

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

Mathew Y. H. Wong

### *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.

---

**Mathew Y. H. WONG** is Ph.D. candidate in government at the University of Essex. He also teaches in the Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Hong Kong. His research interests include income inequality, political institutions, democracy, development, and Hong Kong politics.

\* I would like to thank Ron Lehrer, Hugh Ward, the journal’s editors, and two anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments on previous versions of this article.