

Rethinking the Nexus between Political Regimes and Economic Growth

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First Edition, 2026

Macao Scientific Publishers

Address: Block 11/F, Hengchang Building, Nanwan Avenue, Macao, 999078, China

Website: www.mospbs.com / moaj.mospbs.com

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Rethinking the Nexus between Political Regimes and Economic Growth

Hardcover

Word Count: 281,938 words

First Edition: Jul 2026

Published by Macao Scientific Publishers (MOSP)

Printed by HanLin Publishing Group, Macao, China

Print Date: Jul 2026

ISBN 978-99996-49-73-5



Any quality issue with this book, please contact book@mospbs.com.

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To my parents,
who as children taught me love,
and who as teenagers taught me strategy.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIC	Akaike information criterion
BIC	Bayesian information criterion
BQ	Bureaucracy quality
BQI	Bureaucracy quality index
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
EADS	East Asian developmental state
EG	Economic growth
FE	Fixed effects
FH	Freedom House
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HSW	Henderson, Storeygard, and Weil
ICRG	International Country Risk Guide
IRT	Item response theory
LDCs	Least developed countries
MLM	Multilevel models
MVN	Multivariate normal
POLITY	Combined polity score
POLITY2	Revised combined polity score
PPP	Purchasing power parity
PR	Political regimes
PRI	Political rights index

AIC	Akaike information criterion
QoG	Quality of Government
RE	Random effects
RML	Restricted maximum likelihood
SC	Schwarz criterion
TSCS	Time-series cross-sectional
V-Dem	Varieties of Democracy
WB	World Bank
WDI	World Development Indicators
WGI	World Bank Governance Indicators

PREFACE

This book has its origins in my doctoral dissertation, completed during my tenure as a PhD candidate in Political Science at National Chengchi University in Taiwan. What began as a focused inquiry into the long-standing, unresolved debate over political regimes and economic growth has evolved, through years of refinement, reflection, and empirical revision, into the broader analysis presented here. The core puzzle that animated my dissertation—and that continues to drive this book—remains unchanged: why do similar political regimes often produce dramatically different socioeconomic development outcomes across countries and over time? This question, central to the fields of political science and development economics, has long divided scholars into competing theoretical camps, yet a definitive consensus remains elusive. My dissertation sought to move beyond the simplistic framing of “whether regime type matters” for growth. In revising it for publication as a monograph, I have updated the literature review, deepened the analytical focus, and clarified the theoretical and policy implications of my argument—through a series of targeted revisions that transformed the dissertation’s narrow, focused inquiry into a comprehensive, standalone scholarly work.

My initial decision to pursue this line of research—and the inspiration to frame my dissertation around the interplay of political regimes and economic development—was sparked by the encouragement of Carl Henrik Knutsen. Since his undergraduate studies, Knutsen has dedicated himself to researching the relationship between political regimes and economic development, a scholarly focus that has persisted and deepened throughout his academic career. His profound accumulation of knowledge, continuous contributions to the field, and unwavering enthusiasm for research have long served as a source of inspiration for me, guiding my own exploration of this complex and enduring scholarly puzzle.

As a doctoral student, I was struck by the disconnect between the theoretical emphasis on political regimes in the existing literature and the real-world observation that many developing countries with seemingly sound institutional designs struggled to achieve sustained economic growth. This gap led me to question whether conventional accounts had overlooked a critical mediating factor—one that bridges the divide between political institutions and tangible economic outcomes. Through extensive literature review, pilot analyses, and feedback from my dissertation committee, I increasingly focused on policy processes and bureaucratic quality as that missing link. Unlike much of the existing research, my dissertation argued that political regimes do matter for economic growth but are not omnipotent; instead, political regimes exert their influence on economic growth through bureaucratic quality—specifically, the rigor and impartiality of public *administration*.

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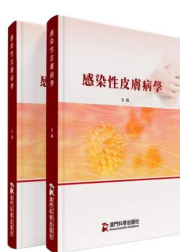


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- 感染性皮肤病学 Infectious dermatology
- 内分泌系统疾病 Endocrine system disease



- 实用小儿内科学 Practical pediatric internal medicine
- 消化系统疾病诊疗学 Diagnosis and treatment of digestive system diseases
- 现代中医诊断学 Modern diagnostics of traditional chinese medicine
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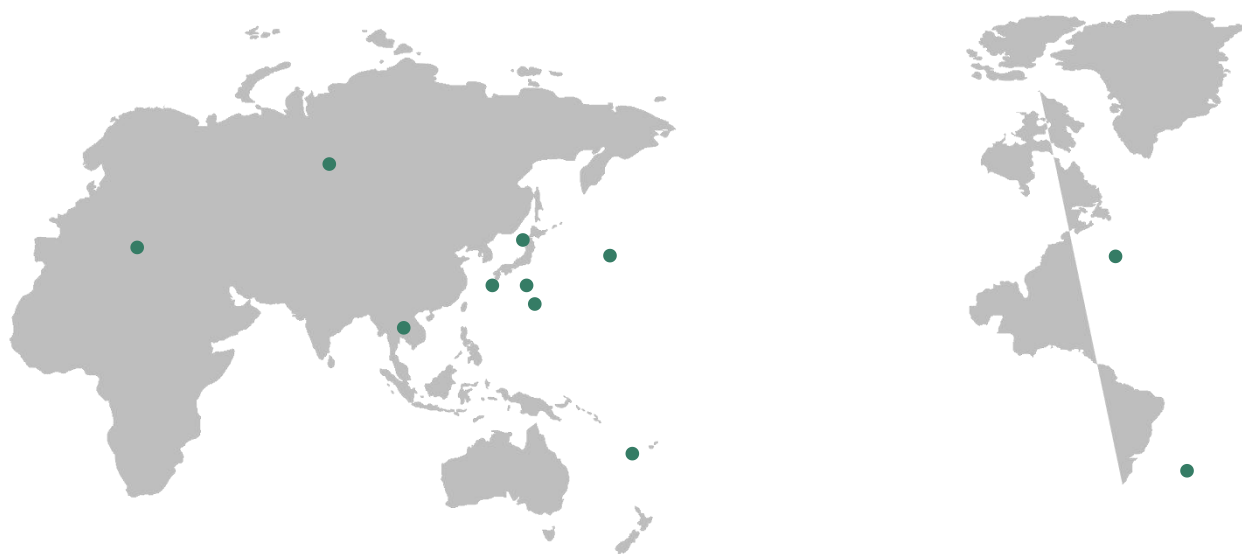
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