

4/23

Prof Huang's title+abstract:

Title: Pro Liberalism or Illiberal? The Nature of Civic Mobilization and Economic Growth

Abstract:

This paper explores the factors that distinguish successful democratizing nations of the Third Wave, which established stable democracies and achieved economic prosperity, from those that failed. We investigate the enduring link between the nature of mobilization during democratic transitions and subsequent economic growth. Using dynamic growth regressions with fixed effects, event studies, a semiparametric model, a matching-augmented DID strategy, and instrumental variable analyses, with data from 1960 to 2020, we find that Pro-liberal Mobilization, which respects diverse values, boosts post-transition economic growth compared to autocratic countries. In contrast, Illiberal Mobilization, driven by autocratic tendencies, does not. This distinction leaves a lasting impact not only on the quality of institutions but also on the cultivation of peaceful political behavior. It matters more for future economic growth than the violence level during the democratization process. The findings align closely with the view that "The ends do not justify the means. The means have important impact on the ends."