How "Fragmented" is China’s Authoritarianism?
A Probabilistic Crucial Case Analysis of Political Pluralization in the Chinese Policy Process

Hans H. Tung
tung@fas.harvard.edu
Department of Government, Harvard University

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Outline

1. Concepts

2. Method
   - Harry Eckstein’s Crucial Case Method
   - A Probabilistic Perspective

3. Case
   - A Framework for Comparative Analysis
   - Labor Contract Law and Export Sector
1 Concepts

2 Method
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3 Case
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“Policy X resulted from a bargain among Ministries A, B, and C and Province D either 1. brokered by one or more top leaders, 2. arranged by coordinating staffs acting in the name of one or more top leaders, or 3. negotiated by the supra-ministry coordinating agency, and ratified through routine procedures by the top leaders. Disgruntled Ministries E and F, losers in the deal, planned to pursue strategies to erode the agreement. The bargain sought to reconcile the conflicting organizational missions, ethos, structure, and resource allocations of the ministries involved.” (3-4)

"... previously-excluded members of the policy-making process in China – officials only peripherally connected to the policy in question, the media, non-governmental organizations and individual activists – have successfully entered the political process precisely by adopting strategies necessary to work within the structural and procedural constraints of the fragmented authoritarianism framework.” (996)
Political Pluralization without A Radical Reform

- **Major Momentums**
  1. Rapid Socioeconomic Changes
  2. Agency Slack

- **Sociological Turn of the China Study**
  - Business Associations (Kennedy, 2005a; Deng and Kennedy, 2010)
  - Individual Policy Entrepreneurs (Mertha, 2009; Zhu, 2008)
  - NGOs (Mertha, 2008; Schwartz, 2004; Xu et al., 2005)

- Assessing Evidence: How "General" is Fragmented Authoritarianism 2.0?
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   - Labor Contract Law and Export Sector
Deterministic Crucial Case Analysis

- **Single-Case Design**
  - Confirmatory (Least Likely)
    - Sinatra Inference: "If I can make it there, I can make it anywhere."
    - Example: Wenzhou’s Lighter Industry in Mertha (2009)
  - Disconfirmatory (Most Likely)
    - Inverse Sinatra Inference: "If I cannot make it there, I cannot make it anywhere."
    - Example: Brazil’s Minicomputer Industry.
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Crucial Case in China’s Policy Process

- Top Leaders (Central Committee Members)
- Ministry-Level Officials
- Local Officials
- Business Associations (Kennedy, 2005)
- Civil Society Actors
- Elections
- Ordinary Citizens
- State
- Low Degree of Fragmentation
- Boundary (Institutional Filter)

- Totalitarianism
- FA 1.0 (Lieberthal, 1992)
- FA 2.0 (Mertha, 2009)

"Crucial Case" Test

Harry Eckstein’s Crucial Case Method: A Probabilistic Perspective
Bayesian Nature of the Crucial Case Method: How much more plausible $e$ is given the presence of $h$

$$Pr(e|h) - Pr(e)$$  \hspace{1cm} (1)

Alternatively, applying Bayes’ theorem to (1) yields

$$Pr(e) \left[ \frac{Pr(h|e)}{Pr(h)} - 1 \right]$$ \hspace{1cm} (2)

Key Parameters

- $Pr(e)$
- $Pr(h)$ (prior)
- $Pr(h|e)$ (posterior)

$Pr(h)$ and "Crucialness": Deterministic versus Probabilistic
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A Probabilistic Crucial Case Analysis

Concepts Method Case

Harry Eckstein’s Crucial Case Method

A Probabilistic Perspective

A Probabilistic Crucial Case Analysis

FA 2.0
Pr(FA 2.0)

FA 1.0
(P^V1)

Deterministic

Pr(Agency Slack)

Agency Slack

no Agency Slack

Crucialness

Deterministic

Deterministic

Deterministic

Deterministic

Crucialness

Labor Contract Law

Trade Policy

Hypothesized Relationship

Pr(Agency Slack)

Hypothesized Relationship

Pr(FA 2.0)

Deterministic

Probabilistic

Deterministic

Probabilistic

Deterministic

Deterministic

π_k

π_m

Mertha (2009)

Kennedy (2005b)

Inference

Confirmation

Confidence Zone

Mertha (2009)

Kennedy (2005b)

Labor Contract Law

Trade Policy

π_k

π_m

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### Comparing Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Policy Area</th>
<th>Conflict of Interests</th>
<th>Domestic Political Cost</th>
<th>Confidence Zone</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mertha (2009)</td>
<td>International Trade</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Confidence Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy (2005b)</td>
<td>International Trade</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>(Harmonization)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Contract Law</td>
<td>International Trade / Labor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>(Regime Stability)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tariff</td>
<td>International Trade</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>(Regime Stability &amp; Selectorate Support)</td>
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</table>
Export Dependency and Labor Intensity, 1999-2008
Labor Contract Law and Labor Cost

- One-month Contract-Signing Period (Article 10)
- Punishment for Failing to Sign a Contract (Article 82)
  - More than One Month but Less than One Year: Double Salary
  - More than One Year: Conclusion of a Contract without a Fixed Term
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Delineating the Confidence Zone

Prior: Lower Agency Slack (i.e., More Crucial)

- Regime Stability
- Industrial Upgrading (Chou and Tung, 2009)

Posterior

The Role of the Export Sector in the Policy Process

Formally,

\[
Pr \left( \text{FA 2.0 | Labor, Kennedy, Mertha} \right) < 1
\]

Tariff Policy

- Bureaucratic Vested Interests in Sectors
- Regime Stability
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\[
\frac{\Pr(H_0|I, \text{Labor}, \text{Kennedy}, \text{Mertha})}{\Pr(H_1|I, \text{Labor}, \text{Kennedy}, \text{Mertha})} < 1 \tag{3}
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Pr \left( \frac{h^{Labor}_{FA 2.0} | e^{Labor}, e^{Kennedy}, e^{Mertha}}{Pr \left( h^{Labor}_{FA 2.0} | e^{Kennedy}, e^{Mertha} \right)} \right) < 1 \tag{3}
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Pr \left( h_{\text{Labor FA 2.0}} \parallel e_{\text{Labor}}, e_{\text{Kennedy}}, e_{\text{Mertha}} \right) < 1
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  - Formally,

\[
Pr\left(\frac{h_{\text{Labor FA 2.0}}}{e_{\text{Labor}}, e_{\text{Kennedy}}, e_{\text{Mertha}}} \right) < 1
\]

- Tariff Policy
  1. Bureaucratic Vested Interests in Sectors
  2. Regime Stability
Conclusion

- Fragmented Authoritarianism 1.0 and China’s Trade Policymaking Process
- A Barometer of Fragmentation
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