

Political booms : local money and power in Taiwan, East China, Thailand, and the Philippines

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Abstrak

Why have Taiwan, rich parts of China, and Thailand boomed famously, while the Philippines has long remained stagnant both economically and politically? Do booms abet democracy? Does the rise of middle "classes" promise future liberalization? Why has Philippine democracy brought no boom and barely served the Filipino people? This book, unlike most previous studies, shows that both the roots and results of growth are largely political rather than economic. Specifically, it pays attention to local, not just national, power networks that caused or prevented growth in the four places under consideration. Violence has been common in these polities, along with money. Elections have contributed to socio-political problems that are also obvious in Leninist or junta regimes, because elections are surprisingly easy to buy with corrupt money from government contracts. Liberals should pay more serious theoretical attention to the effects of money on justice, and Western political science should focus more clearly on the ways non-state local power affects elections. By considering the effects on fair justice of local money and power (largely from small- and medium-sized firms that emerge after agrarian reforms), this book asks democrats to face squarely the extent to which electoral procedures fail to help ordinary citizens. Students and scholars of Asia will all need this book - as will students of the West whose methods have become parochial.