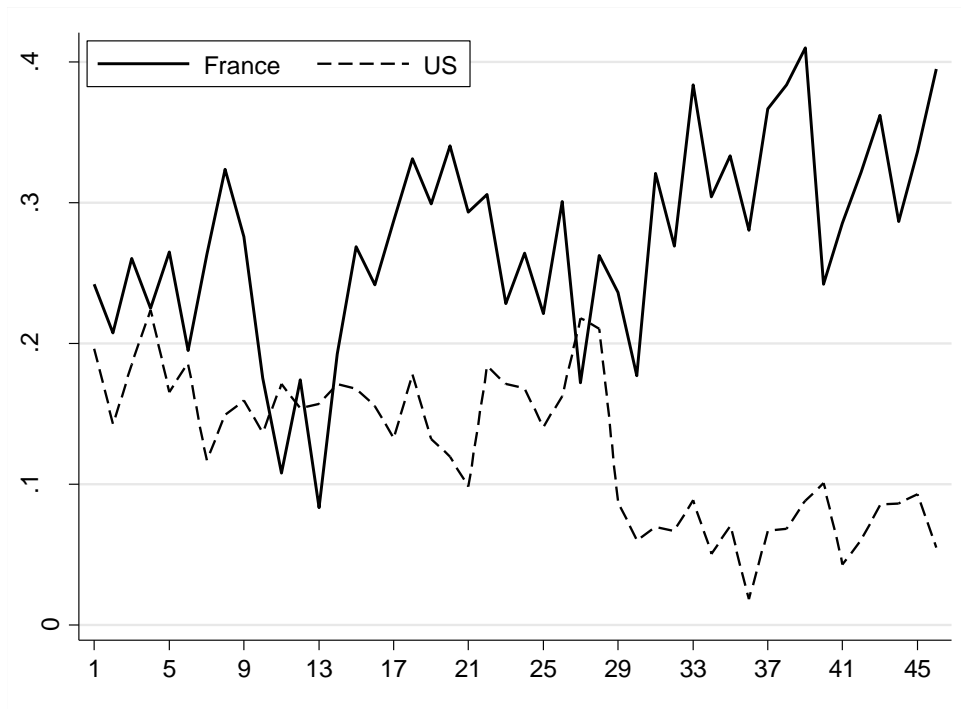
**(a) France**
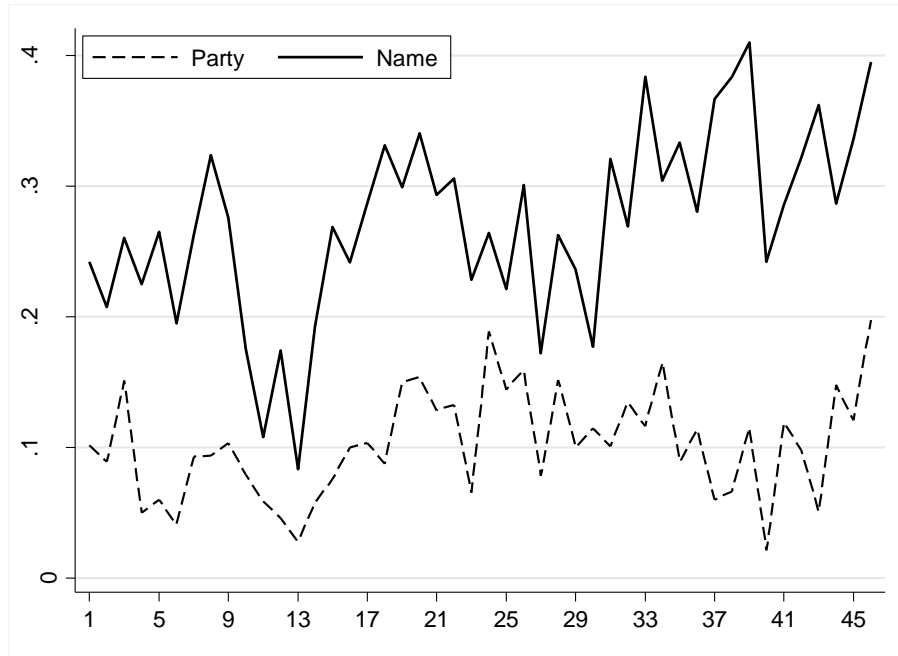


**(b) U.S.**
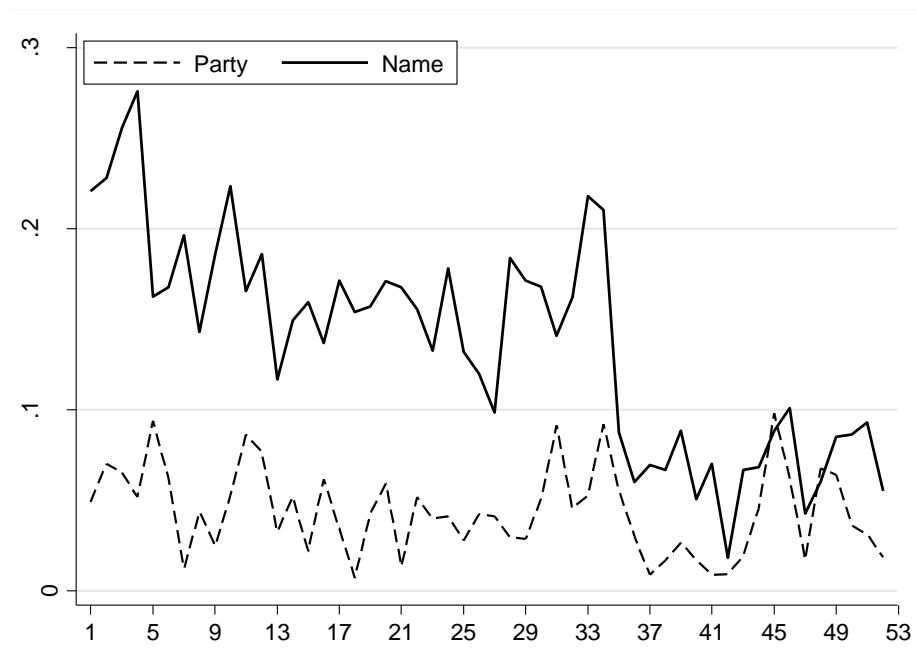
**(c) Combined**



The graphs show that in general both France and the United States make use of personalistic cues slightly more than party brands in newspapers. In both, individual names are more frequently mentioned in the headlines than party names. However, one thing to note is the overall frequency of politician mentions is remarkably lower than South Korea and Taiwan. Further, the gaps between the ratios of politician and party mentions are much narrower than those of both East Asian third-wave democracies. As expected, there are several differences between France and the U.S. in terms of personalistic cue prevalence. First, more individual politicians' names are mentioned in French news headlines than its American counterparts. Second, as the elections neared, the number of the mentions of individual politicians kept increasing in France whereas the opposite pattern developed in the U.S.

In order to gauge each system's reliance of "leader cues", a subset of personal cues, I calculate the % of leader cues out of the total news stories. The results are in Figure 6.2. The graph again confirms that French politics are more inundated with leader-based personalistic cues than the U.S. politics. As elections neared, more numbers of news headlines that contain leaders' names appeared in *Le Monde* whereas the number dropped drastically in the *New York Times*.

**Figure 6.2: Ratio of Political Leader Mentions in News Headlines**
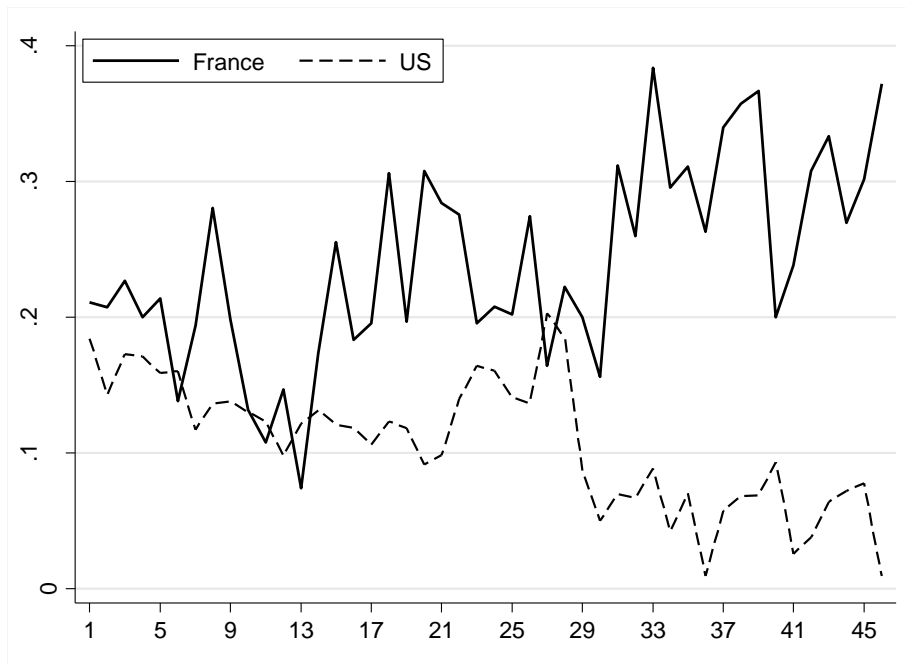


## 6.2 Strong Levels of Political Attention in the Electorate

The political culture of France is characterized by the highly politicized electorate and political activism both of which indicate a high level of political interest in the public (Cole, Meunier, and Tiberj 2013; Converse and Dupeux 1962; Safran 2009). The French

electorate is deeply divided along the ideological cleavages and they, some argue, have a tendency to view and express everything in terms of ideology (Safran 2009). Particularly, it is worth noting Converse and Dupeux's evaluation on the French and American political culture for our purpose. They wrote,

> The turbulence of French politics has long fascinated observers, particularly when comparisons have been drawn with the stability or, according to one's point of view, the dull complacency of American political life. Profound ideological cleavages in France, the occasional threat of civil war, rather strong voter turnout, the instability of governments and republics, and the rise and fall of "flash" parties like the R.P.F. in 1951, the Poujadists in 1956, and the U.N.R. in 1958 have all contributed to the impression of a peculiar intensity in the tenor of French political life." (Converse and Dupeux 1962: 1)

Indeed many public opinion surveys reveal that French voters are "seeking to be well informed of politics" and the majority of them regard politics as an honorable profession and it bears an importance on their lives[25]. In addition, the French public is in general tolerant toward demonstrations or strikes even if they cause inconveniences to them such as the massive strikes in the transport sector in 1995 and moreover, strikers are given fair support from the public (Safran 2009, p. 67). In the case of the 1995 strikes, a public opinion poll showed that 57% of the French supported the public employees' fight

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[25] Source: SOFRES, *L'Etat de l'opinion* (1990); TNS-Sofres, *L'Etat de l'opinion* (2006). These numbers are excerpted from Safran (2009) p. 62 and p. 66, respectively.

against the government (The *New York Times* October 10, 1995) [26]. Not surprisingly, strikes and demonstrations are commonly seen in the streets in France.

The United States shows a quite different picture. What the literature on American political opinion suggests in unison is that American voters are ignorant of and inattentive to political affairs (e.g., Campbell et al. 1960; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1991, 1993, 1996; Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Page and Shapiro 1983; Schudson 2000). Due to their lack of interest in politics, the American voters do not turn out to vote and when they do they heavily rely on their party ID in making a voting decision. Stable loyalty to parties is one of the main indicators for party system consolidation and thus a relatively high score of the U.S. on this measure is viewed in a positive light. A number of scholars prove that party ID is a reliable information shortcut in the American context and thus voters can make reasoned decisions with scant information (Downs 1957; Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Page and Shapiro 1983). No matter whether the American voters' reliance on party ID is positive or negative, the underlying view is that the American public is not very interested in politics. What is worse, as Putnam (2000) lamented, the downward trend in terms of American indifference to politics has been ongoing ever since the late $20^{th}$ century.

Here in this section, I argue that the gap in the level of political interest between the French and American public has an impact on the French parties' inclination to relabel themselves vis-à-vis the stable American party labels. The French electorate's

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[26] "Public-Employee Strike in France Fosters a Day of Discontent," *The New York Times* October 10, 1995.

high level of awareness of and attentiveness to political affairs can be viewed as constant public surveillance by politicians and parties. Particularly, strong collective activism can be a serious threat to the rulers because this means that if a policy failure or any fiasco takes place then it could generate tremendous repercussions that endanger their legitimacy. Under this situation, parties tend to develop an attitude to resolve a crisis when faced with it as soon as possible using resolutions that are as visible and dramatic as possible in order to contain the issue quickly. In line with this logic, I argue that French parties rely more heavily on relabeling as a problem-solving strategy than their American counterparts.

In order to prove this argument, first I discuss an example that displays strong political activism of the French public and the reaction of the parties and the key government actors like president and prime minister to such popular threats. Then, I suggest other evidence that explains the model proposed here more in depth.

### 6.2.1 Political Activism in France: Going Out to the Street!

In this section, I provide a detailed mechanism of the proposed model that states in a political system whose electorate is overly politically active the likelihood that a party relies on relabeling as a rebranding strategy tends to go up. To elucidate the causal mechanism, I discuss the nation-wide general strikes that occurred in 1995 in France. In order to compare the differences between France and the U.S. regarding this model, one needs to select one case each of the countries that are comparable enough for us to draw implications from the comparative analysis. The ideal example is the brief case study

discussed in the previous chapter comparing the impact and consequences of the anti-U.S. beef protests that occurred both in South Korea and Taiwan at similar times. Unfortunately, it is hard to find ideally comparable cases that allow us to do the similar comparative analysis for France and the U.S. mainly for their different government systems: the former a unitary state and the latter a federal state.

The crux of this analysis is to compare the scale, massiveness, duration, and consequences of the almost identical protests that happened in France and the U.S. All of these factors mentioned have a lot to do with territoriality of politics defined by a degree of (de-)centralization that will be discussed in the following section. For instance, in the U.S. as a federal state, there are more physical hurdles that a political demonstration needs to overcome in order for it to be developed into a massive nation-wide movement. Moreover, it is simply nearly impossible that any movement can transcends the state boundary since all important policies except for foreign affairs and macro-economy are handled by the state government. Political scandals or issues that might initiate popular activism in one state lose their relevancy in other states. In short, this constitutional difference between France and the U.S. hinders us from making a meaningful comparison with regards to political activism and mobilization.

For this reason, I choose and analyze one French case for the purpose of drawing implications as to what pattern political mobilization takes in France. Admitting that this falls short of a theory test, I aim at expounding the causal mechanism of my model using the French case.

### 6.2.1.1 The 1995 Strikes in France

The 1995 strikes were so severe and widespread to broad sectors of society that they are often compared to May 1968 (Safran 2009; Trat 1996). Similar to May 1968, the historic upheaval led by students and workers that brought down the Government of President Charles de Gaulle, the 1995 strikes were first initiated by a powerful student demonstration that broke out in October and November of 1995. Frustrated with poor quality of university education, outdated facilities, and anxiety over ever-growing unemployment, the students demanded overhauling of the university education system. This movement quickly spread to tens of university towns which involved boycotts of classes and occupations of university buildings (Trat 1996, p. 224).

This student movement was joined by other groups later on. On October 10 and November 24, civil servants joined the strikes protesting the Juppe Plan, a neo-liberal economic plan that the new Prime Minister Alain Juppe drafted for the purpose of lowering public debt. This group of participants protested particularly the pay freeze on the public sector and the raise of retirement age of the Plan. Simultaneously, feminists were added to the strikes on November 25. About forty thousand women and men participated for the cause of women's rights such as rights to abortion and contraception and gender equality and employment. The massiveness and severity of the strikes peaked in December when the railway workers' federations entered the movement and decided to stage an indeterminate nation-wide strike (Trat 1996, p. 227). The railway workers also opposed the neo-liberal elements of the Juppe Plan. Resonating with their agenda, other public sector workers jumped into the strike. They included metro conductors, postal workers, teachers, gas and electric workers, sanitation workers, teachers, and hospital workers.

The massiveness of the "general" strikes was felt strongly in daily activities of the French citizens. According to the New York Times article[27], for instance, a number of schools in many cities were closed for nearly 41 percent of unionized teachers were mobilized throughout the country. Sanitation workers joined the strike as well and as a result, mountains of garbage piled up in several cities. Public radio broadcast curtailed programs, about half of the scheduled flights were either cancelled or delayed, and ferry services were partially stopped. The strikes even forced the government to change the place for an international conference from Paris to another place. Because of the paralysis of public services, citizens in Paris and neighboring areas were deprived of those everyday-essential services, particularly public transportation. Despite such tremendous inconveniences, the majority of the public sympathized with the protestors(Trat 1996: 228; ). In total, more than 1.7 million people were mobilized to go out on the streets in the 1995 strikes[28].

As a result of the long, devastating strikes, Prime Minister Juppe made two major concessions on December 10, 1995. He suspended the public-sector pension reform plan and allowed railway workers extra time to discuss the government-proposed restructuring

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[27] "Strikes in France surge as demands by unions stiffen," *The New York Times* December 13, 1995, p. 1.

[28] The French government, however, provided a much smaller number, 560,000 ("Strikes in France surge as demands by unions stiffen," *The New York Times* December 13, 1995: p. 1).

plan for the state railway company, SNCF (*The Independent* December 11, 1995: p. 11)[29]. Finally, the strikes were called off on December 15, 1995.

There are some characteristics of French political culture drawn from the discussion of the 1995 general strikes. First of all, the French public is fairly politicized and it leads to collective activism. The movement was not merely a mobilization of self-interested groups but it was a nation-wide movement where various groups with diverse goals gathered together for an umbrella cause that was to call for a change in the ideology of political economy of the country. Second, related to the first point it is noteworthy how a movement sprout in one university quickly spread to tens of universities, gaining momentum escalating it into national protests by attracting diverse groups. Third, the protesters did not engage in an indefinite strike but they set dates on which they would go out the streets and kept their demonstrations orderly. Referring to this, Trat (1996) argues that the motivation behind the public-sector protests' decision not to go on indefinite strike was "so as not to miss the pleasure of participating in a mass event in which each individual could feel the collective force of a movement in which vast mixtures of people, slogans, emotion, and ideas were brewing" (p. 228).

The second and third aspects reflect that that the general public in France has a high level of interest in political (or public) affairs. Further, they consider it is a pleasure to participate in political gatherings even such contentious ones as strikes and demonstrations. Safran clarifies this point arguing that typical French citizens believe demonstrators go into the street in order to feel better by heightening efficacy and restore their enthusiasm for politics, not in order to be aggressive or cause disorders in society

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[29] "Juppe offers strike leaders concessions," The Independence December 11, 1995, p. 11.

(Safran 2009, p. 69). Of course, these features render social norms in France amicable to collective activism. In addition, the 1995 strikes suggest that it was students who played a critical and active role in organizing the political movements. Given the general rule that younger people are generally more passive in political participation, this makes an interesting case to examine.

Finally, it is the response of the French government to the popular demands that deserves our attention. Threatened by the anger from the public, Prime Minister Juppe gave in to the demands of the strikers and made two concessions – holding back pension reform and SNCF restructuring plan. The decision is a drastic concession in that the government revoked part of its policy that had been announced. It illustrates how effectively and credibly a popular threat can pressure the government in France, which forces the government to make radical decisions to resolve the issue[30]. What is more interesting is such dramatic concessions that the government offers does not necessarily mean that a comparable breath of substantive changes will be delivered.

After Juppe's concessions were announced on December 10, 1995, there occurred divisions among the public-sector unions. Militant unions thought the proposed concessions were not sufficient and needed to keep the strike until the whole Juppe Plan gets scrapped while moderate leaders were reluctant to keep fighting (Dumont 2011, pp.

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[30] A drastic drop of public support for the government worked as a credible, serious threat to the government. Opinion poll data support this point. According to Cameron (1996), opinion poll data indicate that the approval rating of the president and prime minister dropped from 62% to 32% and from 59% to 29%, respectively between May and November (quoted from Dumont 2011, p. 323).

324-326). Several days later, however, top union leaders in the militant camp lowered their tone and joined their more moderate counterparts in calling for an end to the movement. They changed their course of action to have a "summit" talk with employer representatives and the government which was offered by Juppe. They believed doing so would give them more favorable deal in a more effective way. With this backdrop, the one-day summit meeting was held on December 21, 1995. The labor having lost their leverage as the movement came to an end by then failed to stop the Juppe Plan from passing into law including measures affecting the pension system[31] (Dumont 2011, p. 326).

In fact, it is not uncommon that the French government and politicians propose radical solutions to the issue they are faced with but do not faithfully deliver their proposals. Accordingly, Safran (2009) argues that the French through experiences have learned not to expect too much from their movements; they are aware "The more things change, the more they remain the same" (p. 66).

The logic behind it has important bearing on my model on hyper-political interest in the electorate and party relabeling. Why do French politicians propose a radical solution that they do not commit themselves to fulfill? They do this as a short-term solution in a desperate bid for ending an ongoing problem that is severe enough to threaten their legitimacy or current status. The solution needs to be radical and visible

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[31] The key elements of the Juppe Plan including the introduction of private pensions system were enacted shortly after the summit. What the labor achieved was they blocked part of the pension reform plan – extending the Balladur Plan to the public sector. See Bouget (1998) for detail.

enough so as to pacify the discontent public. Once the immediate problem is settled, then it is up to the behind-the-scene process shaped largely by institutional arrangements what actual outcome will turn out to be. This logic could explain why French parties change their names, for instance, after a severe crisis. Name change is analogous to the radical concessions that Prime Minister Juppe offered to the protesters. What name change actually means and what substantive changes it is going to carry are not the most important concern for either of the parties and the unhappy electorate. The flamboyant gesture of the party, relabeling itself is something that matters the most. Relabeling is a strong signaling device that the party has resolved the issue at hand and is reborn now, echoing "We are different now!"

### 6.2.2 Evidence

In this section, I provide evidence that the general level of political interests in France is unusually higher than its comparable case, the U.S. Firstly, let us examine how much portion that political news takes up in the front page of each *Le Monde* and the *New York Times*.

**Figure 6.3: Proportion of Political News in the Front Page of Newspapers**
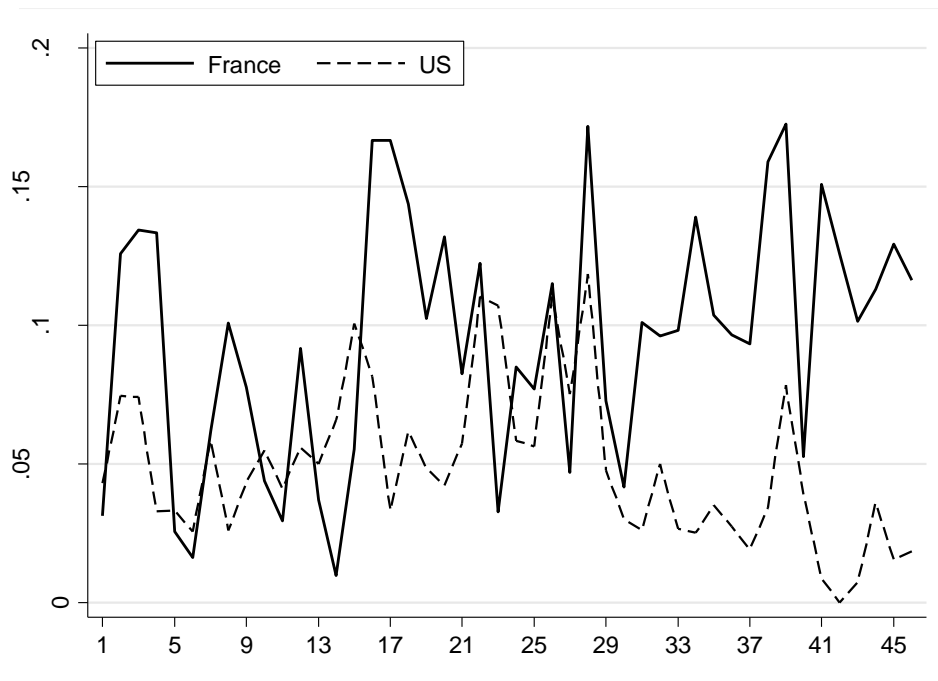


Figure 5.3 conforms to my expectation that the French newspaper contains slightly more political stories in the front page than does the U.S. newspaper. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the overall tendency shown in this graph is that *Le Monde* and the *New York Times* do not offer lots of space to political news stories on the front page. These numbers are remarkably low if we compare them to those of the *Chosun Ilbo* and the *Liberty Times*. To quickly remind you of the differences between the South Korea-Taiwan and France-U.S. pairs, the proportion of political news stories on the front page of the *Chosun Ilbo* and the *Liberty Times* was somewhere in the 50% - 80%. However, as Figure 5.3 indicates, the numbers of *Le Monde* and the *New York Times* never exceed 20%.

**Figure 6.4: Importance of Politics in France and the U.S.**
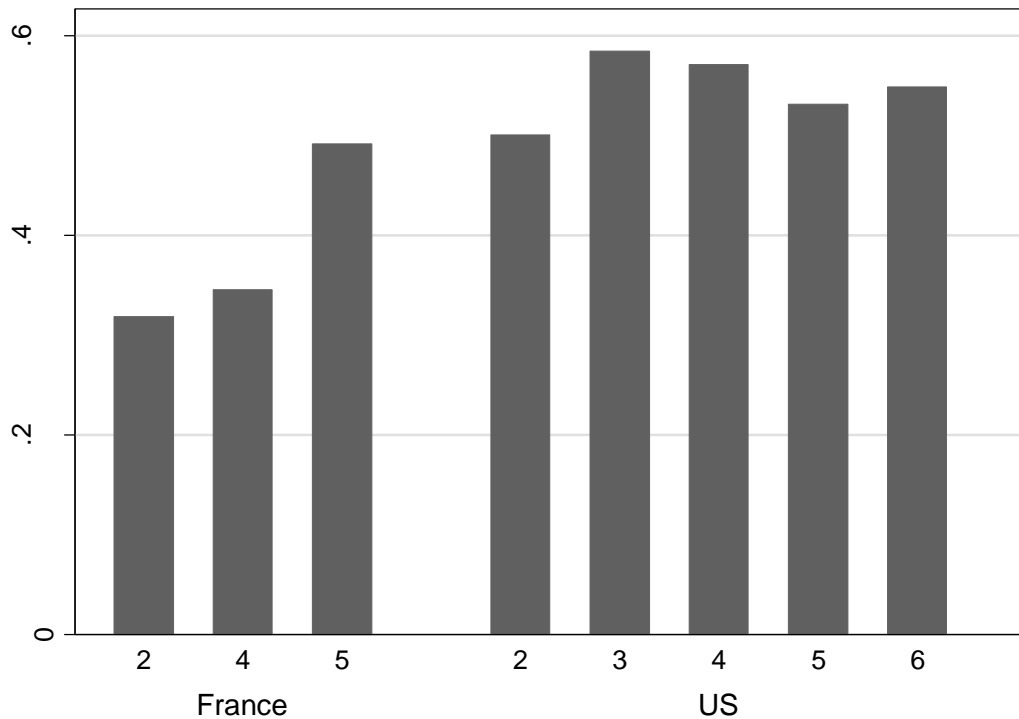


Source: The World Values Survey Wave 1-6. The Y-axis represents the % of
individuals who said politics are very and somewhat important in their life.

Figure 6.4 shows the proportion of respondents who answered politics are important in their life. The findings suggest that the level of political interest in the public is higher in the United States than in France. Although, France increased a little in the most recent survey still it falls behind the U.S. The U.S. shows impressive stability in this measure over time. More than a majority of the respondents appreciated the importance of politics. In short, this graph does not conform to my expectation.

**Table 6.2: Voter Turnout in France and the U.S.**

| France | | | US | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Presidential | Legislative | | Presidential | | Legislative |
| 2012 | 79.92 | 56.32 | 2012 | 60.38 | 2014 | 53.34 |
| 2007 | 83.87 | 60.22 | 2008 | 70.2 | 2012 | 51.07 |
| 2002 | 75.66 | 62.37 | 2004 | 58.29 | 2010 | 48.51 |
| | | | | | 2008 | 50.13 |
| Average | 79.81667 | 59.63667 | Average | 62.95667 | Average | 50.7625 |

Source: Election Guide: Democracy Assistance & Election News

Note: The French data are the averages of the two-round elections for each.

Another indicator that is commonly used for political activism is voter turnout. The voter turnout for presidential and legislative elections is reported in Table 6.2. Consistent with my expectation, voter turnout in France is higher than the U.S., indicating that the former is more politically engaging than the latter. There is one common feature found from both countries' turnout. It shows that these two countries have been strongly "presidentialized" as the gap between presidential and legislative elections is clearly noticeable. Particularly, the presidential-legislative gap is more pronounced in France than in the U.S. This is an interesting and surprising finding in that France is a semi-presidential system where presidential and parliamentary elements are fused whereas the U.S. is a pure presidential system. It confirms the "contamination effect" of the presidency that explains a semi-presidential system's acting more similarly to a pure-presidential system (Poguntke and Webb 2007; Samuels and Shugart 2010).

Now, let us measure the causal mechanism described above using the newspaper dataset that I created for this research. I measured the ratio of news headlines that contain explicit information about valence issues of parties, candidates and politicians. Against

this, I also measured the ratio of news headlines that explicitly talk about policy issues
including policy debates, blaming or praising of policy-related issues. The underlying
assumption I have is that in a political system whose culture is that its public watches
politics as a "sport," there tend to be many gossipy political news stories compared to
more substantive, policy news. In line with this assumption, I expect that France tends to
have more gossipy, valence-related news headlines than Taiwan. The results are shown in
Figures 6.5 and 6.7.

**Figure 6.5: Ratio of Valence-Issue Headlines**



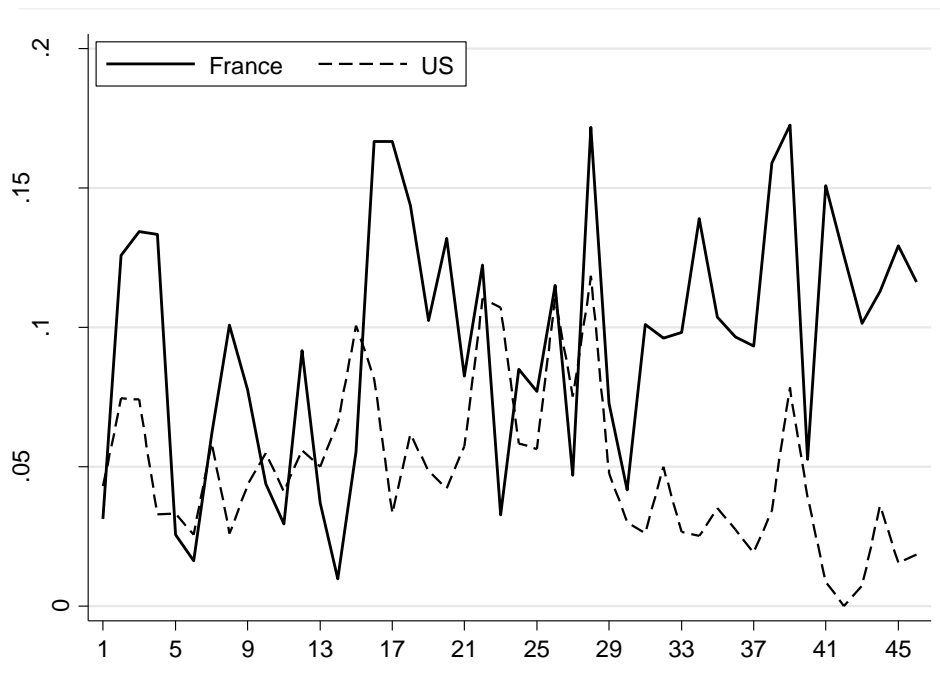Figure 6.5 conforms to my expectation, indicating that *Le Monde* has remarkably
more headlines that contain valence-issue mentions and messages than does the *New York
Times*. What it suggests is that the French news media and the public give lots of weight
to non-policy, personal character-related and sometime gossipy aspects of politics;
moreover, they are interested in these stories. If we look more closely what kinds of

stories compose the valence stories in *Le Monde*, then we can find more compelling

stories that support my causal mechanism. Figure 6.6 records the ratio of political scandal

news headlines reported by the *Le Monde*. By comparing the curve with that in Figure

6.5, one can easily notice that a great deal of valence-issue stories were in fact political

scandal news.

**Figure 6.6: Ratio of Political Scandal News Headlines in Le Monde and the New York Times**
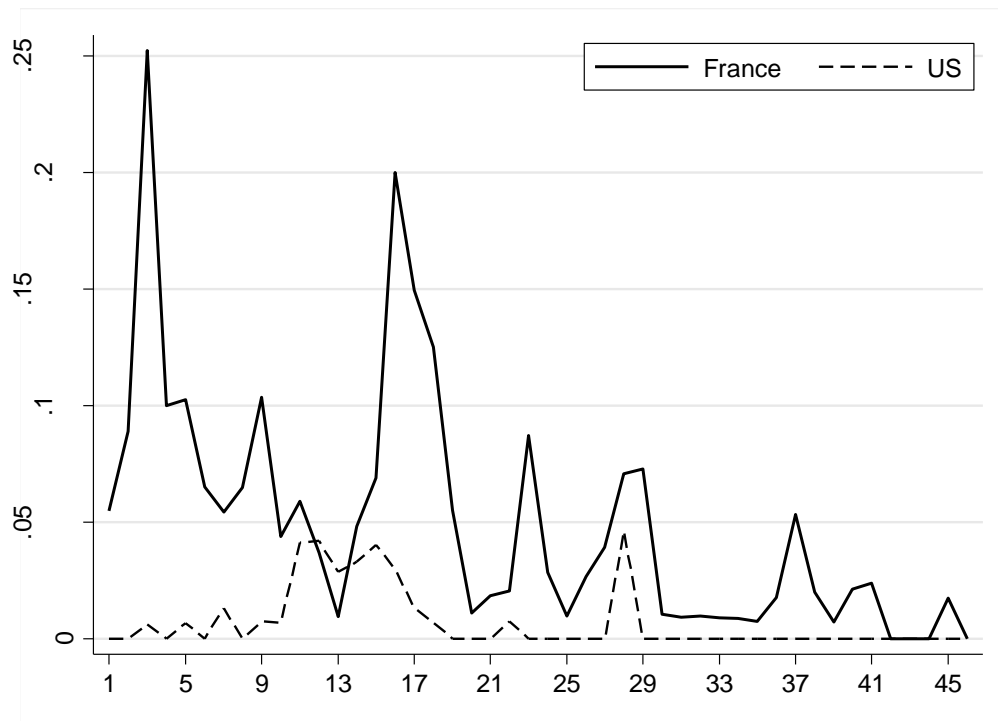


Again, I defined a scandal as a valence issue that harms the reputation and

credibility of the person AND the party seriously. A straightforward characteristic of

such an issue is that normally there is a great explosion and sustainability of news stories

regarding such issues. The graph again confirms the causal mechanism of my theory: the

French public is more interested in gossipy stories, political scandals than the U.S. public.

Or it might simply mean that there are more political scandals that involve high-profile politician in France. I will revisit this point shortly. One example of scandals reported by the *Le Monde* during the 2011-2012 campaign period for both legislative and presidential elections is: DSK (Strauss-Kahn) scandal. DSK was the Head of the IMF and was a promising presidential candidate of the Socialist Party (PS). But he allegedly committed a sexual assault in a New York hotel. It was so shocking a story that it received lots of attention. It is interesting to note that the publications of scandal stories hit the peak during the initial campaign period, which is in contrast to the pattern shown in South Korea.

Let us go back to examine the nature of political scandals in France. Figure 6.7 displays the frequency of scandals that involve political leaders defined by president, ex-president, current and former prime ministers, current and former cabinet members, and party leaders. According to Figure 6.7, the vast majority of the political scandals in France involve political leaders. There are few scandals that happened around rank-and-file politicians. The pattern of corruption centered around top politicians has something to do with France's concentration of power and resources in the central government similar to the South Korean case. In other words, this result is an example of evidence that shows the prominence of personalistic cues and centralization of power in France (C. H. Park 2008; Yoo and Lee 2009).

**Figure 6.7: Ratio of Political Scandal Involving Political Leaders**
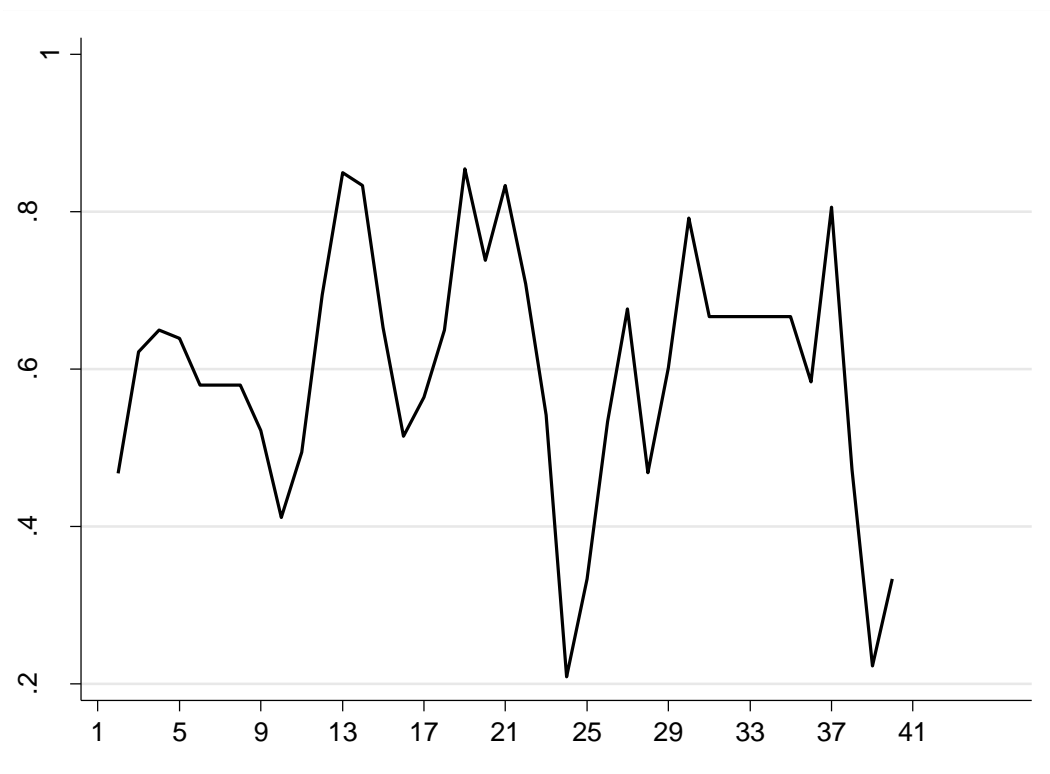


Note: The line represents 3 weeks moving average to smooth out the line.

## 6.3 High Centralization in France: Principle of the French Unitary State

The principle of the "unitary state" is the underlying philosophy of France on which its government system was built. The French Revolution in 1789 eradicated feudalism which previously had linked various regions loosely as a nation and contributed to the emergence of the paradigm of the unitary state characterized by "unity" and "indivisibility" (Loughlin 2011, p. 199). Based on this principle, France has developed a highly centralized political system under which limited autonomy is given to subnational governments. Although many reforms have been made to promote more decentralized governance, the hierarchy between the central and local governments is still

discernible. In fact, France is considered as one of the most centralized countries in developed democracies (Cole 2008; Loughlin 2011).

This unitary state principle is clearly demonstrated in the economic model that France has taken during the postwar era. Since the 1905s, France has pursued an interventionist economic strategy, named *dirigisme*. With considerable autonomy of the bureaucracy from market forces, highly centralized governmental and administrative structures, and the financial system orchestrated by the government, France has been able to take a state-led market strategy (Zysman 1994). *Dirigisme* assumes a state as a "guiding force" in the market and thereby emphasizes the discretionary actions of policy-makers (Clift 2006, p. 389). This economic model was complemented by the highly centralized governing system and *vice versa*, intensifying the hierarchical relationships across layers of authority in politics and economy. It is interesting to note that the French *dirigiste* approach bears lots of similarities to the East Asian developmental state model, particularly the South Korean model.

In contrast to the centralized model of France, the United States is conventionally presented as a prototype of decentralized systems. The U.S. has a federal system where the fifty states fully exercise sovereignty within their territory in all three governmental areas – legislative, executive, and judiciary. States have absolute autonomy over affairs in their jurisdiction as long as they do not violate the U.S. Constitution or federal law. As such, federalism in the U.S. dictates that there is a strict separation of powers between the federal government in Washington D.C. and state as well as local governments. The U.S. system places emphasis on the horizontal and reciprocal relations across levels of government whereas the French system highlights the hierarchical and top-down

relations. Further, American economic policy reflects its inclination to decentralization. Adopting an Anglo-Saxon model, the American approach to economic development plays down the role of the state. It does not believe the guiding role and directive capability of the state as the French *dirigisme* does but instead it puts trust in the market. The combination of federalism and market-oriented economic policy hinders the emergence of dominating national government in the United States.

Similar to the pair of South Korea and Taiwan compared in the previous chapter, France and the U.S. represent two contrasting models of government system. They are located at the two opposite poles on the scale of (de-)centralization with the former being a complete unitary state and the latter a complete federal state (Loughlin 2011, p. 205). I argue that the high concentration of political, economic, and administrative authority on the central government in France makes the value of national office extremely higher than that of local office. Further, this wide gap forces French parties to become desperate national-election seekers juxtaposed with their relatively tepid ambition toward local elections. This attitude in turn renders the parties to be willing to do whatever it takes to win national elections. Since losing national elections is analogous to losing everything in the French context where the national government exercises unwieldy power over subnational governments, parties are more open to undertaking radical campaign strategy if they believe that it helps them to win more seats in the National Assembly. Such radical campaign strategy includes relabeling. Accordingly, I argue that the frequent party name changes in France and the contrasting stability of the American party labels can be attributed to the varying degree of (de-)centralization in both countries.

To test this argument, I discuss the diverging models of the center-periphery power distribution in France and the U.S. focusing on their government systems and economic strategy that each has taken and its consequences in terms of centralization. Then, I present statistics that display the differences of the two in the degree of centralization. Lastly, I provide evidence and discuss in depth how French parties and politicians are much more national-election oriented than their American counterparts.

### 6.3.1 Highly Centralized Government

The French subnational government system is composed of three layers: commune, department, and region. Communes are municipal, departments provincial, and regions are units that are larger than departments. Currently, there are 36,500 municipal councils in the communes, 96 general councils in the departments and 22 regional councils[32]. After the French Revolution, the ruling political paradigm was building a highly centralized unitary state by sweeping away preexisting localities and setting up uniform administrative institutions across the nation (Cole 2008). The communes were established as the basic administrative unit in 1789 several months after the breakout of the revolution. The communes represented local identities and community interests of the pre-revolutionary period and they were the only institutional trait that survived the forceful centralizing movement of the Republic (Cole 2008; Loughlin and Mazey 1995a). Besides the communes, other preexisting institutional trace of subnational

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[32] These numbers are adapted from Cole (2008): Table 3.1, p. 57.

governing units such as provinces was eradicated. These were replaced with departments, a larger unit than the communes not long after the establishment of communes.

Although the communes and the departments were set up about the same time, it is interesting to note that the contrasting implications that they had concerning centralization. The communes were to recognize the preexisting localities and give their residents a certain degree of autonomy whereas the departments were to enhance the rule of the central government over the communes (Cole 2008, 2010; Loughlin and Mazey 1995a). Especially, the central government began to appoint a prefect as a head of the department in 1800 who was in charge of delivering policies from the central government to the communes. Put differently, the prefect was agents of the national government dispatched to the provincial-level office – department – to facilitate centralized governing throughout the country. Accordingly, the communes became subject to the departments which were an administrative apparatus of the national government. This signals the realization of the unity and indivisibility principle of the French state and intensification of its top-down administration.

France had further consolidated its centralized governance throughout the entire 19th and the mid-20th centuries with intermittent unfulfilled attempts for decentralization. There are two decentralization reforms that created substantial changes in the center-periphery relations: 1982 reforms and 2003 reforms. The 1982 reforms took place under the Socialist government with President Mitterrand. The essence of the reforms was to create regional councils, adding one more layer to the existing two levels of the subnational government system. The regions are a larger territorial unit than the departments. The purpose of establishing regions was to weaken the power of the prefect

exerted on to the communes and enhance the decision-making powers of the municipal and departmental governments in cooperation with and under the leadership of the regions instead of the prefect.

The 2003 reforms consisted of the three main elements. One, the constitutional reform was involved that included the phrase 'France is an undivided, lay, democratic and social Republic. Its organization is decentralized' in the new Article 1 of the Constitution (Cole 2008, p. 59). Also, the constitution recognizes one more layer of subnational authorities: a territorial unit with a special statute that refers to larger territorial units that could be created by the merger of existing subnational authorities. More importantly, the reforms were to transfer new functions to local and regional authorities, give local governments more finance and safeguard their fiscal autonomy.

As a consequence of these comprehensive reforms, lots of improvements have been made toward decentralization. In fact, subnational governments have obtained more autonomy and their decision-making powers vis-à-vis the central government has been improved. In short, French subnational councils have now increased power and influence in terms of politics, economy, and finance. However, there are limitations of these reforms that still allow one to view France one of the most centralized countries in the world. The underlying principle of the French center-periphery relations defined in the new Constitution does not challenge the hierarchical control of the central state over lower-level governments. It has not made any substantive change to France's being a unitary state (Cole 2008, p. 59). In other words, the constitution continues to provide a legal foundation to the central state's control over local governments.

In addition, too many layers of local authorities have resulted in highly fragmented local governance. This has several consequences that have negative impact on the furtherance of decentralization. First of all, fragmented local authorities leave themselves with overlapping responsibilities, confusing who does what. Also, this complicatedness of responsibilities and actors involved produce too many veto points requiring interdependent relations across various levels of government in making and administrating policies (Cole 2008; Loughlin and Mazey 1995a). This becomes problematic because it ironically leads the local governments to have to depend on the central state for efficient decision-making. Relatedly, many of the lower-level governments, particularly the communes are too weak in terms of size, capacity and institutionalization. As a result, they lack policy and fiscal autonomy. It is also pointed that the decentralization reforms have achieved lots of improvements but many of them remain relevant in theory only. In practice, much of the state power remains intact in its relations with subnational governments (Cole 2008, 2010, 2014; Loughlin and Mazey 1995b).

### 6.3.2 French *Dirigisme*: Central State at the Apex of Political Economy

The principle of unity and indivisibility of the Republic put the state above society since the French Revolution. This naturally led France to employ a state-led development strategy since the World War II. Similar to the East Asian Developmental state, the French *dirigiste* model is composed of credit controls, supervisory role of the state staffed with highly trained technocrats, and national economic planning (Clift 2006; Hall 1986; Schmidt 2012). Accordingly, the French model is characterized by the

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following features (Hall 1986, pp. 139-141). First, it is the expansive nationalization by nationalizing key economic sectors such as banks including the Bank of France and some private banks, and the gas, electricity, and coal industries. Second, it adopted a highly interventionist policy toward the private sector through the "norms of *tutelle* or hands-on supervision" over the industries (Clift 2006, p. 389).

Third, many government agencies and institutions were created to support the grand role of the state in economic growth, particularly in the implementation of a series of the French National Economic Plans throughout 1946 and 1988. The two most significant examples of the newly built institutions are a national planning commission and the *Ecole Nationale d'Administration* (Hall 1986). The former as its name suggests handled the French National Economic Plans along with some other related agencies. The latter was a university dedicated to cultivating future bureaucrats of high quality for the central government and this institution effectively centralized recruitment of civil servants. As a statist model gives a great amount of discretion to the government, mainly bureaucrats in directing the economy, the supply of good quality bureaucrats is critical in maintaining the model. In fact, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan invested considerably in education and recruitment of well-trained technocrats and this was viewed as one of the factors that made their interventionist approach successful (Johnson 1987; World Bank 1993).

The series of the French Economic Plans demonstrates the state activism in economic policy that directly governed the industries and designed the direction of development. For instance, through the earlier Plans (1st, 2nd, and 4th Plans), France selected six particular sectors – steel, coal, transportation, electricity, cement, and

agricultural machinery and concentrated resources on them (Hall 1986). They became the platform from which French economy developed subsequently. As a result of this government's discretionary decision to develop these particular sectors, France has competitiveness in the large, capital-intensive industries seen as Airbus, TGV, etc. However, this approach left other sectors such as consumer goods industries weak and fragmented (Zysman 1994).

The traditional industrial structure that France used to have before its full-fledged *dirigiste* approach was composed of small firms that were highly fragmented and short of international competitiveness. Moreover, these firms were mostly commune-based and they were resistant to the idea of having larger business by merger that transcends the local identities (Le Gales 1995; Zysman 1994). It is in their culture that French have strong attachment to their commune and thereby resist mergers of communes. This is why over 90% of the communes are with population less than 2000 (Choi J. H. 2012; Cole 2008, 2010, 2014). This feature of the French industrial structure led the government to develop heavy industry leaving the highly fragmented, local-based, uncompetitive sectors intact. This in turn leads to urban congestion of economic power leaving local and regional economies extremely weak (Le Gales 1995).

### 6.3.3 The United States

In contrast to the French unitary state, the United States is one of the most decentralized political systems in the world. While the French Revolution produced the unitary state, the American Revolution created the United States as a federal state, the

first in the modern world (Loughlin 2011). From the beginning of its political life as a nation, the U.S. was a decentralized union of states. In a federal system, governmental powers are divided between national and subnational governments and within each of their jurisdictions the governments enjoy autonomy. In reality however, the division of powers and responsibilities is not as clearly cut as it sounds for there are considerable gray areas where the powers and responsibilities are overlapped between different levels of government. This leaves room for political interpretation and competition between different levels of government in the operation of federalism. A recent example that demonstrates this negotiable thus conflictual nature of power division is the ongoing debates over the Affordable Care Act, better known as Obamacare. Some states that oppose Obamacare claim that it is a blatant intrusion of the federal government on state affairs and violation of the spirit of federalism (see, e.g., *Southeast Texas Record* June 22, 2015[33]; *US Official News* April 15, 2015[34]).

With short-term fluctuations, the long-term trend in the U.S. federalism is a gradual ascendance of the national government over its subnational counterparts. The turning point that made a lingering impact on the federal-state relations was the 1930s during the Great Depression (Chhibber and Kollman 2004). The post-New Deal period is characterized by a huge expansion of political and economic centralization. Prior to this period, the U.S. federalism was in more favor of state supremacy with a brief exception

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[33] "Congress and governors: just say no to Obamacare" *Southeast Texas Record*, June 22, 2015

[34] "Washington: How Republicans Can Cut Through the Obamacare Chaos After King v. Burwell" *US Official News*, April 15, 2015 Wednesday

of the Civil War era, 1860-1876. The 19[th] century of the U.S. was largely dominated by Jeffersonian philosophy which advocated the preservation of state sovereignty.

Although the U.S. federalism has been gradually tilting toward centralization, it never reached the level of French unitary state. Further, it has never viewed the federal-state relations in hierarchical terms as the French do. Instead, the U.S. Constitution considers the relations as "intergovernmental" based on equality rather than hierarchy. Even during FDR's presidency when the federal government tremendously increased its authorities, he and his government did not eradiate the individualistic political culture of the U.S. (Chhibber and Kollman 2004; Zimmerman 2008).

This tradition is well reflected in economic policy that the U.S. has taken. The U.S. economic model is conventionally considered as an Anglo-Saxon model characterized by trust in the market, *laissez-faire*, and skepticism on the directive role of the government (Esping-Andersen 1990). Referring to this American culture, Elazar (1984) argues that the individualistic political culture is evident in every aspect of American society, which can be summarized as one that appreciates the importance of limiting intervention of the public sphere into the private sphere to the minimum. Based on this philosophy, the U.S. economic model is market-oriented letting the market do the work by limiting the intervention of the state in the market. Thus, the model is characterized by flexibility vis-à-vis rigidity of the European models (Siebert 1997).

For instance, the U.S. model has a high degree of wage and employment flexibility by which the demand and supply of labor and wage level are adjusted more swiftly through the market operation. This is a big difference from many of the European

countries where wage negotiations involve highly organized unions, employers, and the government. Reaganomics reflects the essence of the U.S. neo-liberal model.

Based on federalism and laissez-faire economic model, the U.S. is a fairly decentralized country. The high degree of decentralization in the U.S. means considerable amount of political and economic autonomy given to subnational governments. This in turn contributes to more value awarded to the subnational offices, minimizing the gap in the value or benefits of office that exists between the federal and state and local governments. Similar to the Taiwanese case, this has an effect that alleviates the political parties' overwhelming obsession with national-office goals by allowing more access points to office benefits at subnational levels. Consequently, it prevents the parties from employing radical campaign strategies for the purpose of winning national elections. Party relabeling as an example of radical party strategy, as a result, is highly unlikely in the United States.

### 6.3.4 Evidence

In this section, I employ the same measures used to investigate the South Korean and Taiwanese cases in chapter 5. To gauge the degrees of centralization of France and the United States, I employ several indicators that are provided by the OECD Fiscal Decentralisation Database. I use three indicators: (1) tax autonomy of subnational governments, (2) tax revenue as a share of total revenue, and (3) intergovernmental transfer revenue as a share of total revenue.

**Figure 6.8: Tax Autonomy of Subnational Governments in France and the U.S.**

**(a) France**



**(b) U.S.**
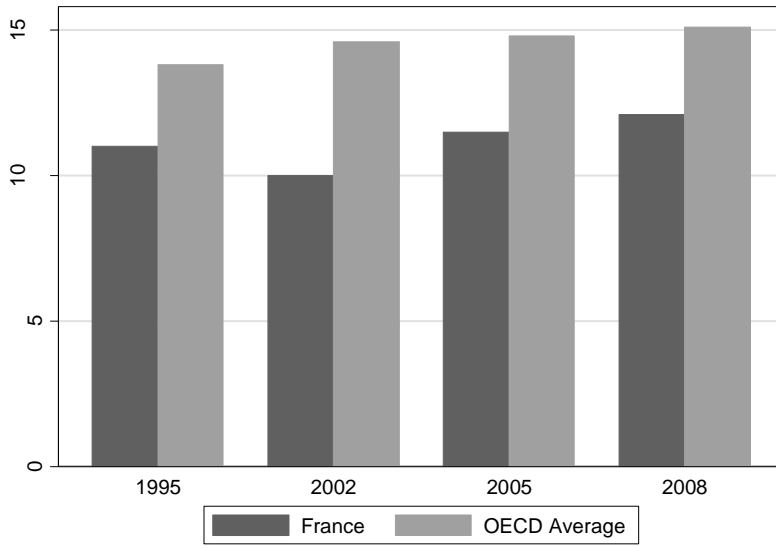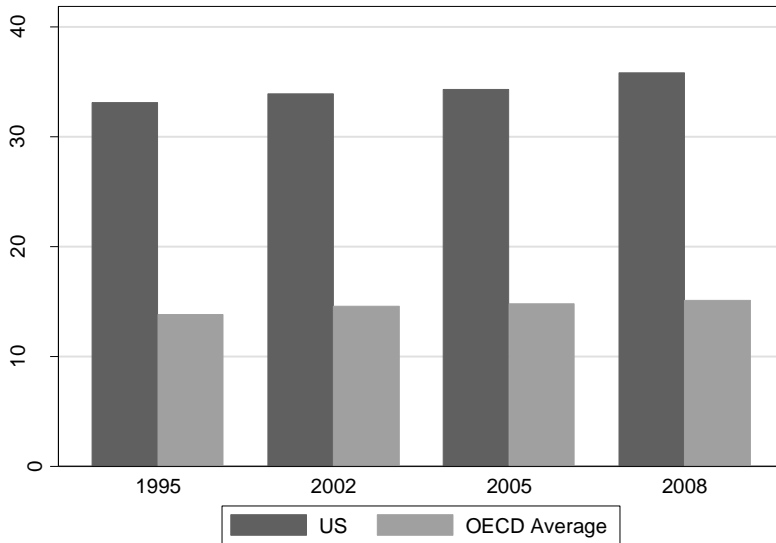


Source: OECD Fiscal Decentralisation Database. The unit of X-axis is %.

**Figure 6.9: Tax Revenue as a Share of Total Revenue at Subnational Government in France and the U.S.**

**(a) France**



**(b) U.S.**



Source: OECD Fiscal Decentralisation Database. The unit of X-axis is %.

Figure 6.8 shows tax autonomy of subnational governments in France and the U.S. and its comparison to the OECD average. According to this figure, tax autonomy of French subnational governments stands below the average of OECD countries as expected. Further, the U.S. figures show that the country is a fairly decentralized political system. The graphs confirm my suggested causal stories.
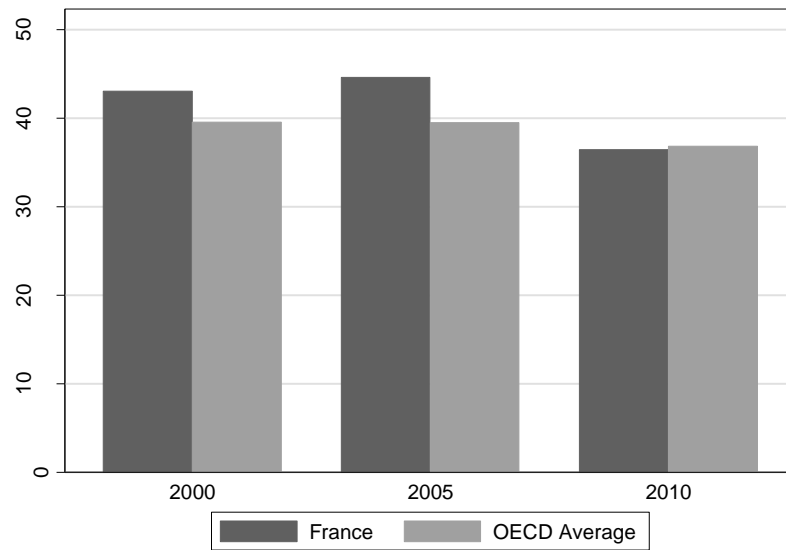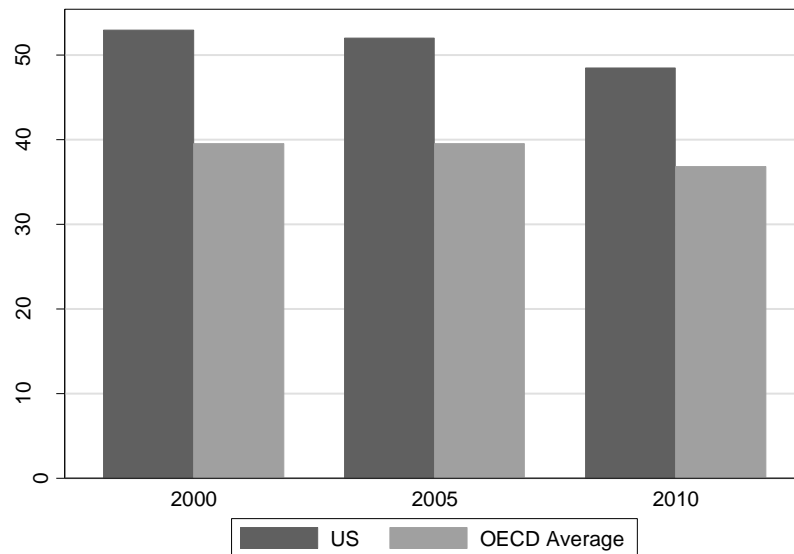
Figure 6.9 illustrates tax revenue as a share of total revenue at subnational governments. Though France is situated slightly above the OECD average it shows a lower degree of the autonomy in its subnational governments than those of the U.S. Finally, Figure 6.10 indicates the % of intergovernmental transfer of total subnational government revenue. Higher values in this measure indicate higher fiscal dependence of local government on central government, meaning higher centralization of political power. These figures indicate that both France and the U.S. have greater levels of fiscal independence from the central government as its comparison to the OECD average suggests. However, still there is a discernible gap between France and the U.S.: the latter demonstrates more independence of subnational governments from the federal government than the former does. In short, the findings conform to my expectation that France is more highly centralized than the U.S.

**Figure 6.10: Intergovernmental Transfer Revenue as a Share of Total Revenue at Subnational Governments in France and the U.S.**

**(a) France**



**(b) U.S.**
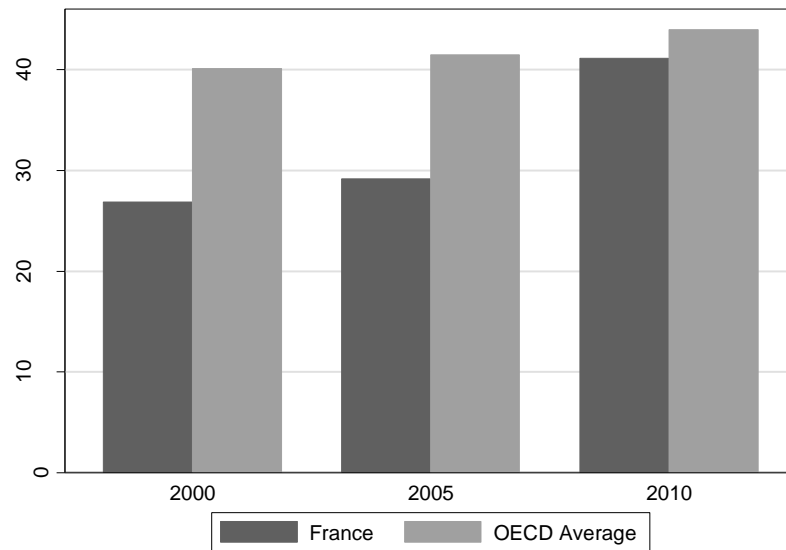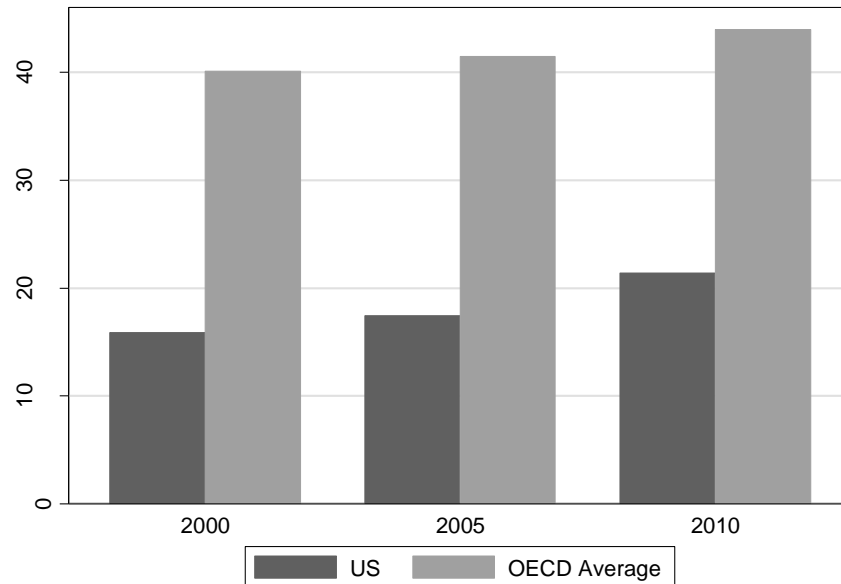


Source: OECD Fiscal Decentralisation Database. The unit of X-axis is %.

Now that we have examined the degrees of governmental centralization using fiscal indicators, let us consider some consequences of centralization on party behavior. Basically, the same story that explains South Korea applies to France. In France as its political and economic authority is disproportionately concentrated in the national government, winning national office is a primary goal for politicians and their parties. As was the case for South Korea, it is not only government resources concentrated in the center but party organization as well is strictly hierarchically structured. The national party organization controls every party activity.

The prime example that illustrates this dominance of national office holders over subnational office holders is so-called "*cumul des mandats*," literally meaning "taking cumulative mandates" (Cole 2008, p. 54). This system allows a legislator to take more than one offices at various levels of government. For instance, a member of the National Assembly can also take a seat in a municipal legislature. In fact, more than 90% of the members of the National Assembly in France have other seats in subnational governments (Choi J. H. 2012, p. 52). Particularly, 513 Deputies of Chamber out of 540 total have local-level seats. It indicates the dominance and control of the national government over subnational governments.

## 6.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I tested the model on party relabeling by applying it to France and the United States. Using the same measures adopted to test South Korea and Taiwan in the previous chapter, I tested diverse dimension of causal mechanisms involved in my

model. The empirical findings provide good support for my theory. In short, they suggest that France's heavy reliance on personalistic party cues, strong levels of political attention in the public, and centralization of power encourage their parties to relabel themselves. The United States, on the other hand, lacking all these features does not develop this pattern in its system.

**CHAPTER 7 CONSEQUENCES OF PARTY RELABELING**

The main purpose of this research is to develop a model that explains the causes

of party relabeling. Throughout the dissertation, I have proposed a new model and tested

it focusing on South Korea and France by comparing them to Taiwan and the United

States. The findings from in-depth historical analysis and various statistical data provide

support for my theory. Here in this chapter, I move a focus from the causes of party

relabeling to its consequences, particularly in terms of electoral results. This chapter

addresses the following questions: Does renaming of a party have any impact on electoral

results? Does this tactic help a party to win more votes or punish it for discarding its

brand in elections? Does frequent relabeling have any influence on the perception of

voters that they have regarding the parties?

**7.1 Why Do Parties Change Names?**

I have discussed the system-level factors that cause parties to change names

extensively. Then, what is the fundamental motivation behind the party's decision to or

not to change names? I argue that parties undertake relabeling simply because they

believe that it is electorally beneficial for them. Some may argue that parties change their

names not necessarily out of vote-maximizing motivations but other types of motivations

such as ideological purposes or identity modifications. Others may also claim that when

parties assess their situation to be extremely desperate, they employ relabeling as a last

resort in the misleading hope that it could reward them with more votes and seats. In

other words, relabeling does not have substantive or significant effect on the parties'

electoral performance. I acknowledge that there is some truth to such critiques. However, there are more reasons that lead me to believe relabeling is a party's deliberate choice made for electoral purposes and in fact, relabeling can be an effective rebranding strategy.

First of all, my argument is based on Mayhew's claim that politicians are single-minded seekers of reelection and parties are formed to serve their members' electoral needs (Mayhew 1974b). I admit that this view is so narrow that no single party in reality can be fully understood through this myopic lens. For instance, as many other researchers suggest parties could have a variety of goals such as ideology or policy maximization, office maximization, and goals concerning intraparty democracy and institutionalization besides mere vote maximization (Harmel and Janda 1994; Strom 1990). Further, it is unrealistic to assume that parties pursue only a single goal; instead, every party pursues a combination of two or more goals. Also, lots of studies reveal that parties do have different sorts of primary goals depending on party types such as mainstream party vs. niche party, catch-all party vs. single-issue party, and traditional party vs. post-material, left-libertarian party (Adams et al. 2006; Adams, Haupt, and Stoll 2009; Meguid 2008; Przeworski and Sprague 1986; Spoon 2011; Strom 1990).

Nevertheless, I believe that electoral goals are the fundamental one that all parties fundamentally share. Even an ideology-driven party can achieve its primary goal only after having a certain degree of electoral viability. If it remains to be hopeless electorally all the time, its survival as an organization itself is put at risk. This view is clearly illustrated by Downs (1957) that ideology is a means to an end, which is getting votes, not an end itself.

Considering that parties are fundamentally vote-seekers, it leads us to believe that parties change names for the purpose of maximizing the amount of votes that can possibly get in a given situation. For instance, if a party expects to suffer a serious electoral loss in an upcoming election, then it could make an effort to minimize the loss by adopting several measures including something aggressive like relabeling. I do not suggest that relabeling is a magic wand that saves parties from electoral debacles but parties attempt to relabel themselves in the hope that this tactic will minimize the loss.

A more interesting argument I propose here is that it is fairly likely that relabeling works out for parties by providing some electoral benefits. For instance, the *Democratic Party* and its variants in South Korea have kept changing labels every three or so years. Also, the *Gaullists* have also repeatedly changed its labels since its foundation. The fact that these parties have repeatedly relabeled themselves arguably indicates that relabeling has been as effective as expected in minimizing the electoral losses or at least it has not been hurting the parties significantly. Parties as vote-seekers if they learn that relabeling hurt them or proved to be ineffective should not have kept relying on it multiple times.

This aspect gets more support as we consider that parties as an organization are conservative in nature and therefore they favor the status quo (Michels 1962). In this light, it is generally assumed in the literature that parties are not likely to change either in organizational features or in identity unless it is inevitable (Harmel et al. 1995; Harmel and Janda 1994; Harmel and Tan 2003; Janda and Harmel 1995). Applying this logic to party relabeling, one of the aspects of party change, one can draw some relevant implications concerning party relabeling. One, party relabeling is a strenuous process that requires organizational capacity of the party to make this organizational or identity

change. Two, parties that change names multiple times deliberately do so because they think either they are forced to, for instance, by some shocks or they get some benefits out of it. Otherwise, parties would not undertake this "reform."

## 7.2 Consequences of Party Relabeling

What do we expect to see as consequences of party relabeling? Based on the discussion above, I argue that party relabeling yields electoral benefits to parties by awarding more votes than they could have received otherwise. In other words, relabeling can be used as an effective strategy that parties employ for electoral purposes. Then, how does relabeling work as a party strategy? In what mechanism does it work to the advantage of a party?

Party relabeling, by definition, does not mean wholesale changes of party but largely only name change. Therefore, party relabeling does not provide any substantive change in terms of ideology, membership, and other organizational aspects. What specifically do parties aim to achieve through name change in the pursuit of their ultimate goal, vote maximization? I argue that they change names in a bid for (re-)building loyalty and legitimacy in the public. Party name changes as a rebranding strategy can create new appeals to the voters through two specific mechanisms at work. First, through relabeling a party can make a break with the past in a way that is visually and symbolically vivid to the electorate. Second, a party can effectively signal its commitment to the new image or appeals it aims to create through relabeling.

Parties change their labels as a break with their dishonorable past. The past they wish to break with could be scandals around their leaders or influential, highly visible

figures such as presidents, cabinet members, and party leaders, intraparty disputes, and disastrous electoral performance (Harmel et al. 1995; Harmel and Tan 2003). Particularly in a system where voters predominantly rely on personalistic cues other than ideological and clientelist cues when identifying parties and candidates, this sort of problem often becomes detrimental to parties (Kitschelt 2000). For instance, a party may change its label when a president from its own is involved in a notorious scandal or suffers extremely low approval ratings as a way of distancing itself from the president and the party's own past. In this light of high visibility that party relabeling provides to the electorate, parties change their labels as a means of signaling to voters their commitment to new appeals or promises they propose. It is crucial for these parties to assure the voters that they will be different and they are resolute about committing themselves to the changes they propose. In short, relabeling can be used as a signaling device in this sense.

In short, relabeling as a rebranding strategy is highly visible to the electorate. From the electorate's perspective, it does not take much effort to recognize changes made to a party when it has been relabeled. By simply looking at the party's new label, the electorate grasps the party has changed. In contrast, if a party adopts other types of rebranding strategies such as ideological or programmatic modifications, then it takes more effort for the public to recognize this change than in the case of relabeling. This point is supported by Converse's (1964) recognition of the importance of information visibility to the general public. He claims that there are certain types of information that are highly visible to the general public, "nonattitudes"; and these information cues can help voters to make intelligent political decisions or give them a better idea of what parties stand for. These types of information, he mentions, include social groupings and

prominent figures associated with a party, i.e. does the African-American politician belong to Party A? Does the female politician belong to Party B (Converse 1964: 234-238)?

Analogous to the appearances of politicians, party name change is particularly visible even to less informed voters and therefore, this cue works effectively in the general public. In line with Converse's argument, I believe that relabeling can effectively signal the resoluteness of a party for change to the public. Moreover, this strategy can be effective in creating new appeals, particularly in a short period of time due to its superb visibility over other types of information cues such as ideology.

Based on the implications discussed so far, I propose a series of hypotheses on the effect of party relabeling on electoral performance of parties.

*H1: A party can win more votes by relabeling itself than it could have won otherwise with other things being equal.*

In order to gauge the effect of relabeling on the party's electoral performance, we need to examine more nuanced models than Hypothesis 1 proposed above. First, I believe that the electoral benefits that relabeling is expected to offer vary depending on the party's electoral viability or party size. The terms electoral viability and party size are synonymous here. By definition, large parties are those that enjoy a large portion of vote share or that are considered highly viable electorally. Small parties are exactly the opposite.

I expect that the positive effect of relabeling on electoral performance is more pronounced among electorally weaker parties than those with considerable electoral viability. In other words, the electoral benefits of relabeling are expected to decrease as

parties get bigger. I expect this causal direction in that the type of electoral benefits that relabeling could provide is more correctly described to be instant, one-time, or short-term than permanent, long-lasting or long-term. Large parties already have well-defined image and reputations that are deeply rooted in the wide proportion of the electorate. This decreases the extent to which such instant "boosting" effects that relabeling can possibly provide in their electoral performance. In contrast, as small parties do not have ties with a large number of voters, they are given more benefits of uncertainty and this allows the instant boosting effects of relabeling to take place to their advantage.

> *H2: The effect that relabeling has on the party's electoral performance is dependent on the party's electoral viability. The larger the party gets, the smaller the effect of party relabeling has on its electoral performance.*

Further, I hypothesize that the effect of relabeling is dependent on the party's electoral pressure. Electoral pressure is defined as a degree of fear that a party has regarding its electoral performance in an upcoming election. This concept is relative to previous election results. For instance, if a party did not meet the expected amount of vote share in the previous election by a large margin, then this poor performance in the previous contest puts the party under tremendous pressure as it faces an upcoming election. This is because the party's performance in the last election is the best possible proxy that can be used for the prediction of the current or upcoming election. In contrast, in the case that a party fared well in the previous election achieving the expected amount of vote share or exceeding it, the electoral pressure that this party is faced with in the upcoming election is much less severe than the party in the former situation. With this concept of electoral pressure, I hypothesize that a party that is put under increased

electoral pressure is more likely to enjoy the electoral benefits of relabeling than a party with less severe electoral pressure.

*H3: The effect that relabeling has on the party's electoral performance is dependent on the party's electoral pressure. The electoral benefits of party relabeling get more pronounced in the parties that are under more intensified electoral pressure.*

Consistent with Harmel and his colleagues' views that catastrophic elections as a strong external shock to parties trigger party change, I contend that parties that did poorly in the last election are more likely to enjoy the benefits of relabeling than those who did well.

*H4: The effect that relabeling has on the party's electoral performance is dependent on the party's election results in the last election. The electoral benefits of party relabeling are increased among the parties that did poorly in the last election.*

In testing these hypotheses, several other factors are included as controls that are believed to have some influence on the party's electoral performance. First, it is incumbency advantage. A host of studies in U.S. Congressional elections suggest that being an incumbent is electorally beneficial for a party and a candidate. The ruling party is able to effectively increase its visibility among the public and is given ample opportunities and resources to offer the electorate some benefits for which it can claim credit later (Erikson 1971, 1972; Mayhew 1974; Collie 1981; Cox and Katz 1996). Therefore, it is expected that being an incumbent, either as part of the government or

holding the prime ministership, will be positively correlated with electoral performance of a party.

Factors that are relevant to party system institutionalization are also considered in the analyses; they include party age and name experience. According to the literature on party system institutionalization, a stable party system is defined as the one in which interactions among its constitutive parties are well established and widely known (Mainwaring and Scully 1995a; Mainwaring and Torcal 2006). This concept entails stability and regularity in the patterns of interparty competition and strong ties between parties and electorates (Sartori 1976; Mainwaring and Scully 1995b; Toole 2000; Randall and Svasand 2002; Mainwaring and Torcal 2006; Tavits 2008). In this light, parties that are not around for long in the political scene are considered less consolidated and systems that have many of such parties are deemed unstable. Party age, therefore, is one of the mainly used indicators for party and party system institutionalization in the literature. These implications suggest that party age and experience of party name have some positive influence on the party's electoral performance.

As ideological indicators, I include euroscepticism and left-right ideological score in the analyses. In the European setting, euroscepticism is one of the major issue dimensions along which parties are positioned. As the increasing emergence of nationalist right-wing parties in Europe implies, eurospcepticism is an important ideological indicator that is expected to have influence on electoral performance of parties. Lastly, disproportionality is considered as a control. That high disproportionality has invincible restrictive effect on the effective number of parties in a system is one of the few hard-science-like principles in the party literature (Duverger 1963; Lijphart 1994;

Riker 1982; Taagepera and Shugart 1989). Consistent with this conventional wisdom in the literature, I expect that disproportionality of electoral system is a negative relationship with vote shares of parties on average.

## 7.3 Data & Analysis

To test the hypotheses, I use a novel dataset that Frederick Solt and I collected for our project that quantifies party relabeling in European democracies and tests the existing theories on the causes of party relabeling[35]. The dataset is based on three sources: (1) The Nordsieck data that we collected for party name changes and each party's share of the vote in each election; (2) ParlGov dataset that incorporates a range of additional characteristics about parties and the elections; and (3) Bormann and Golder's (2013) dataset of electoral systems.

Using Wolfram Nordsieck's Parties and Elections in Europe, we identified name changes of parties in Europe since 1945. Our resulting dataset encompasses 537 parties in 429 different elections held in 31 European democracies (all 28 current EU members, plus Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland), for a total of 3295 party-election observations. The main independent variable, relabeling, is dichotomous, taking on a value of one when a preexisting party runs with a different name than it used in the previous election and zero otherwise.

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[35] Frederick Solt and I tested the existing theories on the causes of party relabeling in Europe in the paper titled *"The Dynamics of Party Relabeling: Why Do Parties Change Names?"* which was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, 2014. Currently, this paper is published at *Party Politics* (Forthcoming).

Our dataset reveals that while most European parties conform to the parties-as-brands thesis about 28%, of the parties have relabeled themselves at least once since 1945. Moreover, some 12% of the parties, 52 parties of total 433, in our dataset have changed their names more than twice and there are over 3% (13 parties) that have done so three or more times. Nearly a third of the democratic elections held across Europe since 1945 have included at least one party running under a new name, about one in six had two or more renamed parties, and nearly 4% of all elections had three or more renamed parties.

The dependent variable, *Electoral Performance*, is vote share that each party won in each election. This variable is continuous ranging 0-100 with the minimum value 0 (Italy's PSI and VERDI in the 1948 and 2001 elections, respectively; Romania's PNL and PER in the 1996 election; Czech Republic's US-DEU in the 2002 election) maximum 71.2 (Cyprus' DP in the 1976 election). The main explanatory variable of this study is *Party Relabeling*, which is dichotomous with 1 if a party runs under a new label in a given election and 0 otherwise. *Electoral Viability* of a party in Hypothesis 2 is operationalized as each party's average vote share in the elections it had to that point contested. A bigger number indicates a higher electoral viability of a party.

As a measure of *Electoral Pressure* in Hypothesis 3, I calculated predicted values of vote share that each party was expected to get in each election and subtract vote share that each had received in the last election from the predicted values (xb − previous vote share). As briefly discussed in the previous section, one might think that higher values in this measure are positive to parties as the vote share the party is expected to get in the current or upcoming election (t) is higher than the last election (t-1). However, its

performance in the most recent election (vote share in the last election) is an important proxy for the current or upcoming election. Put differently, higher values in *Electoral Pressure* are equivalent to a higher likelihood that the party is expected to fail, which means the number of votes the party actually wins in the upcoming election is far behind the expected value. As a measure of *Last Election Result* in Hypothesis 4, I calculated the difference between each party's average vote share in the elections it had to that point contested (the measure of *Electoral Viability*) and its share in the previous election.

*Incumbency Advantage*, one of the control variables in this study, was operationalized whether a party is part of the incumbent government or holds the prime minister's office. *Party Age* was calculated by the number of years since the first election in these data that it contested. For *Party Name Experience*, I counted the number of elections that a party had used their current name. As ideology measures, *Euroscepticism* and *Ideology*, I used the information from ParlGov. Both variables are measured on a 0-10 scale with 0 indicating anti-EU and 10 pro-EU in *Euroscepticism*; with 0 indicating extreme left and 10 extreme right in *Ideology*. To tap D*isproportionality*, I utilized the information from Bormann and Golder's (2013) dataset. This variable is continuous ranging from 0 to 24.3 in our sample.

The unit of analysis is the party-election. To analyze these data appropriately, we must take into account their hierarchical structure. Party-elections are nested in both parties and elections, but neither of these two levels is nested within the other, and both are nested within countries. Therefore, I estimate a cross-classified hierarchical model with a separate error term for each party, election, and country.

**Table 7.1: Consequences of Party Relabeling, Cross-Classified Hierarchical Models**

|  | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Relabeling | -0.03 | 0.07 | -0.56 | 0.17 |
|  | (0.49) | (0.83) | (0.51) | (0.48) |
| Previous Vote Share | 0.40*** |  |  |  |
|  | (0.02) |  |  |  |
| Electoral Viability |  | 0.40*** |  |  |
|  |  | (0.02) |  |  |
| Electoral Pressure |  |  | -0.68*** |  |
|  |  |  | (0.03) |  |
| Last Election Result |  |  |  | 0.56*** |
|  |  |  |  | (0.03) |
| Electoral Viability: Relabeling |  | **-0.05** |  |  |
|  |  | (0.05) |  |  |
| Electoral Pressure: Relabeling |  |  | **0.30***** |  |
|  |  |  | **(0.09)** |  |
| Last Election Result: Relabeling |  |  |  | **-0.48*** ** |
|  |  |  |  | (0.09) |
| Party Age | -0.03** | -0.04** | -0.05*** | -0.00 |
|  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Name Experience | -0.06 | -0.07 | -0.09* | -0.06 |
|  | (0.05) | (0.06) | (0.05) | (0.05) |
| Ideology | 0.20 | 0.19 | 0.32** | 0.20 |
|  | (0.15) | (0.16) | (0.15) | (0.24) |
| Euroscepticism | 0.62*** | 0.61*** | 1.04*** | 1.05*** |
|  | (0.13) | (0.14) | (0.13) | (0.21) |
| Incumbent Prime Minister | 6.22*** | 6.84*** | 10.39*** | 5.27*** |
|  | (0.45) | (0.48) | (0.47) | (0.44) |
| Incumbent Government | 0.29 | 0.18 | 0.45 | 0.44 |
|  | (0.33) | (0.35) | (0.32) | (0.32) |
| Disproportionality | -0.17*** | -0.19*** | -0.28*** | -0.25*** |
|  | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) |
| Constant | 4.15*** | 4.51*** | 7.05*** | 5.57*** |
|  | (1.21) | (1.26) | (1.22) | (1.89) |
| Observations | 2012 | 2012 | 2012 | 2012 |

* $p<0.10$, ** $p<0.05$, *** $p<0.01$

Note: Only the fixed portions of the models are presented in the table.

**Figure 7.1: Party Relabeling and Electoral Viability**
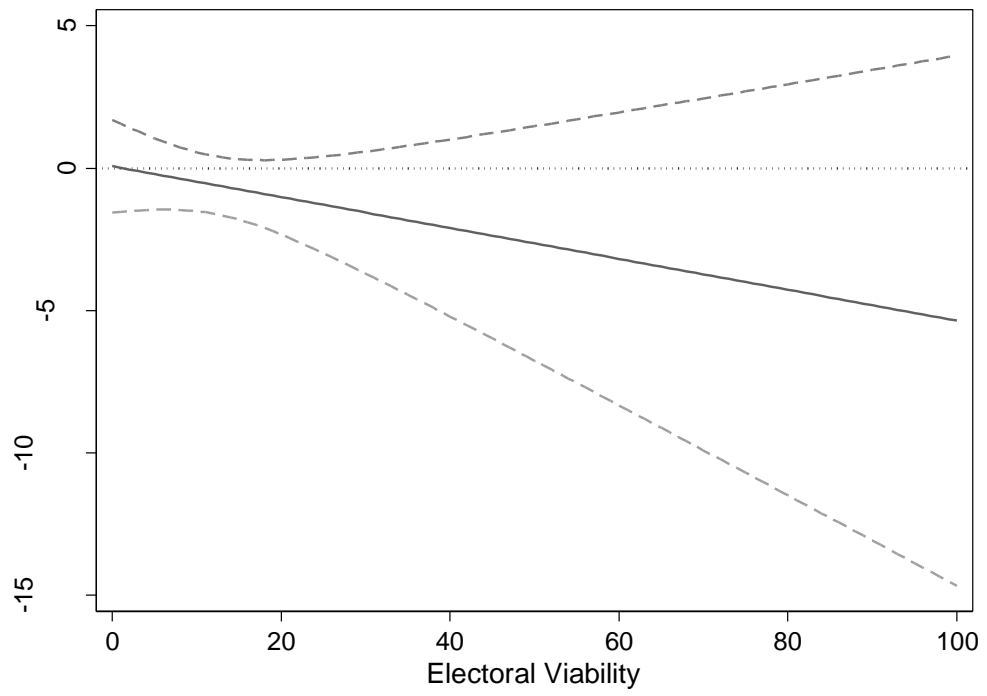
**Figure 7.2: Party Relabeling and Electoral Pressure**
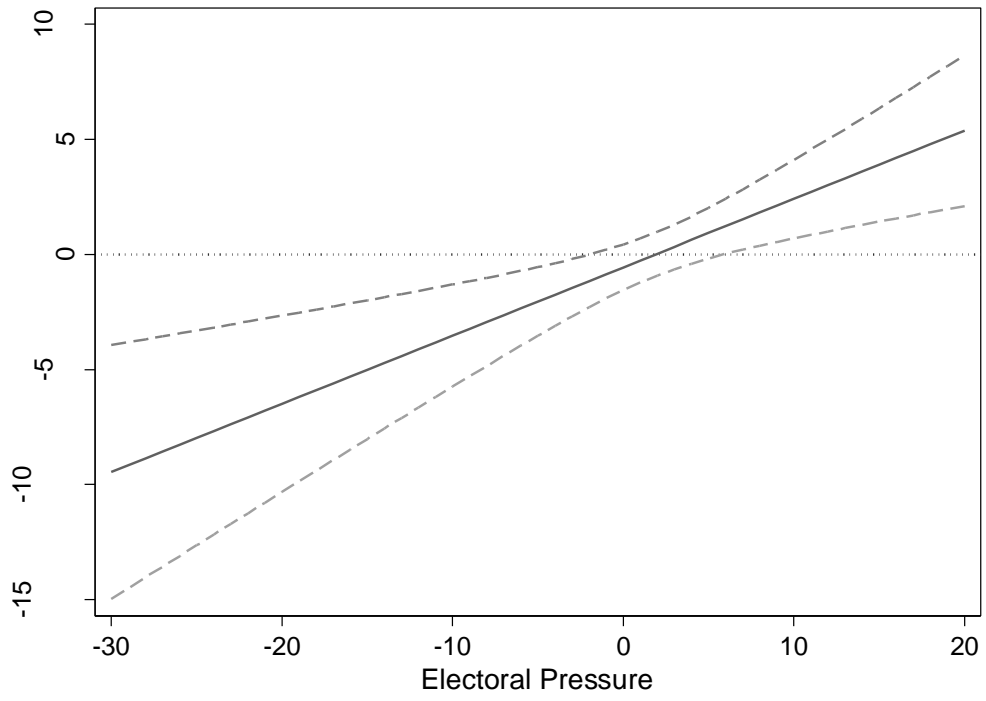
**Figure 7.3: Party Relabeling and Last Election Result**
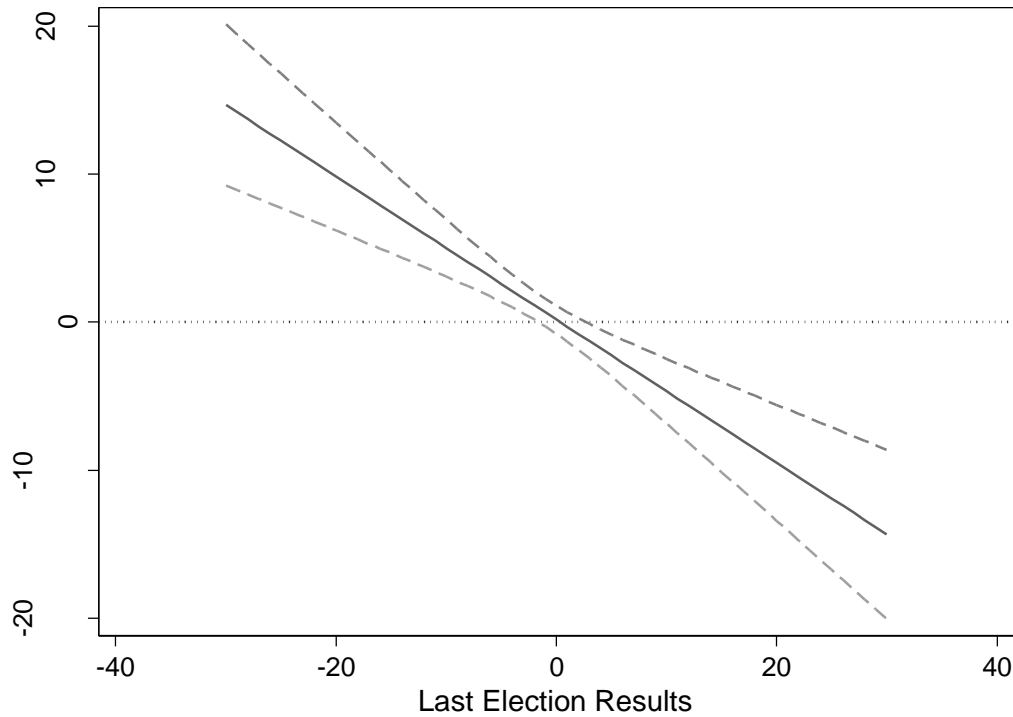


The results appear in Table 1. The results show that party relabeling does not have any independent effects on electoral performance of the party (Hypothesis 1). However, they provide some evidence to the mechanisms whereby various measures of electoral strength condition the impact of party relabeling on electoral performance. The effect of party name change is not negatively conditioned by electoral viability (Hypothesis 2) but positively conditioned by electoral pressure (Hypothesis 3). At the same time, how well parties fared in the last contest negatively affect party relabeling for vote share (Hypothesis 4). Party relabeling does have some impact on electoral results in some special cases.

Some of the control variables also reveal interesting results. For instance, in contrast to the implications drawn from the literature in party system institutionalization,

as a party's age increases the vote share it gets goes down. Partial evidence for incumbency advantage is also found. Parties that currently hold prime ministership are revealed to work well for the advantage of their electoral fortunes whereas parties' holding cabinet membership does not have the similar effect. As an ideology-relevant predictor, *Euroscepticism* implies that pro-EU attitudes are still prevalent in the vast majority of European voters. Lastly, *Disproportionality* conforms to the conventional wisdom that increased disproportionality of electoral systems has restrictive effect on the viability or survival of multiple parties.

The results in Table 7.2 present sub-sample analyses of Model 3 in Table 1 with respect to different party types. The conditional effects of electoral pressure on party relabeling still hold for large parties and catch-all parties. Concerning small parties and extreme parties, the effects disappear in the sub-analyses (Model 6 & Model 7). As researchers in the studies of niche parties suggest that parties have different goals and thus display different patterns of behavior. According to Adams and his colleagues (2006, 2009), for instance, leftist parties are rigid in terms of party change compared to mainstream parties. Particularly, if they modify their ideological platforms in response to change in public opinion and electoral environment, they are punished electorally. The findings that we have from Model 6 and Model 7 are generally consistent with these implications; small and ideologically extreme parties, a family to which leftist parties belong get punished electorally if they change their labels more than do their mainstream catch-all counterparts.

**Table 7.2: Party Relabeling Across Party Types**

| | Model 5 | Model 6 | Model 7 | Model 8 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Large Parties | Small Parties | Extreme Parties | Catch-All Parties |
| Relabeling | 4.45 | 1.37* | -0.59 | -0.53 |
| | (3.49) | (0.81) | (0.91) | (0.56) |
| Electoral Pressure | -0.58*** | -0.56*** | -1.16*** | -0.66*** |
| | (0.10) | (0.06) | (0.08) | (0.03) |
| Electorl Pressure* Relabeling | **0.98*** | **-0.09** | **0.01** | **0.31*** |
| | (0.37) | (0.14) | (0.19) | (0.09) |
| Party Age | -0.20*** | 0.00 | -0.03 | -0.06*** |
| | (0.04) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) |
| Name Experience | 0.28* | -0.14** | -0.20** | -0.08 |
| | (0.15) | (0.06) | (0.09) | (0.06) |
| Ideology | 0.14 | 0.50*** | 0.39*** | 0.22 |
| | (0.68) | (0.19) | (0.08) | (0.21) |
| Euroscepticism | -1.07 | 0.93*** | 0.88*** | 0.94*** |
| | (0.66) | (0.17) | (0.12) | (0.17) |
| Incumbent Prime Minister | 9.12*** | 14.38*** | 18.35*** | 10.16*** |
| | (1.16) | (1.01) | (2.59) | (0.49) |
| Incumbent Government | 0.11 | 0.35 | -0.61 | 0.47 |
| | (1.13) | (0.32) | (0.85) | (0.34) |
| Disproportionality | -0.77*** | -0.02 | -0.15 | -0.29*** |
| | (0.12) | (0.06) | (0.09) | (0.05) |
| Constant | 37.15*** | 3.74** | 6.62*** | 8.59*** |
| | (7.05) | (1.52) | (0.76) | (1.77) |
| Observations | 320 | 1040 | 211 | 1801 |

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

## 7.4 Conclusion

This chapter examines the electoral consequences of party relabeling. My analyses find support for some of the hypotheses proposed in this study. Depending on the degree of a party's electoral strength measured by various indicators, party relabeling has some positive influence on electoral outcomes. It is also found that this effect of party relabeling varies depending on party types – mainstream versus small parties and catch-

all versus single-issue or extreme-left, extreme-right parties. The findings in this chapter suggest that under certain conditions party relabeling does benefit parties in elections and therefore it can be used as an effective party strategy.

I conclude with providing some anecdotal evidence that I had from interviews with members of the South Korean National Assembly which support the findings of this chapter that party relabeling is beneficial and thus necessary. One legislator in opposition says,

> The Korean political system is strictly winner-take-all. If you lose an election, then you lose everything. If a party loses an election, then the party is immediately faced with the problem of survival. That is why after bad elections the parties in Korea commonly have internal disputes concerning leadership and reform, etc. Winning is everything for the party. We do everything to win elections. If we believe things are not going to work for us then we need to make change. Here, change begins with a replacement of the party label. Even though it might not have a big meaning, we do it anyways. Without formal name change, we feel like we can't start anything anew, really. A new beginning is impossible without name change. In fact, this is what the Korean people want us from.

Although he did not mention directly how party relabeling affects electoral results, whether it is positive or not, he suggested that relabeling is one of the efforts that parties in South Korea believe to be done in order to win an election. This implies that party relabeling is believed to or does in fact have positive impact on electoral performance of parties. There were several other legislators who agreed with the legislator's opinion quoted above. Particularly, those from the *Saenuri Party* evaluated

their relabeling in 2012 very positively. They attributed their phenomenal victory both in legislative and presidential elections of 2012 largely to this successful rebranding.

Then, why do parties and politicians believe that relabeling is necessary and what do they believe relabeling does in the electorate? As discussed in this chapter, I argue that parties use relabeling as a means to make a break with their undesirable past, i.e., scandal, policy failure, etc. Moreover, they use it as a salient signaling device that there have been some big changes in them. Some news stories about the UMP's (Gaullist) recent renaming to *Les Républicans* (The Republicans) shed light on this aspect. The Irish Times specifically puts it,

> With the name change, the former president of France hopes to erase the UMP's disastrous recent history: Sarkozy's defeat in the 2012 presidential election; the financial ruin of the party, which is nearly EUR 70 million in debt; a vicious power struggle between Jean-François Copé and Francois Fillion for leadership of the party; and Copé's resignation in the middle of the "Bygmalion" scandal over the illegal financing of the failed 2012 campaign" (*The Irish Times* May 29, 2015: p. 10[36]).

In sum, the findings and implications of this chapter indicate that party relabeling as a strategy can create some meaningful consequences.

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[36] "Sarkozy reaches for republican brand as he sizes up France s heritage for UMP; By changing party name, the former president wants to bury disastrous past," *The Irish Times*, May 29, 2015 Friday, p. 10.

# CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION

My dissertation searches for system-specific factors that render party relabeling more likely than others. Tackling this issue, I theorize that the combination of prominence of personalistic party cues, strong levels of political attention from the electorate, and high degree of governmental centralization leads to frequent party relabeling. The mechanisms that work in the suggested model are that these factors cause a party to be extremely sensitive to public opinion and prone to shocks. Moreover, highly centralized government system reinforces this hypersensitivity by making the benefit of national office extremely high, driving parties to be sheer vote- or office-maximizers. This set of factors, therefore, makes parties more vulnerable to shocks. These factors combined render parties more willing to engage in aggressive rebranding strategies like relabeling than otherwise as a way to overcome the aftermath of shocks or to create new appeals to the public.

Here, in this concluding chapter, I discuss what this model suggests as a type of party system that is characterized by the features offered in the model. Further, I consider some of the contributions that this research make to the literature and conclude by proposing ideas for future research.

## 8.1 Weak Party-Voter Linkage

The three parts of my theory – prominence of personalistic cues, strong levels of political attention in the electorate, and centralization – suggest one underlying character in common regarding general features of a party system: the weakness of parties in the

electorate. Put differently, the underlying structure of party systems that are conducive to more frequent party relabeling is the weak party-voter ties. What I mean by the weak party-voter ties is different from the weak-party-system arguments discussed in the previous chapter. Unlike Mainwaring and Scully (1995) and Mainwaring and Torcal (2006) who suggest weak party-voter tie as one of the prototypical variables of party system instability, I argue that it does not necessarily mean party system instability automatically.

Borrowing from V.O. Key's (1964) tripartite model of a political party, the weak-party-system argument only talks about one of the three dimensions, which is "party in the electorate". Hence, I argue that we should understand party systems in a more integrated way than the way generally treated in the existing literature. In other words, I suggest we should examine the three functions of a political party developed by V.O. Key (1964) holistically rather than a "piecemeal" approach that examines each dimension separately. Schlesinger (1984) supports my point as he critiques the party literature that most of the theories talk about separate pieces about a party but often they fail to show us the whole picture of it. He refers to this approach prevalent in the literature as a "piecemeal" approach (Schlesinger 1984: 371-372).

He further contends that theories are mainly focused on the party in its relation to the electorate and interparty competition. For instance, Duverger and Lijphart define and compare party systems mainly based on the number of competitive parties in the system (Duverger 1963; Lijphart 1994). Besides the number of parties, Sartori (1976) adds an ideological component to the definition of party system, ideological polarization of parties. Mair later includes the openness of party system in government formation

processes and the degree of institutionalization in the processes (Mair 1997, 2002). Both of these concepts, however, are basically about the regularity in the number of parties in competition and the stability in the patterns of interparty competition.

In line with Schlesinger's critique, I argue that we should look at V. O. Key's three dimensions as a whole to understand what my theory on party relabeling suggests as to general features of party system where party relabeling is common. Before developing this point further, let us briefly review V. O. Key's tripartite framework of political party. V. O. Key (1964) defines the functions of a party in three different aspects. First, a party in government emphasizes the role that a political party plays in government as a policy maker as well as a policy executer. This aspect is most manifest in party voting in legislatures.

Second, a party as an organization is about the functions that a party plays as a political organization such as fielding candidates in elections and campaigning for them, operating a party organization, and making decisions within its organization. Third, a party in the electorate stresses its role as a mediator between citizens and government, a representative of the citizens' or its supporters' interests. How loyal individual voters are to a certain party is a question of the strength of a party in the electorate. Depending on the degree of systematization or strength in these three dimensions, we have eight different types of combinations as in Table 8.1 below.

**Table 8.1: Combinations of V. O. Key's Tripartite Framework**

| Type of Party System | Party in the Electorate | Party in Government | Party as Organization |
|---|---|---|---|
| (i) Non-System | Weak | Weak | Weak |
| (ii) | Strong | Weak | Weak |
| (iii) | Weak | Strong | Weak |
| (iv) | Weak | Weak | Strong |
| (v) | Strong | Strong | Weak |
| (vi) | Strong | Weak | Strong |
| (vii) | Weak | Strong | Strong |
| (viii) Ideal System | Strong | Strong | Strong |

Type (i) signifies that there is no systematization at all in the party system and therefore, it is highly unlikely that this system has any systematic parties. Type (ii) is an unrealistic combination since if there is no systematization in the party as a governing entity and no organization power it is almost impossible for parties to take roots in the electorate (Strom 2000). Similarly, Type (iv) is an unrealistic combination as well. If parties are not systematic and influential enough as a governing entity and they do not have strong ties in the electorate, there is no reason for them to develop their organizational capabilities. Type (iii), on the other hand, indicates the systems of authoritarian regimes where there is one dominant party that is undistinguishable from the government apparatus and there are no meaningful fair and free elections. Examples of this type of party system include China and authoritarian post-communist countries. Type (viii) is an ideal combination that can be found in some of the most stable party systems in Western Europe. Most of the (relatively stable) democracies fall in either Types (v), (vi), or (vii).

Of the three, I argue that the party system that is characterized with the three parts of my theory refers to Type (vii), which is the party system with the combination of strong parties in government and as organizations but weak in the electorate. This type of system is characterized by relatively weak ties between parties and the electorate and this leaves party "labels" *per se* less meaningful to the electorate than other types with stronger party-electorate ties. In other words, party labels in this system tend to cue less information and hence relabeling involves fewer costs than in others. This naturally discourages parties to invest much effort in producing and maintaining brand-name labels. Particularly when they are faced with problems such as a continual or sudden loss of electoral support and internal disputes and thus evaluate that their labels do no good, parties in this setting are exposed to more incentives to relabel than those in a system where parties root deeply in the electorate. Instead, parties in this type of system find relabeling viable and attractive as a strategy to build loyalty and legitimacy in the electorate and thus boost electoral support effectively in a short period of time, particularly before elections.

Yet, parties in Type (vii) have considerable influence on individual legislators and thus enjoy a high degree of discipline in government. Being influential as a governing entity, parties are considered crucial to politicians. Therefore, politicians believe their affiliation with a party particularly a major one is an absolute need for them to continue their career. In other words, this makes their disaffiliation from the party unattractive to politicians even when their party faces low popularity or scandals that negatively affect its fortune. Instead, they are likely to remain in the party but try to fix the troubles by making some changes as a way of rebranding the party, for instance, through leadership

change, platform change, and label change. Further, with considerable organizational strength parties in Type (vii) are capable of carrying out rebranding and remarketing themselves under a new label in the electorate.

In contrast, Types (v), (vi), and (viii) do not make relabeling an attractive option to the parties in those systems, particularly major parties, as they have such stable roots in the electorate that there is rich brand name value attached to their party labels. As their labels themselves are meaningful in both symbolic and substantive terms to politicians and voters, party relabeling is highly unlikely in these types of systems. Put differently, relabeling in these systems is extremely costly. The assumptions that Downs and later scholars generally make about party labels are strongly upheld in such settings. The longer the label lasts, the better it serves as a brand name. Therefore, in this setting, relabeling of parties is almost unthinkable among major, established parties while it might occur among those weak or newer parties in their bid for establishing themselves in the system.

In short, the weak tie between parties and voters in Type (vii) enables parties in this system, even major ones, to be willing to change their labels if they find it needed. However, the fact that this system shows a high level of systematization in terms of the party in government and the party as an organization makes it hard to be seen as an unstable or unconsolidated party system. This particular combination of V. O. Key's tripartite party functions makes party affiliation, especially to major parties, attractive to politicians, preventing a chaotic rise and fall of new parties in the system. Organizational power and strong party influence in government enable a party to relabel without being dissolved or going through fundamental changes.

**8.2 Contributions and Future Research**

This dissertation makes several theoretical and empirical contributions. First of all, as already mentioned in earlier chapters, this dissertation investigates a phenomenon that has not been received sufficient scholarly attention. It systematically reviews the relevant literature, analyzes implications from it, and develops a novel theory that explains the causes of party relabeling. By providing a new theoretical model on this understudied phenomenon, I contribute to a better understanding of the role of party labels and initiate more active discussion over party strategy and party branding. Furthermore, by examining South Korean and Taiwanese parties in depth, my dissertation provides a systematic analysis on the studies of East Asian politics. The literature in this region is notoriously underdeveloped, having received less scholarly attention than other regions in the discipline.

Empirically, my dissertation takes advantage of the benefits of mixed methods utilizing both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Further, I use various types of data in my case studies of South Korea, France, Taiwan and the United States including interviews, newspaper content analysis, primary and secondary sources of qualitative and quantitative data, etc. Particularly, the fieldwork that I conducted in South Korea in spring 2014 was helpful in examining the meaning of party labels to parties and voters and how the mechanism of relabeling works not limited to South Korea but also other systems in general. I interviewed national legislators, their staff, party officials and journalists.

The underlying approach that I take in this research is motivated by historical institutionalism. Historical institutionalism emphasizes the influence of existing

institutions in shaping actors' behavior and interactions, and thus forming certain patterns of political, social, and economic systems in a society. Institutions could mean various things. For instance, North (1990) defines institutions as formal rules such as rules and laws and informal rules such as culture, norms of behavior, and societal codes of conduct in a given society. He views that both informal and formal rules contain enforcement mechanisms in them which ensure individuals' compliance with the preexisting rules.

To historical institutionalists, all human behavior and interactions are characterized by uncertainty and transaction costs arising from it. Institutions help individuals reduce uncertainty by making patterns of behavior more predictable than otherwise by establishing a stable structure (North 1990, pp. 3-4). Once established, these institutions tend to stay long as they have deeply entrenched in social interactions and formed incentives based on cost-and-benefit calculations that affect all aspects of interactions in a society. Preexisting institutions thus have such a tremendous impact on the evolution of societies that channel the evolutionary trajectories of societies in certain directions. Referring to this phenomenon, historical institutionalists highlight path dependency of institutional change (Pierson 2000). The notion of path dependency has a strong explanatory power to understanding continuity of institutions in a society though some of these institutions are inefficient and evolutionary patterns of institutions vary across societies.

The existing institutions have interconnectedness among themselves and therefore have lock-in effect, rendering radical institutional change or transplantation of foreign institutions highly unlikely. Pierson (2000) focuses on the concept of "increasing returns" to clarify this lock-in effect of institutions. He puts, "Specific patterns of timing and

sequence matter…particular courses of action, once introduced, can be virtually

impossible to reverse; and consequently, political development is often punctuated by

critical moments or junctures that shape the basic contours of social life…preceding steps

in a particular direction induce further movement in the same direction. (This is) well

captured by the idea of increasing returns" (Pierson 2000, pp. 251-252). According to

him, increasing returns are a relative benefit that we obtain increasingly over time as we

continue to follow the established patterns of activity rather than other alternatives.

Increasing returns occur because an existing set of institutions has "self-reinforcing" or

"positive feedback processes" and also incurs costs if actors exit from these set rules

(Pierson 2000, p. 252).

Drawing on these implications, historical institutionalists explain cross-national

variations and historical continuities of policy. For instance, Hall (1986) investigated why

Britain and France took different developmental paths upon facing similar economic

crises during the post-war period. He argues that it is mainly due to the different patterns

of economic, social, and political institutions that already existed in France and Britain.

These different institutional arrangements shaped their economic policy accordingly and

it led them to respond differently even under the same external shock. Similarly, Zysman

(1994) explains various developmental models of countries as consequences of historical

legacies. Esping-Andersen (1990) and Hall and Soskice (2001) categorize European

economic models into three welfare groups and two labor paradigms and explain why

each group of economies has ended up having what they have.

To sum, historical institutionalism states that history matters. Historical legacies

or existing institutions established over time have tremendous influence on the

development of a society. Based on the concept of path dependency, this theory well explains historical continuities of institutions and incremental evolutionary processes of institutional change. Complementarity or lock-in effect of institutions makes abrupt institutional change such as import of foreign institutions highly unlikely or unsuccessful in a given society.

I investigate the four party systems, South Korea, France, Taiwan, and the United States using a historical institutionalist approach. I attempt to define the historical background or "origins[37]" of the emergence of strong personalistic party cues in South Korea and France. Also, I emphasize that the historical legacies that gave rise to strong personalistic cues also contributed to the creation of centralized government systems in the two systems. The interrelatedness between personalisitc cues and excessive political interests of the electorate are considered, too.

I claim that my research overcomes the weakness of historical institutionalist studies by employing the combined use of cross-case and within-case analyses. One of the criticisms against the historical institutionalist studies is the lack of generalizability. As they emphasize the idiosyncrasy of each political system and thus impossibility of other alternatives to what each ends up having now, often these studies offer explanations that are applicable only to the cases chosen in their studies. For instance, Esping-Andersen's (1990) analysis on three types of welfare models provides a host of

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[37] This is one of the most elusive concepts in historical analysis. It is always tricky to define which the true "origin" is of something because everything is connected to each other in historical concatenation of events. Therefore, it requires the researcher to provide rationale for her definition of the "origin" that she is interested in explaining.

extraordinarily insightful theories and implications but the validity of each explanation is limited to each welfare model of the three. The validity of each set of his theories is bounded within each of the three territorially grouped categories. However, my research is to offer a universal law that explains party relabeling, which is not limited to only a certain group of systems but applicable to all. I argue this was possible thanks to the combined use of cross-case and within-case analyses conducted through the "South Korea-Taiwan" and "France-U.S." paired comparison.

There are some places that could to be improved. First of all, to better test my theory, I need to develop more fine-grained empirical analysis to test each causal mechanism of the theory. For instance, there needs to be a more rigorous empirical test that examines the different levels of national-subnational office value determined by levels of centralization. I included some descriptive evidence for it but if I could provide some form of quantified analysis that would make the analysis much stronger. Secondly, I could extend the newspaper analysis to a longer period of time so as to examine long-term and thus more accurate trends of the use of personalistic cues, public response, and party behavior. This big data collection can be possibly done by taking advantage of webscraping capabilities that R provides, for instance. I leave these for my future project.

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