Party Models in a Hybrid Regime: 
Hong Kong 2007–2012*

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Abstract
In this article, I argue that traditional party models may be meaningfully applied to the case of Hong Kong, which is a hybrid regime. This is due to the unique constitutional arrangement separating sovereign Beijing from the Hong Kong polity, allowing opposition parties to compete freely in some elections. Due to the lack of a ruling party, elections are highly competitive among political parties. A “stunted but contested” party system is in place. The major parties in Hong Kong are then classified as elite, mass, catch-all, or cartel according to their characteristics, structure, and resourcefulness. The resulting typology is shown to have good explanatory power with regard to parties’ polling patterns, even when compared with other popular frameworks for political parties in Hong Kong. The study also has implications for hybrid regimes as it demonstrates that a highly competitive party system is possible.

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