

ANNOUNCEMENT

Elizabeth Meehan ‘Best Article’ Prize

On behalf of the editorial board, the editors of *Government and Opposition* are pleased to announce the winner of the annual ‘best article’ prize, named in memory of long-time editorial board member Elizabeth Meehan (1947–2018). This prize is offered to the non-commissioned, peer-reviewed, original research article published during the previous calendar year that the editorial board members believe best represents the scholarly excellence of the journal and the tradition of commitment to public discourse on important topics in comparative politics that *Government and Opposition* has maintained for more than fifty years.

The 2022 prize-winning article is by Michael G. Breen, School of Social and Political Science, Faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne: ‘Federal and Political Party Reforms in Asia: Is There a New Model of Federal Democracy Emerging in Ethnically Diverse Countries in Asia?’, *Government and Opposition: An International Journal of Comparative Politics*, 57(2), 296–317. <https://doi.org/10.1017/gov.2020.26>.

The article is theoretically and methodologically innovative. The author applies a historical-comparative analysis, using qualitative and quantitative data in a most similar systems approach to eight ‘federal democracies’ in Asia, namely India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines and Sri Lanka. Lessons are drawn from the new model of federal democracy in Asia, comprising multilevel ethno-territorial federalism, mixed-majoritarianism and a party system that includes both ethnic and multi-ethnic parties. It is demonstrated that, in ethnically divided countries in Asia, ‘majoritarianism and ethnofederalism are being combined such that regional and ethnic parties provide an important counterbalance to the national and aggregative (multi-ethnic) parties.’ As a result, ‘executives in the region are almost invariably coalition governments, and – in most cases – post-election coalitions combining ethnic and multi-ethnic parties’. The article challenges dominant theories that argue that majoritarianism leads to two-party systems and that party fragmentation declines as the party system becomes more structured in the context of democratization.

We are very pleased to have selected this article. We particularly welcome the focus on the comparative study of complex multilayered societies. This was an issue of central importance to Professor Meehan’s work. The selection committee found this work to represent a very significant contribution in an exciting and important international field of study.