

## **The Representation of East Asia in Latin American Legislatures\***

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### Summary

What is the representation of East Asia in Latin American legislatures? Existing studies have focused on individual politicians of East Asian descent such as Alberto Fujimori, former president of Peru, but no systematic research has been done on the political representation of East Asia in Latin America. In order to fill this gap, this study analyzes the descriptive and substantive aspects of East Asian representation in Latin America. For the descriptive dimension, this article reviews the composition of legislators of East Asian descent in each Latin American country and finds that people of Japanese descent are “overrepresented” in the Peruvian and Argentine lower houses, while people of Korean and Chinese descent are underrepresented. Using the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies as an example, this study also reveals that deputies of East Asian descent differ from other deputies in terms of their political careers. As for the substantive dimension, this study focuses on Brazilian deputies’ responses to the Twin Ocean Railroad project, one of the largest Chinese infrastructure projects in Latin America. The statistical test performed in this study shows that the deputies tend to be members of the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus if they are affiliated with the Brazil-Japan Caucus, if they are from a wealthier state, or if their performance in the last election was good. In addition, they are not likely to be members of the caucus if they are affiliated with the PSDB, an important opposition party.

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## 1. Introduction

What is the representation of East Asia in Latin American legislatures? Existing studies have focused on individual politicians of East Asian descent such as Alberto Fujimori, a former president of Peru, but no systematic research has been done on the political representation of East Asia in Latin America. In order to fill this gap, I study the degree of descriptive representation of people of East Asian descent in Latin American legislatures. Moreover, using the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies as an example, I examine the political careers of deputies of East Asian descent as well as deputies' responses to the Twin Ocean Railroad (Ferrovia Bioceânica) project, one of the largest Chinese infrastructure projects in Latin America.

Even though Chinese immigrants began to arrive at Latin America in the 16<sup>th</sup> century through the Manila-Acapulco trade connection, their mass settlement in the region did not begin until the 19<sup>th</sup> century due to the so-called coolie trade (Wilson, 2004; Lai, 2010). The termination of the slave trade in 1834 led Cuba to be the first Latin American country that “imported” Chinese contract workers in 1847, followed by Peru in 1849. Other Latin American countries also recruited Chinese contract workers, though to a lesser extent, and Chinese migration spread to the entire region. By 1950, there were Chinese communities in almost all the countries in Latin America (Wilson, 2004). According to Ellis (2009), the three Latin American countries that host the largest populations of people with Chinese ancestry are Peru (approximately 4,200,000),<sup>1</sup> Brazil (approximately 300,000), and Panama (150,000).

By contrast, Japanese migration to Latin America was encouraged by bilateral treaties as well as the Japanese government's effort to promote overseas migration. The 1888 Japan-Mexico treaty allowed people to move between the two countries with no restriction, and Japanese immigrants started to move to Mexico in the 1890s (Wilson, 2004). Peru's need to replace Chinese contract workers also encouraged Japanese people to migrate, but poor economic opportunities in Latin American countries did not attract so many Japanese immigrants, especially before each of the United States and Canada reached a “Gentlemen's Agreement” with Japan in order to limit Japanese migration. The only exception was Brazil, since Japanese migration was significantly subsidized, and

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<sup>1</sup> This number is equal to 15% of the population of the country (Ellis, 2009).

both Japanese and Brazilian interests invested in it (Masterson, 2004). The changes in the immigration policy of the United States and Canada as well as the occurrence of World War II altered the trend. However, the number of people of Japanese descent in Brazil (approximately 1,900,000) is much larger than that in Peru (approximately 100,000) and other Latin American countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2016).

Some Koreans migrated to Latin America as “Japanese workers” before the end of World War II, but the mass migration of Koreans started in the 1960s after the establishment of a diplomatic relationship between South Korea and Latin American countries (Wilson, 2004). A significant number of Koreans migrated to Argentina and Brazil, but the number of people of Korean descent in Latin America is quite small compared to the ethnic Chinese and Japanese populations (Yoon, 2015).

For people of East Asian descent, entering politics in early 20th-century Latin America meant challenging the *criollo* political class. Some of these “challengers” were thus inclined to the leftist ideology. In Peru, Víctor Polay-Risco, the son of a coolie, founded the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (*Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana*, APRA) with his colleagues in 1930 (Lausent-Herrera, 2010). In Brazil, where the main reason people of Japanese descent entered politics was to improve their image during World War II, by contrast, people of Japanese descent ran for municipal councilmanship from political parties of various ideological backgrounds (Nagamura, 2017).

The Cold War and the rise of military regimes in the region strengthened the leftist tendency.<sup>2</sup> In Chile, Carlos Ominami was an active member of the Revolutionary Left Movement (*Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria*, MIR) from 1968 to 1975 and exiled himself to Europe after the 1973 coup. As an important figure of the banking industry union in São Paulo, Luiz Gushiken founded the Workers’ Party (*Partido dos*

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<sup>2</sup> This tendency was different from the characteristics of the politicians of East Asian descent in Suriname and former British colonies in the Caribbean, where many people of Chinese descent were active in politics before the independence. As a result, Suriname (Hendrick Chin A Sen, 1980–1982) and Guyana (Arthur Chung, 1970–1980) had a president of Chinese descent, even though Chin A Sen was affiliated with the leftist Nationalist Republican Party (PNR) (Europa Publications, 2002).

*Trabalhadores*, PT) with former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in 1980. After the democratization in the two countries, Ominami served as the minister of economic affairs (1990–1992) and a senator (1994–2010), while Gushiken served as a deputy (1987–1999) and the chief minister of the Secretary of Social Communication (*Secretaria de Comunicação Social*) (2003–2005) under the Lula administration (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile, 2016; Folha de S. Paulo, 2013).

Beginning the 1990s, we could observe more diversity in the ideological origins of Latin American politicians of East Asian descent. Alberto Fujimori won the 1990 Peruvian presidential election with a campaign message of interventionist economic policies, but he introduced neoliberal reforms “by surprise” (Stokes, 2001). He was an outsider to politics in the sense that he had no prior political experience (Carreras, 2012), and his fellow citizens of Japanese descent won legislative seats. Even though Japanese Peruvians feared if such political actions might provoke anti-Japanese sentiments (Murakami, 2007), the number of Peruvian politicians of East Asian descent drastically increased in the 1990s. On the one hand, Minister of the Presidency (*Ministro de la Presidencia*) Jaime Yoshinaka (1995–1997) and Prime Minister Víctor Joy Way (1999) were affiliated with the Fujimori’s *Cambio '90*, a right-wing party. On the other hand, Prime Minister José Antonio Chang (2010–2011) was a member of the APRA, a left-wing party. In 2016, Keiko Fujimori, Alberto’s daughter, was defeated by Pedro Pablo Kuczynski in the presidential election, while Kenji Fujimori, Alberto’s son, was reelected for the 2016–2021 term as a congressman.

The trend described above was also observable in other Latin American countries. As I show later in this article, deputies of East Asian descent in Brazil were affiliated with left-wing as well as right-wing parties. In Argentina, Mayor of José C. Paz Mario Ishii is well known as a leader of machine politics (O’Donnell, 2005) and maintained a good relationship with Presidents Eduardo Duhalde (2002–2003), Néstor Kirchner (2003–2007), and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007–2015). As for Mexican politicians of Chinese descent, Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong is famous as a close ally of Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto. He held the governorship of the State of Hidalgo between 2005 and 2011 and currently (as of August 1, 2016) serves as the secretary of the interior (*secretario de gobernación*).

In spite of the presence of politicians of East Asian descent in Latin America, students of comparative politics have paid little attention to them. It is true that many studies have focused on Alberto Fujimori and his government. Contrary to the suggestion of Freedom House's and Polity's scores, McClintock (2006) regarded the Fujimori government prior to the 2000 elections as an electoral authoritarian rather than "partially democratic," and Levitsky and Way (2010) considered it a textbook example of competitive authoritarianism. Regarding the economic policies of the Fujimori administration, Weyland (2003) emphasized the affinity between neoliberalism and populism, while Stokes (2001) found that the age of a president's party is negatively associated with policy switches from security-oriented campaign messages to the introduction of neoliberal policies, which was the case in Peru in the 1990 presidential election.<sup>3</sup> Murakami (2007) explained the rise and fall of Fujimori from the viewpoint of the weakness of Peruvian political institutions, while Carreras (2012) found that institutional factors such as compulsory voting and presidential term limits increase votes for outsiders, who run for office with no prior political experience, sometimes forming a new party as in the case of Fujimori in 1990. Despite such rich analyses of Fujimori and his government, however, there is no systematic study on politicians of East Asian descent in Latin America.

To fill this oversight in the literature, I study the representation of East Asia in Latin American legislatures. Following trends in the studies of the representation of marginalized groups such as women (e.g., Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008), African-Americans (e.g., Tate, 2003), and Latinos (e.g., Wallace, 2014),<sup>4</sup> this article analyzes descriptive and substantive aspects of representation. For the former aspect, I study the degree of descriptive representation of people of East Asian descent in the national legislatures of Latin American countries. Focusing on the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies from 1991 to 2015, I also examine the career structure of deputies in Brazil and address whether the political careers of deputies of East Asian descent differ from those of other

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<sup>3</sup> *Cambio '90* was founded less than one year prior to the election.

<sup>4</sup> Referring to Pitkin (1967), these studies distinguish the degree to which legislators share attributes of marginalized groups (descriptive representation) from the degree to which legislators substantively represent the interests of marginalized groups.

deputies. For observing the responses of legislators to “East Asian interests” in order to examine the latter aspect, I study the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus (*Frente Parlamentar Mista Brasil-Peru-China Pró Ferrovia Bioceânica*) in the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies and statistically analyze what kinds of factors influence a deputy to join the caucus, which seeks to promote the construction of the Twin Ocean Railroad between the Atlantic and the Pacific, which is one of the largest Chinese infrastructure projects. In order to study the career structure of deputies as well as their responses to East Asian interests, the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies is an ideal case, since politicians of both Japanese and Chinese descent held a seat in the Chamber during the period covered by this study, and the percentage of Brazilians of East Asian descent in the population is similar to that of East Asian deputies in the lower house.

The argument of this paper is developed as follows. In the next section, I study the degree of descriptive representation of East Asians in 20 countries. I then study the political careers of Brazilian deputies between 1991 and 2015, focusing on their previous positions before they came to the lower house as well as their career choices facing the expiration of their terms. In the fourth section of the article, I statistically analyze the determinants of a Brazilian deputy’s choice to be a member of the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus and discuss the results of the statistical test.

## **2. Legislators of East Asian descent in Latin America**

In this section, I focus on the descriptive representation of people of East Asian descent in the legislatures of 20 countries in Latin America.<sup>5</sup> Are people of East Asian descent overrepresented or underrepresented in Latin American legislatures? Which legislature hosts more politicians of East Asian descent than the other legislatures? To address these questions, I show the distribution of legislators of East Asian descent in Latin American legislatures. I then briefly explain why the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies is a suitable case for studying career structure as well as the substantive aspect

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<sup>5</sup> In this section, “overrepresentation” refers to cases in which the share of legislators of East Asian descent exceeds that of citizens of East Asian descent in the national population, whereas “underrepresentation” means that the latter share exceeds the former share.

of representation.

The concept of descriptive representation assumes that voters are best represented by legislators who share similar social attributes such as ethnicity or gender (Wallace, 2014).<sup>6</sup> I examine the descriptive aspects of East Asian representation in Latin American legislatures, since no systematic research has addressed it, even though many studies on the representation of marginalized groups such as gender representation refer to descriptive representation as a starting point of discussion (Lombardo & Meier, 2014). Moreover, some studies find the importance of descriptive representation in the legislative process. For example, Wallace (2014) shows that Latino representatives are more likely to co-sponsor immigration, education, and labor bills, which deal with salient issues for the Latino public in the US. In the Latin American context, Johnson (1998) contended that underrepresentation of Afro-Brazilians is an explanatory factor that reduces their effectiveness in the Brazilian Congress. Another school of research showed that descriptive representation facilitates voters' more positive assessment of their legislators (Gay, 2002; Tate, 2003). It is thus important to analyze whether people of East Asian descent are overrepresented or underrepresented in legislatures in order to understand their representation in Latin America.

*-- Table 1 about here --*

Table 1 shows the number of legislators of East Asian descent in each Latin

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<sup>6</sup> It is also important to recognize that many studies have questioned this assumption. For instance, Swain (1993) criticized that having more black legislators does not necessarily enhance the representation of blacks' interests, while students of female representation also challenged the direct linkage between descriptive and substantive representation (e.g., Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008). I do not disagree with these criticisms. However, I study descriptive aspects in this section since we still lack information on the composition of politicians of East Asian descent in Latin American legislatures. Providing such information should facilitate discussion on the usefulness of the concepts of descriptive representation and substantive representation in the case people of East Asian descent for future research.

American legislature (as of August 1, 2016). In this article, I regard a legislator as someone of East Asian descent if one of his/her last names is East Asian.<sup>7</sup> Besides the practical constraint that it is almost impossible to collect complete biographical data on all the legislators in Latin America, I adopted this criterion for the following reason. In most of the Latin American countries where people speak Spanish or Portuguese,<sup>8</sup> each person's last names consist of his/her paternal and maternal last names. If a legislator has an East Asian last name, it is quite possible that his/her father or mother holds a nationality of one of the East Asian countries, since the *jus sanguinis* principle dominates East Asia.<sup>9</sup> I assume that those who are raised by fathers or mothers who hold citizenship in one of the East Asian countries are keen to represent the East Asian community, and therefore, I checked legislators' last names.

Using the information from this table, we can discover several characteristics of the descriptive representation of East Asians in Latin America. First, there are only eight incumbent legislators of East Asian descent.<sup>10</sup> If we also focus on substitute legislators (*suplentes*),<sup>11</sup> we may add another Bolivian deputy, another Brazilian senator, and two

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<sup>7</sup> Of course, this is not a perfect criterion, and it is quite possible that this definition may include those who do not have a strong cultural tie with East Asian communities. However, it is also true that there is no perfect solution for the identification of people of East Asian descent. See Kent (2003) for problems in the case of the enumeration of Chinese Peruvians.

<sup>8</sup> The only exception is Haiti, where French is the official language. In the case of Haiti, I only consider whether a legislator's father is from an East Asian family.

<sup>9</sup> Latin American countries grant citizenship based on unconditional *jus soli* except for Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti. In addition, the acceptance of dual nationality varies by country (Vonk, 2014).

<sup>10</sup> The Guatemalan Congress hosts Deputy Juan Ramón Lau Quan (Suchitepéquez, *Todos*), but I could not find sufficient information to judge if he is of East Asian descent.

<sup>11</sup> In Latin America, substitute legislators are often elected in the same legislative election in case some deputies or senators come to be unavailable before the expiration of their terms.

more Brazilian deputies.<sup>12</sup> However, the table still suggests that the number of legislators of East Asian descent is quite limited.

Second, people of Korean and Chinese descent are underrepresented in Latin America. As I explained in the previous section, the number of citizens of Korean descent is small. Reflecting this fact, there is no national legislator of Korean descent, as of August 1, 2016. Moreover, it is striking that almost all the legislatures in Latin American countries do not host politicians of Chinese descent, including the case of Peru, where 15% of the population are of Chinese descent (Ellis, 2009). The only exception is the National Assembly of Panama. Deputy Zulay Rodríguez Lu (San Miguelito, Democratic Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario Democrático*, PRD)) is a fourth-generation Chinese Panamanian, and, responding to an interview by the Chinese Panamanian media, she promised to support the Chinese community in Panama (Revista Panamá Oriental, 2014). Still, just having one deputy (1.4%) in the National Assembly means that Chinese Panamanians, who account for 3.8% of the population,<sup>13</sup> are underrepresented.

Third, contrary to the cases of Korean and Chinese people in Latin America, people of Japanese descent are overrepresented in some legislatures. For example, Japanese Peruvians account for 0.3% of the population (Takenaka, 2004), but three out of 130 (2.3%) Peruvian deputies are of Japanese descent: Liliana Takayama (Lambayeque, Popular Force (*Fuerza Popular*)), Kenji Fujimori (Lima province, Popular Force), and Marco Miyashiro (Lima province, Popular Force). It is worth noting that all of them are affiliated with the Popular Force, *Fujimorista* party led by Keiko Fujimori, Alberto Fujimori's daughter. Even though the number of Japanese Argentineans is approximately

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<sup>12</sup> They are Yeimy Peña Maeda (Department of Pando, Democrat Unit (*Unidad Demócrata*)), Jorge Yanai (Mato Grosso, Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (*Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro*, PMDB)), Walter Ihoshi (São Paulo, Social Democratic Party (*Partido Social Democrático*, PSD)), and William Woo (São Paulo, Green Party (*Partido Verde*, PV)).

<sup>13</sup> This number is calculated using the information from Ellis (2009) and World Bank (2016). In this section, the latter source is utilized for calculating the percentage of the Chinese/Japanese population in each country.

35,000 (Centro Nikkei Argentino, 2016), which is less than 0.1% of the Argentine population, the Argentine Chamber of Deputies hosts Alicia Terada (Chaco, Civic Coalition (*Coalición Cívica*)). By contrast, Japanese Brazilians, who account for 0.9% of population in Brazil, are slightly underrepresented, having three deputies (0.6%): Keiko Ota (São Paulo, Brazilian Socialist Party (*Partido Socialista Brasileiro*, PSB)), Luiz Nishimori (Paraná, Party of the Republic (*Partido da República*, PR)), and Hidekazu Takayama (Paraná, Social Christian Party (*Partido Social Cristão*, PSC)).

Fourth, as I described earlier, the ideological origins of the legislators of East Asian descent are diverse. Among the political parties mentioned above, the Peruvian Popular Force and the Brazilian PR are right-wing parties, while the Brazilian PSB can be considered a left-wing party. The Brazilian PSC is center-right, the Argentine Civic Coalition is center, and the Panamanian PRD is a center-left party.

The following sentence summarizes the above discussion of the descriptive representation of East Asians in Latin America: the Japanese population is “overrepresented” in the Peruvian and Argentine lower houses even though the number of legislators of East Asian descent is very small in Latin America, while the Korean and Chinese populations are underrepresented. Then, which legislature is appropriate for studying career structure as well as the substantive aspect of representation?

Taking into account the four features of the representation of East Asian descent in Latin America, I chose the case of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies for my analyses in the third and fourth sections, for the following reasons. First, even though most of the deputies of East Asian descent are Brazilian Japanese, choosing the Brazilian lower house allows me to include the case of Deputy William Woo (São Paulo, Progressive Party (*Partido Progressista*, PP)),<sup>14</sup> who is of Taiwanese descent.<sup>15</sup> He served as a deputy between 2007 and 2011 and has been a substitute deputy since 2012. Adding his case to my dataset enables me to analyze the political careers of Japanese and Taiwanese/Chinese politicians simultaneously.

Second, compared to other legislatures, the difference between the percentage of East Asian Brazilians in the population and that of East Asian deputies in Brazil is

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<sup>14</sup> He is currently (as of August 1, 2016) affiliated with the PV.

<sup>15</sup> He has Taiwanese father and Japanese mother.

relatively small. As I showed, deputies of Japanese descent account for 0.6% of the total, which is just slightly lower than the share of Japanese Brazilians (0.9%). In addition, if we count Deputy Woo as a representative of Chinese descent,<sup>16</sup> his share in the lower house (0.19%) is almost equal to the share of Chinese Brazilians in the population (0.14%). This ideal and unique composition of the Chamber of Deputies should make my analysis of substantive representation more fruitful.

In the following sections, I analyze the career structure as well as substantive aspects of the representation of East Asia focusing on the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies.

### **3. Representation and political career structure**

In order to understand the descriptive representation of East Asia in Latin American legislatures in detail, I examine the political careers of legislators of East Asian descent, using the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies as an example. Even though intensive analysis of career paths is not a common strategy in studies of the representation of marginalized groups, some studies claim its usefulness as a tool for comparative analysis of minority representation (e.g., Bird, Saalfeld, & Wüst, 2011).

More importantly, scholars of legislative politics have insisted on the importance of studying political recruitment and the candidate selection procedure, which shape legislative behavior, in comparative perspective (Pennings & Hazan, 2001; Siavelis & Morgenstern, 2008). For explaining legislative behavior from the viewpoint of political careers, Americanists tend to emphasize the future office ambition of incumbent legislators (e.g., Van Der Silk & Pernacciaro, 1979; Hibbing, 1986; Herrick, 2001), while comparativists also focus on legislators' prior political experience (e.g., Ames, 1995; Tavits, 2009). However, recent literature insists that the two should be analyzed simultaneously (Pereira & Rennó, 2013; Kikuchi & Lodola, 2014).

Do the political careers of legislators of East Asian descent differ from those of other legislators? After providing background information on Brazilian politics, I address this question, examining the previous positions deputies held before coming to the Chamber of Deputies as well as the career choices they made before the expiration of

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<sup>16</sup> As a substitute, he assumed a seat in the Chamber of Deputies for 313 days in total between February 2015 and May 2016.

their terms.

### **The Brazilian case**

Brazil is a presidential and federal country with 26 states and the Federal District. The president is directly elected for a four-year term with the possibility of one consecutive reelection, whereas 513 deputies are elected through the open-list PR system from 27 state-wide districts for a four-year term. The Senate consists of 81 senators and renews one-third or two-thirds of its members every four years. Senators are elected through a first-past-the-post system from 27 state-wide districts for an eight-year term in the “one-third” year. In the “two-thirds” year, by contrast, the two most voted candidates in each state-wide district are elected for an eight-year term.

Contrary to bicameralism at the federal level, unicameralism is adopted at the subnational level. State governors and mayors are directly elected for a four-year term with the possibility of one consecutive reelection, while state deputies and municipal councilmen are elected through the open-list PR system for a four-year term. Federal and state elections are conducted simultaneously in the same year, but municipal elections are staggered by two years.

Brazil is well known for its highly fragmented party system (Carreras, Morgenstern, & Su, 2015). In the 2014 congressional election, for instance, 28 parties won seats in the Chamber of Deputies. Before that election, President Dilma Rousseff’s PT was the plurality party in the Chamber, but it held just 17.2% of the seats. As this example illustrates, it is necessary for each presidential candidate to form a broad electoral coalition to win the presidency. Once in office, management of the governing coalition is critical for the president to generate favorable executive-legislative relations.<sup>17</sup>

It is the conventional wisdom that the open-list PR system makes the Brazilian party system quite unstable. As Carey and Shugart (1995) theorized, such candidate-centered electoral system with large district magnitudes weakens party discipline, and deputies prioritize personal vote-seeking behavior over party reputation-seeking (Ames, 2001; Morgenstern, 2004). Deputies often switch their party affiliation for electoral success (Desposato, 2006).

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<sup>17</sup> See Praça, Freitas, and Hoepers (2011) for a discussion on portfolio allocation.

Deputies are relatively autonomous in making their career choices (Leoni, Pereira, & Rennó, 2004). It is true that all candidates for elective office must be affiliated with political parties, and that elite arrangement is the common procedure of candidate selection. However, it is quite easy to be nominated for legislative elections.<sup>18</sup> For example, each party may field its deputy candidates up to 150% of the district magnitude of each state-wide district. We also find many cases in which candidates changed their party affiliation to run for gubernatorial or mayoral elections. Parties thus hold little influence over legislators' career choices.

As in the case of other Latin American countries, the political value of executive offices is higher than that of legislative offices. Governorship is very attractive for politicians in Brazil, since governors may exclusively control pork-barrel funds and employment of the state government (Samuels, 2003). According to Pereira and Rennó (2013), a deputy's candidacy for the presidency, the vice-presidency, a governorship, a vice-governorship, or the Senate should be regarded as an ambition for higher office. In reality, however, most of the incumbent deputies seek reelection despite a lack of legislative careerism (Samuels 2003; Leoni, Pereira, & Rennó, 2004; Pereira & Rennó, 2013).

### **Previous positions of Brazilian deputies of East Asian descent**

-- Table 2 about here --

Table 2 summarizes the previous positions of the 20 deputies of East Asian descent who served in the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies at least once between 1991 and 2015.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The *candidato nato* rule, which obliged parties to nominate all incumbents for reelection, was abolished in 2002.

<sup>19</sup> The 20 deputies include Antonio Ueno (Paraná, Liberal Front Party (*Partido da Frente Liberal*, PFL), 1967–1999), Homero Oguido (Paraná, PMDB, 1991–1997), Koyu Iha (São Paulo, Brazilian Social Democracy Party (*Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira*, PSDB), 1987–1999), Luiz Gushiken (São Paulo, PT, 1987–1999), Diogo Nomura (São Paulo, Liberal Party (*Partido Liberal*, PL), 1971–1987 and 1991–1995), George

In accordance with the general tendency of political careerism in Brazil that the president, the vice-president, and senators rarely seek seats in the Chamber (Gemignani, 2015), there was no deputy of East Asian descent who previously served in these positions. Moreover, none of the 20 deputies had previously occupied a cabinet post or other position in the federal government.

Regarding previous positions at the state level, George Takimoto was the only deputy who had been a vice-governor and moved to the Chamber in 1991 immediately after the expiration of his tenure as the vice-governor of Mato Grosso do Sul. By contrast, half of the 20 deputies were state deputies, and eight of them moved directly from a state legislature to the Chamber. State deputyship is thus the most prominent springboard position to become a member of the Chamber of Deputies. None of the 20 deputies held a position in a state cabinet or other state government position.

As for the experience at the municipal level, five deputies held a mayoralty or a vice-mayoralty before coming to the Chamber: Koyu Iha (the mayor of São Vicente from 1977 to 1981), George Takimoto (the vice-mayor of Dourados from 1982 to 1988), Makoto Iguchi (the mayor of Ferraz de Vasconcelos from 1973 to 1977 and 1983 to 1988), Cássio Taniguchi (the mayor of Curitiba from 1997 to 2004), and Junji Abe (the mayor of Mogi das Cruzes from 2001 to 2008). However, none of them moved to the

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Takimoto (Mato Grosso do Sul, PFL, 1991–1995), Itsuo Takayama (Mato Grosso, PSD, 1993), Makoto Iguchi (São Paulo, PSDB, 1995), Tadashi Kuriki (São Paulo, Reform Progressive Party (*Partido Progressista Reformador*, PPR), 1995), Ushitaro Kamia (São Paulo, PSB, 1995–1999), Paulo Kobayashi (São Paulo, PSDB, 1999–2007), Hidekazu Takayama (Paraná, PMDB, 2003–), Walter Ihoshi (São Paulo, PSD, 2007–2011, 2011–2012, 2012–2014, and 2015), William Woo (São Paulo, PP, 2007–2011 and 2015–2016), Cássio Taniguchi (Paraná, Democrats (*Democratas*, DEM), 2007–2011), Keiko Ota (São Paulo, PSB, 2011–), Luiz Nishimori (Paraná, PR, 2011–), Akira Otsubo (Mato Grosso do Sul, PMDB, 2013–2015), Junji Abe (São Paulo, PSD, 2011–2015), and Massami Miki (Amazonas, Social Liberal Party (*Partido Social Liberal*, PSL), 2015). The party names listed here are the politicians' party affiliation when they won a deputy seat for the first time.

Chamber immediately after the expiration of their mayoral/vice-mayoral term. In addition, two deputies held a municipal government position immediately before reaching the Chamber: Itsuo Takayama (the subsecretary of infrastructure of the Municipality of Cuiaba from 1991 to 1993) and Walter Ihoshi (the *subprefeito* of Jabaquara of the Municipality of São Paulo from 2005 to 2006).

Municipal councilmanship is another important position to be a deputy. Twelve out of the 20 deputies of East Asian descent served on a municipal council. More importantly, all of the eight deputies who moved directly from a state legislature to the Chamber had been municipal councilmen, and seven of the eight also moved directly from a municipal council to a state legislature, including Paulo Kobayashi, who made a “roundtrip” between the state legislature of the State of São Paulo (1975–1979, 1983–1987, and 1995–1999) and the municipal council of the Municipality of São Paulo (1989–1995). Thus, moving from a municipal council to the Chamber via a state legislature is a prominent career path for politicians of East Asian descent in Brazil. By contrast, three deputies directly arrived at the Chamber from a municipal council: Ushitaro Kamia (councilman of the Municipality of São Paulo from 1989 to 1995), William Woo (councilman of the Municipality of São Paulo from 2001 to 2007), and Massami Miki (councilman of the Municipality of Manaus from 1992 to 2015 and 2015 to 2016).

Most of the six deputies who held an “other position” listed in Table 2 held some party position. The only exception was Keiko Ota, who had no previous political experience before being a deputy. However, it is worth mentioning that she was well known as a founder of *Instituto Ives Ota*, an NGO named after her son who was kidnapped and killed by a group including a former military police officer, and that her husband is an incumbent councilman of the Municipality of São Paulo.

Do these political trajectories of deputies of East Asian descent differ from those of deputies of non-East Asian descent? Gemignani (2015) examined the political trajectories of all politicians in elective offices in Brazil from 1998 to 2012. Comparison of the descriptive statistics of his dataset and my dataset thus allows us to find similarities and differences in the political experience of deputies of East Asian descent and non-East Asian descent. This task reveals that state deputyship is also the most important springboard position for politicians of non-East Asian descent. As I have already shown,

eight out of the 20 deputies of East Asian descent started serving as deputies immediately after the expiration of their tenure as state deputies. According to Gemignani (2015), 22.45% of state deputies moved directly to the Chamber, which was the second most common trajectory after achieving reelection (59.18%). In addition, municipal councilmanship was one of the three most frequent previously occupied positions for state deputies, which is coincident with the fact that all of the eight deputies of East Asian descent who came to the Chamber directly from a state legislature also held a seat in a municipal council.

However, Gemignani's (2015) data also show the following three differences in political career paths between deputies of East Asian descent and those of non-East Asian descent. First, it is quite rare for municipal councilmen in general to run for a seat in the Chamber, because the municipal electoral cycle is staggered by two years. By contrast, three out of the 20 deputies of East Asian descent ran for a deputyship in the middle of their term as a municipal councilman. Second, on the one hand, mayoralty was one of the three most common previously occupied positions for deputies, and the second most common continuous trajectory for mayors was moving to the Chamber of Deputies via a state legislature (13.33%). On the other hand, Koyu Iha (the mayor of São Vicente from 1977 to 1981) was the only former mayor of East Asian descent who arrived at the Chamber (1987–1999) via the state legislature of the State of São Paulo (1975–1977 and 1983–1987). Third, the importance of the vice-governorship is different. As I have already mentioned, George Takimoto was the only deputy of East Asian descent who held a vice-governorship. In general, however, the Chamber was one of the three most frequent destinations to which vice-governors moved.

### **Career choices of Brazilian deputies of East Asian descent**

*-- Table 3 about here --*

What were the future ambitions of the 20 deputies of East Asian descent? Table 3 shows their career choices. Surprisingly, no ambition for higher offices was observed. When faced with 28 opportunities at the expiration of the deputy's term, none of the 20

deputies of East Asian descent decided to run for the presidency, the vice-presidency, a governorship, a vice-governorship, or the Senate. Moreover, “regressive ambition” for a mayoralty, a vice-mayoralty, a state legislature, or a municipal council was also rarely observed. Massami Miki was the only deputy who decided to return to the council of the Municipality of Manaus, but this was an exceptional case, since he actually did not lose his seat in the municipal council while occupying a seat in the Chamber of Deputies for twelve days in 2015.<sup>20</sup>

What the deputies showed in regard to 20 out of the 28 opportunities was “static ambition”: aspiration to be reelected. Even though the deputies of East Asian descent held such strong ambitions, just nine of them were successful in achieving their reelection goal (45.0%). However, some of the failed candidates also had a chance to assume a seat in the Chamber. Incumbent deputies accumulated a sufficient number of votes to be substitute deputies in eight out of the eleven unsuccessful cases, and Paulo Kobayashi and Walter Ihoshi served in the Chamber as substitutes from 2003 to 2005 and from 2011 to 2015, respectively.

Regarding appointed positions at the federal, state, and municipal levels, Cássio Taniguchi was the only deputy of East Asian descent who moved out to be the state secretary of planning of the State of Paraná. As for retirement, three deputies’ political careers at the Chamber were terminated, including Homero Oguido and Paulo Kobayashi,

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<sup>20</sup> He has been a municipal councilman since 1992, but unsuccessfully ran for the Chamber in the 2010 election. The number of votes he received in the 2010 election was still enough to be a substitute deputy for the 2011–2015 term, and thus he was a councilman of the Municipality of Manaus as well as a substitute deputy from 2011 to 2015. He assumed a seat in the Chamber for twelve days in 2015 due to another deputy’s departure. Assuming a position in the Chamber usually requires giving up other positions, including a councilmanship. In the case of Manaus, however, the council had already approved legislation that allows councilmen to assume a federal position without losing their seat in the council (Radar Amazônico, 2013). As a result, he could return to the municipal council after serving for twelve days in the Chamber of Deputies without any problem.

who passed away in 1997 and 2005, respectively, before the expiration of their terms. Six deputies left for party positions, and one of them (Akira Otsubo) won a vice-mayorality in the 2016 municipal elections.

In order to check if these features of the political ambition of deputies of East Asian descent differ from those of other deputies, I compared the information in Table 3 with the descriptive data of Gemignani (2015) and Pereira and Rennó (2013). The latter work focuses on deputies' career ambitions from 1998 to 2010. The most striking difference between the ambition of deputies of East Asian descent and that of other deputies is the frequency of ambition for higher offices. According to Pereira and Rennó (2013), 7.7% of deputies sought the presidency, the vice-presidency, a governorship, a vice-governorship, or the Senate, and their success rate was 29.6%. More specifically, Gemignani (2015) shows that 16.25% of deputies departed to the Senate, which was the second most common path for deputies after seeking reelection. His data also reveals that a deputyship is one of the three prominent springboard positions to be a senator or a vice-governor. As I have described, however, the deputies of East Asian descent were not observed to have ambitions for higher offices in the period from 1991 to 2015.

Deputies of East Asian descent and other deputies are also different in terms of regressive ambition. In general, deputies are less likely to have regressive ambition, and just 3.4% of deputies showed it in 1998–2010 (Pereira & Rennó, 2013). However, leaving for a mayorality was the third most common trajectory for deputies, and 7.5% of deputies moved directly to a mayorality in spite of staggered municipal electoral cycle (Gemignani, 2015). By contrast, none of the 20 deputies of East Asian descent sought a mayorality.

On the other hand, the deputies of East Asian descent had strong static ambition, as did other deputies. The political structure of Brazil makes federal and subnational executive positions more valuable than legislative positions, and legislative careerism is low (Samuels, 2003). Legislative organizations such as a committee system are less institutionalized, and legislators are reluctant to be professionalized. In this context, incumbent deputies are expected to have a weak incentive to be reelected (Pereira & Rennó, 2013). In spite of such an environment, the static ambition of incumbents is surprisingly strong compared to the cases in other Latin American countries: 74.6% of

deputies sought reelection, and their success rate was 63.7% in 1998–2010 (Pereira & Rennó, 2013). Even though the static ambition of deputies of East Asian descent is also strong, and 71.4% of them sought reelection, just 45.0% of deputies with static ambition successfully returned to the office. Among the nine successful cases, Hidekazu Takayama was the only incumbent deputy of East Asian descent who successfully renewed his seat multiple times in 2006, 2010, and 2014.

Overall, the description of political career structure in this section suggests that deputies of East Asian descent and other deputies share fewer similarities than differences. Both deputies of East Asian descent and other deputies tended to arrive at the Chamber via a state legislature, which was a common destination for municipal councilmen, and both groups of deputies shared a strong static ambition to be reelected. However, some deputies of East Asian descent moved directly from a municipal council, which was rare among other deputies. In addition, common trajectories among other deputies such as moving from a mayoralty via a state legislature or from a vice-governorship were rare for the deputies of East Asian descent. None of the deputies of East Asian descent departed to the common destinations for other deputies such as the Senate, a vice-governorship, or a mayoralty.

Why do these differences exist? A possible answer to this question is the geographical concentration of the deputies of East Asian descent. According to Leoni, Pereira, and Rennó (2004), deputies are less likely to run for higher offices as their district magnitude increases. The rationale behind this finding is that the number of deputies' rivals for the Senate or a vice-governorship should increase if they are from a state with a large district magnitude. This could also be true in the case of the 20 deputies of East Asian descent. Since eleven of them were from the State of São Paulo (70 seats in the Chamber) and five of them were from the State of Paraná (30 seats in the Chamber), it is understandable that they had less incentive to run for higher offices.

Moreover, all the three deputies of East Asian descent who moved directly from a municipal council were based in a state capital. One of the challenges for municipal councilmen in running for higher offices is launching a statewide campaign, since just mobilizing their old support base would not be enough to win a seat in a state legislature or the Chamber of Deputies. If they are based in a populous municipality, however, the

campaign strategies for municipal legislative elections may also work for state legislative elections as well as for federal deputy elections. It is thus worth mentioning that Massami Miki was a councilman of the Municipality of Manaus, the capital of the State of Amazonas, and Ushitaro Kamia and William Woo were councilmen of the Municipality of São Paulo, the capital of the State of São Paulo and the most populous city in Brazil.

#### **4. “East Asian interests” and legislators’ responses**

I have discussed the descriptive representation of East Asia in Latin America. The analyses in the previous sections have revealed that the percentage of deputies of East Asian descent in Brazil is similar to that of East Asian Brazilians in the national population, and such deputies’ political careers are different from other deputies’ trajectories. In this section, in turn, I study the substantive aspect of East Asian representation in the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies.

Besides Chinese immigration to Brazilian cities such as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, commercial relations between China and Brazil have evolved considerably since the beginning of the twenty-first century. Brazilian exports, which accounted for more than 36% of all Latin American exports to China in 2007, include commodities such as soy products, iron, and petroleum, whereas 11.37 billion dollars of goods were imported from China to Brazil in 2007 (Ellis, 2009). Reflecting this growing commerce with China, 77% of respondents in a 2014 public opinion survey in Brazil answered that China is a friend or a partner (Leo, 2015). Given this favorable public opinion as well as the characteristics of descriptive representation discussed in the previous sections, how do deputies in Brazil respond to “East Asian interests?”

In order to answer this question, I focus on the case of the Twin Ocean Railroad project, which is one of the largest Chinese infrastructure projects in Latin America. After briefly describing the project, I conduct a statistical analysis that identifies conditions under which a deputy decides to join the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus that promotes the construction of the Twin Ocean Railroad.

#### **The Twin Ocean Railroad project and the caucus**

A drastic increase in the export of primary products to China as well as the import

of Chinese goods requires Brazil to improve its infrastructure, including highways and a railroad system, so that the transportation of Brazilian primary products and Chinese goods will be less time-consuming and less expensive (Ellis, 2009). In this context, several infrastructure projects that extend or improve highways and railroads crossing the Andes have been discussed. In January 2016, for example, President Dilma Rousseff visited Quito to discuss the “Manta-Manaus Axis” project with Rafael Correa, the president of Ecuador. This is an ambitious project that would connect Manaus (Amazonas) to the Ecuadorian port of Manta by highway and railroad; however, the project has not gone forward for a decade since its inclusion in the South American Regional Infrastructure Integration Initiative (IIRSA) (BBC, 2016).

As of 2016, the most intensively discussed infrastructure project that connects Brazil to the Pacific is the Twin Ocean Railroad (*Ferrovía Bioceânica*) project, which would establish railroad link between the Pacific coast of Peru and Porto do Açu (Rio de Janeiro) via Corinto (Minas Gerais), Campinorte (Goiás), Lucas do Rio Verde (Mato Grosso), Porto Velho (Rondônia), and Rio Branco (Acre). Technical studies for construction have been started for the route between Bayóvar, Peru, and Porto Velho, whereas the existing railroad will be utilized between Campinorte and Corinto (Folha de S. Paulo, 2016). In 2014, Xi Jinping, the president of the People’s Republic of China, and President Rousseff signed a memorandum of cooperation that allows Chinese companies to invest in Brazilian railroads. In addition, Xi and Ollanta Humala, the president of Peru, signed a memorandum of understanding to form a trilateral working group for the Twin Ocean Railroad project (Folha de S. Paulo, 2014). Moreover, through 35 agreements between Li Keqiang (the premier of the People’s Republic of China) and Rousseff in 2015, China promised to invest between 5 billion and 12 billion dollars in the project (Folha de S. Paulo, 2015).

There are several counterarguments against the project. Some have questioned the purpose of the project claiming that export to China from the port of Santos (São Paulo) should be far less expensive than using the railroad to Peru (O Estado de S. Paulo, 2015). Some specialists have anticipated protests of the indigenous groups and the environmental NGOs, while Evo Morales, the president of Bolivia, was unhappy with the project since the railroad is not going to touch Bolivia (BBC, 2015). On the other hand, a

Chinese company showed its analysis of the project and concluded that the railroad would decrease transportation costs (Folha de S. Paulo, 2016). In addition, Chinese officials and executives of Chinese companies often visit the Brazilian Congress as well as state governors to ask their support for the project (Senado Federal, 2016; Agro Olhar, 2016).

Facing this controversy, a group of deputies and senators decided to found a caucus named the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus (*Frente Parlamentar Mista Brasil-Peru-China Pró Ferrovia Bioceânica*) in August 2015. The *frentes parlamentares* are inter-party groups in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, and thus should be regarded as caucuses. The number of such caucuses is increasing drastically, and 247 caucuses are registered to the Chamber of Deputies as of August 24, 2016 (Câmara dos Deputados, 2016b). Caucuses such as the Brazil-Japan Caucus (*Frente Parlamentar Brasil-Japão*) and the Brazil-China Caucus (*Frente Parlamentar Brasil-China*) are dedicated for diplomatic relations, while some caucuses are more issue-specific. The Evangelical Caucus (*Frente Parlamentar Evangélica do Congresso Nacional*) is well known for its influence over the legislative process. In order to be a caucus, a group should include at least one-third of members of the Congress (deputies or senators) and must be registered to the Congress with its charter (Ringe & Victor, 2013).

The Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus, an issue-specific caucus, is a *frente parlamentar mista* in the sense that it is composed of deputies and senators. Deputies Fabio Garcia (Mato Grosso, PSB) and César Messias (Acre, PSB) and Senators Wellington Fagundes (Mato Grosso, PR), Jorge Viana (Acre, PT), Valdir Raupp (Rondônia, PMDB), and Acir Gurgacz (Rondônia, the Democratic Labor Party (*Partido Democrático Trabalhista*, PDT)) founded the caucus with 201 deputies and three senators (Câmara dos Deputados, 2016b). According to Deputy Fabio Garcia, the goal of the caucus is to make the Twin Ocean Railroad project a viable investment (Folhamax, 2015).

### **Determinants of the caucus' membership**

What factors influence a deputy to join the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus? Some deterministic factors may be attributed to the nature of the caucus. For instance, it is expected that the members of the Brazil-China and Brazil-Japan

Caucuses are more likely to be members of the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus, because those deputies should be friendly to “Asian interests.” For the same reason, deputies of East Asian descent are more likely to be members of the caucus. As the fact that all founders of the caucus are elected from states on the railroad route such as Acre, Mato Grosso, and Rondônia suggests, deputies from such states are expected to join the caucus. Since Chinese infrastructure projects have a huge impact on local economy, deputies are expected to decide their membership in the caucus considering the condition of the state economy.

The literature on legislative member organizations suggests that deputies’ experience in office as well as their performance in the previous election should matter (Ringe & Victor, 2013). In addition, deputies’ party affiliation should be considered given that the Twin Ocean Railroad project was promoted by the PT government.

### **Strategy for statistical analysis**

In order to identify determinants of deputies’ membership in the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus, I ran a multilevel mixed-effects logistic regression model. The units of analysis are all the deputies who served in the Chamber on August 30, 2015, and states constitute level 2 units. Since the Chamber of Deputies consists of 513 members, The N of the model also came to 513.

The dependent variable of this study is *Brazil-Peru-China Caucus*. This is a dichotomous variable coded as 1 if a deputy is affiliated with the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus. Since the number of members of the caucus is always changing, 195 out of the 513 deputies (38.01%) in my dataset were coded as 1. This variable is based on information from Câmara dos Deputados (2016b).

The first three independent variables measure deputies’ relations with Asia. *Brazil-China Caucus* is a dummy variable coded as 1 if a deputy is a member of the Brazil-China Caucus. In the same way, I coded *Brazil-Japan Caucus* 1 if a deputy is a member of the Brazil-Japan Caucus. Then, 180 cases (35.09%) and 241 cases (46.98%) were regarded as 1 for these variables, respectively. The information for generating these variables was obtained from Câmara dos Deputados (2016b). *East Asian descent* is another dichotomous variable coded as 1 if a deputy has an East Asian last name. Four

such deputies (Deputies Keiko Ota, Luiz Nishimori, Hidekazu Takayama, and Walter Ihoshi) are included in this analysis.

The model contains two independent variables measured at the state level. I coded *state on the route* as 1 if a deputy is elected from one of the following states on the railroad route: Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, Goiás, Mato Grosso, Rondônia, and Acre. In this analysis, 140 cases (27.29%) take the value 1. I also included *gross state product per capita* in order to consider the condition of state economy. This variable was calculated by dividing the gross state product of 2011 (the unit is thousand reais in 2010) by the population of each state, as obtained from IPEA (2016). The values ranged from 7.33 (Piauí) to 58.91 (Federal District).

Two additional independent variables measured at the individual level were included for testing the impacts of deputies' experience in office and their previous electoral performance. *Number of terms in office* measures how many terms a deputy serves in office and ranged from 1 (194 freshmen) to 11 (Deputy Miro Teixeira (Rio de Janeiro, *Rede*)). The information for generating this variable was obtained from Câmara dos Deputados (2016a). The *vote share* variable is also a continuous variable included in the model and it was calculated as follows. First, based on the information from Tribunal Superior Eleitoral (2016), I divided the number of votes cast for a deputy in the 2014 election by the number of valid votes in his/her state-wide district in the same election. I then multiplied the quotient by 100. *Vote share* ranged from 0.10 (Deputy Fausto Pinato (São Paulo, Brazilian Republican Party (*Partido Republicano Brasileiro*, PRB))) to 15.13 (Deputy Arthur Bisneto (Amazonas, PSDB)).

I also generated fourteen dummy variables to control the deputies' party affiliation. The *DEM*, *PDT*, *PMB*, *PMDB*, *PP*, *PR*, *PRB*, *PSB*, *PSC*, *PSD*, *PSDB*, *PTB*, and *SD* variables were coded as 1 if a deputy is affiliated with the DEM, the PDT, Brazilian Woman Party (*Partido da Mulher Brasileira*, PMB), PMDB, PP, PR, PRB, PSB, PSC, PSD, PSDB, Brazilian Labor Party (*Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro*, PTB), or the Solidarity (*Solidariedade*, SD). The number of deputies coded as 1 for each variable is 23 (4.48%), 19 (3.70%), 12 (2.34%), 66 (12.87%), 37 (7.21%), 36 (7.02%), 23 (4.48%), 35 (6.82%), 11 (2.14%), 38 (7.41%), 51 (9.94%), 23 (4.48%), and 13 (2.53%). In addition, the *small parties* variable was coded as 1 if a deputy is affiliated with one of the

parties that hold less than 10 seats in the Chamber, and 61 deputies (11.89%) fell into this category.

### **Statistical results**

Because the model contains independent variables measured at the individual level as well as the state level, a multilevel modeling technique was required. I estimated the equation using a multilevel mixed-effects logistic regression model, since the dependent variable is a dichotomous variable. The likelihood-ratio test for the model indicates that it is an appropriate technique (significant at the .05 level). I report the results for Model 1 in Table 4.

-- Table 4 about here --

Among the three independent variables about deputies' relations with Asia, *Brazil-Japan Caucus* is the only variable that generates a significant coefficient. Its positive coefficient suggests that members of the Brazil-Japan Caucus also tend to be members of the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus. By contrast, the coefficient for *Brazil-China Caucus* is not statistically significant. This result could stem from the difference in the goal of each caucus. The Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus precisely aims at promoting the Chinese infrastructure project, whereas the Brazil-China Caucus is dedicated to maintain diplomatic relationships between the two countries. As a result, the memberships of these two caucuses do not overlap. Even though two out of four deputies of East Asian descent (Deputies Hidekazu Takayama and Walter Ihoshi) in the dataset were members of the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus, the *East Asian descent* variable also does not generate a significant coefficient. This result could be due to the fact that the four deputies were just elected from two states (Paraná and São Paulo), and thus the mixed-effects technique flushes out the significance of the coefficient.

As for the two variables concerning the state level factors, the coefficient for *gross state product per capita* is positive and significant at the .05 level. Model 1 thus suggests that deputies elected from wealthier states are more likely to be members of the

caucus that promotes the Two Ocean Railroad project. Since such states are considered to receive investments from China as well as to have Brazilian companies that have commercial relations with China, deputies from wealthier states tend to support the project. Surprisingly, by contrast, deputies elected from the states on the railroad route do not necessarily choose to be members of the caucus. The *state on the route* variable does not generate a significant coefficient. Even though founders of the caucus were from the states on the route such as Acre, Mato Grosso, and Rondônia, this statistical result might imply that the degree of interest in the project differs among the states on the route.

Regarding the impacts of deputies' experience in office and their previous electoral performance, the latter factor matters. The coefficient for *vote share* is positive and significant at the .01 level. That is, a deputy is more likely to be a member of the caucus if his/her margin of victory in the previous election was high, which is coincident with Ringe and Victor's (2013) finding on the membership of caucuses in the US House of Representatives. By contrast, seniority does not matter in the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies. The coefficient for *number of terms in office* is negative but not statistically significant. In the case of the US House of Representatives, where the seniority rule is strictly followed, the number of caucuses that a representative join increases as the number of terms he/she serves increases (Ringe & Victor, 2013). Even though many incumbents try to stay in the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies, deputies' experience in office does not determine their choice to be members of the caucus due to a lack of legislative careerism (Samuels, 2003; Pereira & Rennó, 2013).

As for the party dummies, *PSDB* is the only variable that generates a significant coefficient. The negative coefficient suggests that a PSDB deputy is less likely to be a member of the caucus. This is quite understandable, since the Twin Ocean Railroad project was mainly promoted by the PT government, and the PSDB was one of the main opposition parties in the Chamber of Deputies.

Since Model 1 is a non-linear model, Table 5 reports predicted probabilities for significant variables so that we can evaluate the degree of the impact of each variable. Imagine the case in which a PT deputy of non-East Asian descent with 2.517 terms in office, who is not affiliated with the Brazil-China or Brazil-Japan Caucuses, obtained 2.987% of valid votes cast in the last election in the state, which is not on the route of the

Twin Ocean Railroad, where gross state product per capita is 18,973 reals. In this baseline case, his/her probability of being a member of the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus is .304.

*-- Table 5 about here --*

The simulation results reported in Table 5 suggest that deputies' party affiliation is more influential in determining their caucus membership than their relations with Asia, the economic situation of their states, and their previous electoral performance. If the PT deputy is a member of the Brazil-Japan Caucus, his/her probability of being a member of the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus increases to .417. In the case that the PT deputy is from a wealthier state where gross state product per capita is 28,075 reals, the probability goes up to .361, whereas it goes down to .252 if he/she is elected from a less wealthy state. Similarly, the deputy's likelihood of being a member of the caucus increases to .381 if his/her vote share in the last election was 5.499%, but it decreases to .237 if his/her vote share was 0.475%. If the deputy is affiliated not with the PT but with the PSDB, the probability significantly drops to .161.

In sum, this statistical test shows that the determinants of a deputy's affiliation with the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus are his/her affiliation with the Brazil-Japan Caucus, his/her state's economic condition, his/her electoral performance in the last election, and his/her party affiliation.

## **5. Conclusion**

What are the characteristics of the representation of East Asia in Latin American legislatures? Are East Asian descents overrepresented or underrepresented in Latin America? Do the political careers of legislators of East Asian descent differ from those of other legislators? How do deputies respond to "East Asian interests?" I tackled these questions, focusing on the descriptive and substantive aspects of representation. By reviewing the composition of legislators of East Asian descent in each Latin American country, I find that the people of Japanese descent are "overrepresented" in the Peruvian and Argentine lower houses, while the people of Korean and Chinese descent are

underrepresented.

Then, using the case of Brazil, where the percentage of East Asian deputies is similar to that of East Asians in the national population, I examined political career structure and deputies' responses to the Twin Ocean Railroad project, one of the largest Chinese infrastructure projects. Regarding political careers, I discovered that deputies of East Asian descent differ from other deputies. Some deputies of East Asian descent moved directly from a municipal council, while they rarely came to the Chamber from a mayoralty (via a state legislature) or a vice-governorship. I pointed out the geographical concentration of the deputies of East Asian descent as a possible factor explaining these characteristics. In addition, the deputies of East Asian descent did not depart to the destinations common for other deputies such as the Senate, a vice-governorship, or a mayoralty. As for deputies' responses to the Twin Ocean Railroad project, they are more likely to be members of the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus, which aims at promoting the project, if they are affiliated with the Brazil-Japan Caucus, if they are from a wealthier state, or if they performed well in the last election. In addition, they are not likely to be members of the caucus if they are affiliated with the PSDB, an important opposition party.

While this article provides abundant information as well as interesting findings, some questions remain to be answered. Why are people of Japanese descent more overrepresented in some Latin American legislatures, especially in comparison to people of other types of East Asian descent? Why do the members of the Brazil-Japan Caucus, deputies from a wealthier state, and deputies who performed well in the last election support the Twin Ocean Railroad project? Answering these questions will be the next task for my future research.

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**Table 1: Number of legislators of East Asian descent in Latin America  
(as of August 1, 2016)**

	Number of seats	Number of East Asian descents
<b>Argentina:</b> Chamber of Deputies	257	1
<b>Argentina:</b> Senate	72	0
<b>Bolivia:</b> Chamber of Deputies	130	0
<b>Bolivia:</b> Senate	36	0
<b>Brazil:</b> Chamber of Deputies	513	3
<b>Brazil:</b> Senate	81	0
<b>Chile:</b> Chamber of Deputies	120	0
<b>Chile:</b> Senate	38	0
<b>Colombia:</b> Chamber of Representatives	166	0
<b>Colombia:</b> Senate	102	0
<b>Costa Rica:</b> Legislative Assembly	57	0
<b>Cuba:</b> National Assembly	612	0
<b>Dominican Republic:</b> Chamber of Deputies	190	0
<b>Dominican Republic:</b> Senate	32	0
<b>Ecuador:</b> National Assembly	137	0
<b>El Salvador:</b> Legislative Assembly	84	0
<b>Guatemala:</b> Congress	158	0
<b>Haiti:</b> Chamber of Deputies	92	0
<b>Haiti:</b> Senate	23	0
<b>Honduras:</b> National Congress	128	0
<b>Mexico:</b> Chamber of Deputies	500	0
<b>Mexico:</b> Senate	128	0
<b>Nicaragua:</b> National Assembly	92	0
<b>Panama:</b> National Assembly	71	1
<b>Paraguay:</b> Chamber of Deputies	80	0
<b>Paraguay:</b> Senate	45	0
<b>Peru:</b> Congress	130	3
<b>Uruguay:</b> Chamber of Deputies	99	0
<b>Uruguay:</b> Senate	31	0
<b>Venezuela:</b> National Assembly	167	0

Note: “Number of East Asian descents” shows number of legislators with East Asian last names. Substitute legislators (*suplentes*) are not included.

Source: Author’s compilation based on the information from website of each legislature (accessed on August 1, 2016).

**Table 2: Previous positions of Brazilian deputies of East Asian descent**

Position	Immediately before (# of deputies)	At some point prior (# of deputies)
<b>Federal</b>		
President/Vice-President	0	0
Minister of State	0	0
Other federal government position	0	0
Senator	0	0
<b>State</b>		
Governor/Vice-Governor	1	1
State Deputy	8	10
State Secretary or other state government position	0	0
<b>Municipal</b>		
Mayor/Vice-Mayor	0	5
Municipal Councilman	3	12
Municipal government position	2	2
Other position (without holding public positions)	6	N/A

Note: N=20. "Other position" includes party executive positions as well as positions in the private sector.

Source: Author's compilation based on the information from Câmara dos Deputados (2016a).

**Table 3: Career choices of Brazilian deputies of East Asian descent and their success**

Position Sought/Held	Sought (# of deputies)	Held (# of deputies)
<b>Federal</b>		
President/Vice-President	0	0
Minister of State	N/A	0
Other federal government position	N/A	0
Senator	0	0
Deputy (reelection)	20	9
<b>State</b>		
Governor/Vice-Governor	0	0
State Deputy	0	0
State Secretary or other state government position	N/A	1
<b>Municipal</b>		
Mayor/Vice-Mayor	0	0
Municipal Councilman	1	1
Municipal government position	N/A	0
Retirement	N/A	3
Other position (without holding public positions)	N/A	6

Note: N=28. The number of deputies succeeded in reelection excludes the cases in which deputy candidates were qualified as a substitute deputy (*suplicante*). “Retirement” includes the cases of deputies’ death. “Other position” includes party executive positions as well as positions in the private sector.

Source: Author’s compilation based on the information from Câmara dos Deputados (2016a).

**Table 4: Determinants of Brazilian deputies' affiliation with the Brazil-Peru-China Pro-Twin Ocean Railroad Caucus**

Independent variables	Model 1
Brazil-China Caucus	.312(.215)
Brazil-Japan Caucus	.492**(.210)
East Asian descent	.232(1.070)
State on the route	.329(.306)
Gross state product per capita	.028**(.014)
Number of terms in office	-.037(.058)
Vote share	.136***(.047)
DEM	-.920(.608)
PDT	-.125(.568)
PMB	.691(.683)
PMDB	-.490(.397)
PP	-.225(.451)
PR	.057(.454)
PRB	-.388(.546)
PSB	.299(.462)
PSC	.330(.713)
PSD	.115(.446)
PSDB	-.824*(.435)
PTB	.342(.526)
SD	-.163(.661)
Small parties	.330(.396)
Constant	-1.680****(.463)
$\sigma^2$	.355(.157)
Wald $\chi^2$	32.18*
Log likelihood	-320.348
N (observations)	513
N (states)	27

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. \*p<.10; \*\*p<.05; \*\*\*p<.01; \*\*\*\*p<.001.

**Table 5: Predicted probabilities of Model 1**

	Model 1
Baseline case	.304 (.179 - .429)
Member of Brazil-Japan Caucus ( <i>Brazil-Japan caucus</i> = 1)	.417 (.256 - .578)
Higher gross state product per capita ( <i>gross state product per capita</i> = 28.075)	.361 (.212 - .510)
Lower gross state product per capita ( <i>gross state product per capita</i> = 9.871)	.252 (.133 - .372)
Higher vote share ( <i>vote share</i> = 5.499)	.381 (.236 - .526)
Lower vote share ( <i>vote share</i> = 0.475)	.237 (.120 - .354)
Member of PSDB ( <i>PSDB</i> = 1)	.161 (.060 - .261)

Note: 95% confidence interval in parentheses. Baseline assumes the case in which a PT deputy of non-East Asian descent with 2.517 terms in office, who is not affiliated with Brazil-China and Brazil-Japan Caucuses, obtained 2.987% of valid votes cast at the last election in the state, which is not on the route of the Twin Ocean Railroad, where gross state product per capita is 18,973 reals.