

## **Party Politics, Partisan Polarization and Perverse Political Strategies: A Growing Challenge to Catch-all Parties?**

Alexander C. Tan<sup>1</sup>、Cal Clark<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Political Science, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

紐西蘭坎特伯里大學政治學系

<sup>2</sup>Department of Political Science, Auburn University, U.S.A.

美國奧本大學政治學系

In the past decade, Taiwan's politics became increasingly polarized over the strongly interlinked issues of national identity and cross-Strait relations. The balance of power resulting from divided government with the Pan-Green coalition controlling the Executive branch and the Pan-Blue coalition controlling the legislature produced policy gridlock and increasingly vicious politics. This situation created serious problems for Taiwan as policy towards the PRC and economic policy became embroiled in intense partisan dispute and inflamed with emotional battle over national identity. Yet, the vicious polarization over national identity does not appear to have been predetermined as the main feature of modern Taiwanese democratic politics since the "median" voter appears to be in a moderate middle on this issue rather than falling into two bipolar extremes. This paper examines the role of party politics in partisan polarization over national identity and suggests that while elite polarization may be incongruent with mass public's attitudes several factors innate to the dynamics of Taiwanese politics may help us understand the seemingly perverse political strategies.