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TAIWAN’S 2010 METROPOLITAN CITY ELECTIONS: AN ASSESSMENT OF TAIWAN’S POLITICS AND A PREDICTOR OF FUTURE ELECTIONS

John F. Copper

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John F. Copper*

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I. INTRODUCTION

On November 27, 2010 voters in Taiwan's (officially known as the Republic of China) metropolitan cities went to the polls to cast ballots for their mayors, city council members, and borough chiefs.1

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1. For this author's assessment of Taiwan's previous elections including the previous metropolitan city elections in 2006, see John F. Copper with George P. Chen, Taiwan's Elections: Political Development and Democratization in the Republic of China (Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Law, 1984); John F. Copper, Taiwan's Recent Elections: Fulfilling the Democratic Promise (Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Law, 1990); John F. Copper, Taiwan's 1991 and 1992 Non-Supplemental Elections: Reaching a Higher State of Democracy (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994); John F. Copper, Taiwan's Mid-1990s Elections: Taking the Final Steps to Democracy (Westport, CT: Praeger Publisher, 1998); John F. Copper, Taiwan's 1998 Legislative Yuan, Metropolitan Mayoral and City Council Elections: Confirming and Consolidating Democracy in the Republic of China (Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Law, 1999); John F. Copper, Taiwan's 2000 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election: Consolidating Democracy and Creating a New Era of Politics (Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Law, 2000); John F. Copper, Taiwan's 2001 Legislative, Magistrates and Mayors Election: Further Consolidating Democracy (Singapore: World Scientific/Singapore University Press, 2002); Taiwan's 2004 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election: Democracy's Consolidation or Devolution (Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Law, 2004); Taiwan's 2004 Legislative Election: Putting it in Per-
Such elections are held every four years and are considered nearly as important as Taiwan’s legislative and presidential elections.\(^2\)

Originally Taiwan had only two metropolitan cities: Taipei and Kaohsiung, so defined because of their size and political and economic importance (Taipei being the capital and Taiwan’s largest city and Kaohsiung the second largest city and the largest port).\(^3\) However, before this election Taipei County was separated from Taipei Metro and designated “New Taipei” or Xinbei.\(^4\) Kaohsiung Metro and Kaohsiung County were combined into one unit. Taichung City and Taichung County and Tainan City and Tainan County respectively were merged and gained the status of metropolitan cities.\(^5\) The combined population of the five approached 14 million—around sixty percent of Taiwan’s total population.\(^6\)

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\(^2\) Taiwan has nine categories of elections. Two are at the national level: presidential and vice presidential elections and legislative elections. Seven are local elections: municipal mayors, municipal council members, county magistrates (city mayors), county council members, township chiefs, township council members, and village heads. All are elected for four-year terms, the terms of legislators having been changed from three to four years recently. Further details are provided by the Central Election Commission (online at cec.gov.tw).

\(^3\) Taipei was made a metropolitan city in 1967, Kaohsiung in 1979.

\(^4\) On December 31 the Ministry of Interior approved the English name “New Taipei City.” See June Tsai, “English name approved for New Taipei City,” Taiwan Today, January 3, 2011 (online at taiwantoday.com.tw). The term Xinbei is used here since it was the official name during the campaign and the election. The name for Taipei County was also spelled Sinbei. In fact, there was a dispute over the spelling. The government and the KMT favored Xinbei as this was consistent with the spelling of Chinese in China and foreign tourists who have visited China would recognize it. The DPP favored Sinbei to avoid using the same spelling used in China. The China Post and the Taipei Times, the two main English papers in Taiwan, used different spellings reflecting their different views.

\(^5\) On October 4, 2010 the Central Election Commission decided that all local elections would be held at the same time after 2014. That will include special municipalities, city mayors and county magistrates, city and city councilors, township chiefs, township representatives and village and ward heads. See “CEC to bring local elections in sync by 2014,” United Daily News, October 4, 2010.

\(^6\) The total population of the five metropolitan cities is 13,744. Taiwan’s total population is 23,024,956 (estimated as of July 2010). See “Taiwan,” The World Factbook published by the Central Intelligence Agency (online at www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tw.html).
The election campaign went smoothly, meaning generally without serious violence or disruption, except for the final day of the campaign when Sean Lien, the son of former vice-president and chairman emeritus of the Nationalist Party or Kuomintang (KMT) LIEN Chan, was shot while speaking at a campaign rally on behalf of a candidate for city council in Xinbei. Speculation immediately ensued as to how the incident would affect the election results.

One theme heard throughout the campaign as well as after the results were announced was that the election would have a marked influence on the 2012 legislative and presidential elections. In other words, these elections were seen as a referendum on MA Ying-jeou's presidency as well as the KMT, or constituted a “mid-term” in the American sense. The reasoning behind this argument was that the voters were still undecided about the president and his administration but also the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which had lost badly in the 2008 elections, was in a recovery mode.

The election was a contest between Taiwan's two major parties, the KMT and the DPP, Taiwan's other parties having been marginalized over the last few years due to changes in the election laws and other factors. Many observers saw this as proof of Taiwan's further evolution toward a two-party system. This and more attention to issues and less to ideology and the parties' more moderate platforms indicated Taiwan's democracy had matured and was operating well.

The elections' tallies on the surface favored the KMT. Its candidates won three (Taipei, Xinbei, and Taichung) of the five metropolitan mayorships. The DPP had hoped to win three of the races or even four. On the other hand the results simply maintained the status quo in terms of control of the metropolitan cities. Thus, many observers suggested the elections' results produced no change. A third opinion, and one that was supported by a number of observers, was that since the DPP obtained a larger vote count, having won its two mayoral victories by large margins in the mayoral races, and because it made gains in city council seats, the elections constituted a DPP victory. Hence there was a plethora of interpretations concerning who won and how their results would influence the next election contests.

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7. Lien Chan was vice president from 1996 to 2000 and chairman of the Nationalist Party from 2000 to 2005. He was twice a candidate for president, in 2000 and 2004 having previously served as premier from 1993 to 1997, governor of Taiwan Province from 1990 to 1993 and foreign minister from 1988 to 1990.
The effect of the political milieu in Taiwan on the electorate during the run-up to these elections may best be analyzed by looking at two general or broad variables in play. One was the image of the MA Ying-jeou presidency, including Ma himself, together with the KMT’s ruling majority in the Legislative Yuan (the lawmaking body or branch of government). Election victories in early 2008 gave President Ma and the KMT legislators very strong mandates. Both, however, faced daunting problems not long after the elections and on many fronts performed below expectations, resulting in loss of public confidence and quickly falling approval ratings as reflected in the polls.

The central issues were the economy and competent governance. Leading up to the elections President Ma and his administration were able to claim they had turned the economy around while they parried accusations of poor governance citing the previous Chen administration’s bad record; but they were only partially effective in making these pitches.

The other factor was former DPP president CHEN Shui-bian ending his presidency in disgrace owing mainly to his, his family’s, and his associates’ horrendous corruption. Chen was also culpable of poor governance and overseeing a decline in civil and political rights, press freedom, and ethnic relations, which brought into question the status of Taiwan’s democratization during his tenure as president. His approval numbers in the polls fell to single digits before his term in office ended causing the DPP to suffer a serious decline in morale and lose backers. Making matters worse, immediately after Chen left the presidency prosecutors indicted him on serious criminal charges. Chen was thus an albatross around the neck of the DPP. The party, under its new leader TSAI Ing-wen, strug-

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8. These were the two biggest political issues in the run-up to the election if judged by the number of stories in the media.

9. Opinion polls were done regularly on President Ma and his administration’s approval ratings by the Global Views Survey Research Center (online at gvrc.com.tw). The KMT also publishes opinion surveys done by the various newspapers in Taiwan (online at kmt.org.tw).

10. For details on all of these matters, see John F. Copper, *Taiwan’s Democracy on Trial* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010).

11. This was reflected in opinion surveys asking about party identification in the months and years leading up to the election. Close to the election the KMT’s score was above thirty percent; the DPP’s was in the low twenties. Those that said they were independents number higher than those that identified with the DPP. See “Party Identification Tracking Analysis in Taiwan,” Global Views Survey Research Center, December 2010 (online at gvm.com.tw/gvsrc/20101231S06AL05PR2R.pdf)
gled to overcome this. Her efforts were successful to a degree, though the DPP remained stained by its former president.

One might say that the tribulations the two parties experienced, and the consequent loss of public trust in both, offset or balanced each other. The devil is in the details.

The KMT suffered a palpable loss of public support in large measure as a consequence of the economic downturn that occurred soon after the 2008 legislative and presidential elections that lasted well into the next year. President Ma’s reputedly poor handling of a number of issues, including Typhoon Marakot that hit Taiwan in the autumn of 2009, further undermined the credibility of his administration.\(^\text{12}\) Both affected his reputation and ratings the public gave him in the polls mirrored that. The KMT suffered a decline in its image as well.

More specifically, during the 2008 presidential campaign MA Ying-jeou promised to “rehabilitate” Taiwan’s economy. However, six months after Ma’s inauguration the global economy fell into a recession that severely impacted Taiwan. The third quarter of 2008 saw the growth in Taiwan’s gross domestic product (GDP) drop to just one percent. Exports dropped by more than forty percent through November.\(^\text{13}\) Other bad news accompanied this: The stock market plummeted, Taiwan failed to get its projected 3,000 tourists a day from China, and oil prices (Taiwan being dependent on imported oil) climbed notwithstanding the global economic downturn.\(^\text{14}\) In the fourth quarter the GDP dropped by a stunning 8.36 percent.\(^\text{15}\) Growth for the year registered less than two percent.\(^\text{16}\)

In 2009 economic conditions in Taiwan worsened. The GDP growth rate fell 9.0 percent in the first quarter and 6.8 percent in the second quarter. It went south 0.9 percent in the third quarter.\(^\text{17}\) In August unemployment reached 6.13 percent. The electronics and machinery exports, which had been generating seventy percent of


\(^{14}\) For additional details, see Peter C.Y. Chow, “The Impact of the Financial Tsunami on Taiwan’s Economy,” Asia Program Special Report (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars), October 2009, pp. 5-12.

\(^{15}\) “Taiwanese economy slumps into recession,” CNN.com/world business, February 18, 2009 (online at cnn.com).

\(^{16}\) “Taiwan Economy 2009,” 2009 CIA World Factbook (online at cia.org).

\(^{17}\) “Taiwanese economy at a glance,” Taipei Representative Office in the EU and Belgium, no date given (online at taiwanembassy.org viewed on November 17, 2010).
Taiwan's economic growth, contracted (twenty-seven percent in the first ten months of 2009) as expected due to the global economic downturn. Thus the public generally perceived Taiwan's situation as one of general economic malaise.

The bad economy had a more harmful effect on the president's popularity than it might have otherwise owing to the fact that Ma and his vice presidential running mate, Vincent Siew, made economic recovery a central plank in their 2008 campaign platform. Making matters worse, in new democracies (which Taiwan is) the populace takes campaign promises quite literally.\(^\text{18}\) Put another way, most voters believed the Ma administration could and would bring immediate economic growth and good times. Hence, Ma's 6-3-3-campaign promise (gross domestic product growth of six percent or better, unemployment of three percent or less, and a per capita income of US$30,000 to be reached by 2016) looked disingenuous and a large portion of the populace felt misled.\(^\text{19}\)

Meanwhile, the KMT-controlled Legislative Yuan's popularity waned. KMT leaders had promised during the election campaign in 2008 they would not abuse power and would tend to business. To many this did not seem to be the case.\(^\text{20}\) There were fights over turf, difficulties passing financial bills (including in late 2009 a failure to decide on a budget), KMT legislators disagreeing with the executive branch of government, one KMT legislator being forced to resign because she had citizenship in the U.S., and more.\(^\text{21}\) Specifically the separation of powers between the legislative and executive branches of government became blurred, suggesting constitutional checks were not working properly.\(^\text{22}\) Many citizens also felt that

\(^\text{18}\) See Copper, *Taiwan's 2008 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election*, pp. 14-23. Regarding the issue of voters' disenchantment because Taiwan is a new democracy, see Copper, *Taiwan's Democracy on Trial*, p. 5 and chapter 4.

\(^\text{19}\) "Taiwan's Economy in 2010," *2010 CIA World Factbook* (online at cia.org).

\(^\text{20}\) Even before the election there was serious concern expressed by voters about this. In one poll, 50.5 percent said they worried about it as opposed to 44.7 percent that said they didn't. See "Public worried KMT may abuse power, DPP poll says," *Taipei Times*, January 20, 2008 (online at taipeitimes.com). Reforms that had created a new electoral system and reduced the size of the Legislative Yuan were to improve the body, but many citizens failed to perceive this had happened.


\(^\text{22}\) See Parris Chang, "KMT Change of Guard: Ma's Power Play in Taiwan Politics," *China Brief*, July 23, 2009. When President Ma became chairman of the KMT in 2009 it appeared to many that there had been an overreaching by the KMT.
KMT members of the Legislative Yuan were arrogant and power hungry.\textsuperscript{23} The executive branch of the government likewise came under fire. The Minister of Health badly handled a scandal over tainted milk products from China and resigned.\textsuperscript{24} There was a long drawn out spat with the United States over beef imports. The Ma administration and the president himself (being a legal scholar) were criticized harshly by lawyers and legal experts in Taiwan and abroad for its handling of the Chen case, which some connected to a reported decline in civil liberties in Taiwan.\textsuperscript{25} President Ma was seen as indecisive and too focused on details.

The Ma administration’s foibles were amplified by the fact the opposition, which prior to 2000 when it became the ruling party had been very effective in political protest and in challenging the KMT, adopted that \textit{modus operandi} again. Opposition leaders portrayed Ma as weak and lacking leadership qualities. Ma was by all accounts a scholar/official-style leader who sought to rule by consensus as prior KMT leaders had done.\textsuperscript{26} Those who supported Ma contended that Taiwan politics were fractious as a result of eight years of the Chen presidency and his style of rule would bring healing and was thus appropriate. But many others said consensus was not the way to lead in Taiwan’s very polarized and competitive democracy.\textsuperscript{27} In short, political debate in Taiwan focused on defining Ma’s

\textsuperscript{23} This accusation followed some members calling for former president Chen’s execution. Such a comment first came from a prosecutor who later denied the remark. It then became an issue of discussion by legislators. See “Inquiry ordered into Chen ‘execution’ remark,” \textit{China Post}, May 22, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw).

\textsuperscript{24} “Taiwan minister allegedly attacked over tainted milk, Channel News Asia, October 3, 2008 (online at channelnewsasia.com).

\textsuperscript{25} Some of the criticism directed at President Ma came from the fact that he wanted the legal system to deal with the Chen Shui-bian case and did not want to interfere and he generally refused comment on the matter. Liberty House downgraded Taiwan from one to two ranking in the area of civil rights in its 2010 report. See \textit{Freedom in the World 2010}, online at freedomhouse.org). However, it gave Taiwan a higher ranking on press freedom. See J. Michael Cole, “Taiwan Moves up in press freedom index,” \textit{Taipei Times}, October 21, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).


\textsuperscript{27} There has long been a debate in Taiwan concerning the desirability of having a strong leader. The DPP argued against this when the KMT was in power, but argued just the opposite during the years 2000 to 2008 when Chen Shui-bian was president. The KMT also argued for a strong leader in the past, but changed that stance with democratization.
leadership instead of what he accomplished or the difficulties he faced in doing his job.

In late August 100,000 demonstrators gathered in front of the Presidential Palace to complain about the handling of typhoons and other issues the Ma administration had not responded to effectively. It was also the opposition’s contention that (as they said they had feared) Ma was sacrificing Taiwan’s sovereignty for better relations with China. On Retrocession Day (October 25), more than half a million protestors turned out.\(^\text{28}\) Ma’s public opinion approval rating, which was 60.5 percent in April, fell to 24.9 percent by September.\(^\text{29}\) In ensuing months the situation did not turn around for Ma or the KMT.

In August 2009, Typhoon Morakot made a direct hit on Taiwan. It was the worst typhoon the island’s residents had seen in fifty years. It destroyed the homes of more than 7,000 people and knocked out thirty-four bridges and 253 stretches of road. Damage to crops was immense. More than 500 people perished in floods and mudslides.\(^\text{30}\)

The handling of the event unquestionably damaged the Ma administration’s reputation for governance. The Presidential Office had criticized the Central Weather Bureau the previous year for bad predictions and promised improvements. But the forecasters were again wrong—announcing the brunt of the storm would hit north of Chiayi when it struck Kaohsiung and Pingtung in the far south the hardest with 2,000 mm of rain when 300 mm was anticipated.\(^\text{31}\) The opposition also excoriated President Ma for personal comments that they characterized as unfeeling. The press called him “aloof” and assailed his statements about the secondary role of the central government and mentioning the costs of the disaster.\(^\text{32}\)

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30. “Typhoon Morakot lashes Taiwan,” CNN, August 9, 2009 (online at ccm.com) and “Taiwan hardest hit by Typhoon Morakot,” UPI, August 12, 2009 (online at upi.com).
32. “Editorial: A president far from his people,” Taipei Times, August 12, 2009 (online at taipeitimes.com). Those who spoke for the president noted that President Ma was reported to have refused foreign help, when he simply wanted to delay it until the situation was assessed more carefully. In addition, the local media reported that 10,000 people were trapped in isolated areas, which was inaccurate.
The administration indeed seemed confused about the lines between local and national jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{33}

Taiwan's economy turned around during the last quarter of 2009 with GDP growth reaching an impressive 9 percent. It performed even better in early 2010. Growth in the GDP was double digit during the first half of the year—exceeding even China's rapid growth pace. In fact, by the end of September 2009 Taiwan had experienced four straight quarters of more than eight percent expansion in the GDP.\textsuperscript{34} Opinion polling reflected a growing public confidence about the economy. This gave President Ma a boost in the polls: 8.1 percentage points in his approval rating and 6.3 percent in trust index in October compared to the previous month.\textsuperscript{35}

President Ma cited other positive aspects of Taiwan's economic performance: NT$300 million (US$9.7 million) in new foreign investment, twelve i-Taiwan infrastructure projects, six emerging industries, four smart industries, and ten key service sector projects. He added that Taiwan's economic growth in the first half of the year was 13.1 percent, one of the highest in the world, and that 285,000 new jobs had been created.\textsuperscript{36}

There were various other items of good news on the economic front leading up to Election Day, such as export orders setting a new record in September and coming close to that pace in October, an increase of 34.28 percent in fixed capital formation (year-on-year), GDP per capita reaching a new high of US$19,046 (up US$2,600 from the previous year), a forecast of nearly ten percent growth in the GDP for the year (the best since 1990), a strengthening of the NT$ (which would cushion rising prices of oil and other commodities), and the World Bank raising Taiwan's ranking as a good place for doing business.\textsuperscript{37} Just days before the election the

\textsuperscript{33} "More than 500 dead in typhoon Morakot," \textit{The Guardian}, August 14, 2009 (online at guardian.co.uk).

\textsuperscript{34} "Taiwan's Economy Probably Grew More than 8% in 3Q," \textit{Bloomberg Businessweek} November 17, 2010 (online at businesweek.com).

\textsuperscript{35} "Survey on President Ma Ying-jeou's Approval Rating and Removal of Missiles Deployed by China," Global Views Survey Research Center, October 28, 2010 (online at gvrc.com.tw). Also see "Ma's approval ratings soar from recovering economy," \textit{China Post}, October 22, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw).

\textsuperscript{36} Steve Bercia, "Ma talks up Taiwan's economic prospects," \textit{Taiwan Today}, October 6, 2010.

\textsuperscript{37} Audrey Wang, "Taiwan's GDP up 9.8 percent in 3rd quarter," \textit{Taiwan Today}, November 19, 2010 (online at taiwantoday.tw); Audrey Wang, "October export orders 2nd highest on record," \textit{Taiwan Today}, November 22, 2010 (online at taiwantoday.tw). "World Bank lifts Taiwan’s doing business ranking," \textit{Taiwan Today}, November 4, 2010.
government reported the unemployment rate had fallen to below five percent.\textsuperscript{38}

The other important variable that comprised the political context for these elections was former president CHEN Shui-bian's legacy, including his arrest, several trials and convictions, and imprisonment. The effect on the public was amplified by the fact that he confessed to some of the complaints, and his wife, other relatives, and associates pled guilty to charges that related to those against the former president and/or they provided evidence against him. It was indisputable that the record of the Chen presidency and the former president's deeds hurt the DPP grievously.\textsuperscript{39}

Even before he left office President Chen caused his party severe damage. By his own admissions he was to blame for the DPP's serious setbacks in the legislative and presidential elections in 2008. He then resigned from the party.\textsuperscript{40} During the presidential and vice-presidential election campaign that followed, DPP candidates Frank Hsieh and SU Tseng-chang avoided mentioning their connections with Chen; they even criticized him in public. The KMT's MA Ying-jeou and Vincent Siew won a resounding victory, which many attributed in no small part to the public's negative view of the Chen presidency.\textsuperscript{41}

Chen continued to sully the DPP's image and undermine its support base after the election—the public being reminded almost daily of his crimes because of the long and drawn out investigations, trials, and appeals, not to mention Chen's lame efforts to defend his record. The story is a complicated one.

\textsuperscript{38} Ted Yang, "Unemployment rate falls below 5%," \textit{Taipei Times}, November 12, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).

\textsuperscript{39} For details, see John F. Copper, "Taiwan's Failed President," \textit{Asian Affairs}, Winter 2008.

\textsuperscript{40} "Chen Steps Down as DPP Chairman," \textit{Taiwan News}, January 13, 2008 (online at taiwannews.com.tw).

\textsuperscript{41} The KMT candidates, Ma Ying-jeou and Vincent Siew, got more votes and won election by a bigger margin than any set of candidates in any such election ever in Taiwan, winning more than incumbent President Lee Teng-hui got in 1996 and almost twenty percent more of the popular vote than Chen had won in 2000. They took twenty of Taiwan's twenty-five electoral districts. They won in Tainan near Chen Shui-bian's hometown. Hsieh and Su won only rural, traditional pan-green districts in south Taiwan. Ma and Siew approximated the KMT's legislative victory earlier in the year refuting the claim made by DPP supporters that the KMT legislative victory was the product of a new electoral system. For details see Copper, \textit{Taiwan's 2008 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election}, pp. 72-73.
When Chen's tenure as president ended prosecutors forthwith named him in an investigation of alleged mishandling of the state funds (in other words, embezzlement). Relevant agencies were notified to report if Chen made any attempt to leave the country. Chen appeared contrite and said he would not criticize President Ma and that his supporters should not call him president any longer. But Chen soon changed his demeanor. He filed a suit against the Minister of National Defense for suggesting he had not really been shot during his reelection campaign in 2004. He then adopted an aggressive stance on Taiwan's national identity and independence, an apparent ploy to counter the charges against him. Many DPP members supported Chen. TSAI Ing-wen, just elected DPP chairwoman, said she would “speak the language of the people”; in short, she was adopting Chen's stance.

DPP politics at this juncture seemed to be defined thusly: Even though President Chen left office thoroughly dishonored he remained the DPP's spiritual leader and retained the support of a sizeable number of party members because he was the scion of Taiwan's independence. He also personified Taiwanese victimization—an important element of the party's strategy in attracting followers. His future and that of his relationship with the DPP were in question. Clearly this constituted a conundrum for the DPP.

It is important to understand that at this point the DPP suffered from a leadership quandary. Frank Hsieh resigned as party chairman after his election defeat and vowed that he was getting out of politics for good. TSAI Ing-wen was viewed by most in the party as honest and intelligent, but not necessarily as a promising leader—having never run for elective office. In addition, she had only recently become a party member and did not have the allegiance of many older party members, especially those who strongly supported independence. However, neither Hsieh nor SU Tseng-

42. “Chen named defendant in special affairs fund case,” Taipei Times, May 21, 2008 (online at taipeitimes.com).
43. Ko Shu-ling, “Chen says he will not criticize Ma, but Lu says she plans to,” Taipei Times, May 22, 2008 (online at taipeitimes.com).
44. “Chen to file suit against defense minister: Hsu,” Taipei Times, May 24, 2008 (online at taipeitimes.com).
45. “DPP chair plans grassroots tour,” Taipei Times, May 28, 2008 (online at taipeitimes.com).
chang was in a position to take over leadership of the party and others who might have come forward did not.\textsuperscript{47}

Then, reverting to their \textit{modus operandi} of earlier years, DPP activists, including many CHEN Shui-bian supporters, organized protest demonstrations against the government whenever they saw an opportunity. When a member of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS) in China visited Taiwan in late 2009 to attend a seminar he was accosted by pro-independence activists. Chen told reporters that the ARATS member's boss was a "communist bandit," who planned to visit Taiwan, including Chen's hometown, and should be arrested because the visit was a provocation."\textsuperscript{48}

In fact, CHEN Yunlin, chairman of ARATS visited Taiwan the next month to arrange for additional air flights between Taiwan and China and resolve some other issues such as food safety and postal services. He was the first high official from China to set foot in Taiwan in sixty years. The DPP organized protest demonstrations in Taipei in response to his visit. Activists threw bottles and stones and dozens of people were injured.\textsuperscript{49} The DPP accused President Ma of "selling out" Taiwan. TSAI Ing-wen blamed the government for the violence, making it appear she was taking her marching orders from Chen and that he was \textit{de facto} leading the DPP. The situation was doubly bad for her since polls at the time indicated most citizens blamed her more than President Ma for the chaos and violence while the majority of citizens approved of the talks.\textsuperscript{50} The foreign media treated the DPP with even less sympathy.\textsuperscript{51}

Before the year ended Chen went on a hunger strike for a fortnight at almost the same time his wife, son, daughter-in-law and thirteen others, including the former minister of interior, were indicted (for channeling bribe money to President Chen from bidding contracts during 2004). Separately, former Vice Premier CHIOU I-

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{47} For details on events leading up to this situation, see "Ruling DPP to kick off meeting on post-poll reform," \textit{China Post}, March 31, 2008 (online at chinapost.com.tw).
\item \textsuperscript{48} Ho Ai Li, "Beijing official cuts short trip after attack; But he says violent acts by a few people won't hurt China-Taiwan ties," \textit{South China Morning Post}, October 23, 2008 (online at scmp.com).
\item \textsuperscript{49} Ho Ai Li, “Protestors in Taiwan clash with riot police: Protests mar historic meeting between Ma and visiting China envoy,” \textit{Straits Times}, November 7, 2008 (online at straitstimes.com).
\item \textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{51} Copper, \textit{Taiwan's Democracy on Trial}, p. 9.
\end{itemize}
jen was indicted for fraud. Many viewed Chen’s actions in defense of his presidency as pathetic and his cause a losing one. Yet Chen’s faithful supporters contended that Ma and the KMT were persecuting him.

During the course of these events Frank Hsieh said that Chen should admit his wrongdoings and show remorse. Chairwoman Tsai added that Chen and his family should face their moral problems. Tsai seemed to have made a critical pivot. But would this help her improve her leadership of the party? And would the party disown its only former president?

It was obvious that Chen was guilty of a host of crimes. The evidence was overwhelming. Chen’s own relatives supplied documentary proof and eyewitness testimony. The media duly reminded citizens that the legal case was started by Eric Chen, a pro-DPP, pro-Chen prosecutor, who indicted the First Lady in 2008, and said at the time that he would also indict President Chen except that Chen had immunity as president. Thus it could hardly be argued that the prosecutors were taking orders from the KMT.

In January 2009, Chen was indicted on additional charges: extorting property, demanding political donations forcibly, and profiteering. Chen’s son and daughter pled guilty to charges of money laundering and offered to cooperate with prosecutors. In February Chen’s wife, WU Shu-chen pled guilty to the charge of forgery of official documents in claiming reimbursement from a public fund when her husband was president.

In September Chen was convicted in court on the charges of embezzlement, bribery, money laundering, forgery, mishandling a special state fund, and corruption involving land deals. He was sen-

52. “Jailed ex-Taiwan president faces further graft charges,” Channel News Asia, September 23, 2009 (online at channelnewsasia.com).
54. “DPP Chair urges Chen and family to face moral problems,” China Post, December 18, 2008 (online at chinapost.com.tw).
55. For Eric Chen’s role in the case against the First Lady and his comments about President Chen, see “A legal tug of war,” China Post, June 3, 2008 (online at chinapost.com.tw).
56. “Ex-president’s son pleads guilty,” China Post, January 22, 2009 (online at chinapost.com.tw). The two apologized and agreed to surrender the funds said to amount to NT$1.8 billion.
57. “Former first lady pleads guilty,” China Post, February 11, 2009 (online at chinapost.com.tw). The evidence came from a Swiss bank that reported unusual remittances from Taiwan via Hong Kong and Singapore.
tenced to life in prison and fined $15.3 million. His wife was also sentenced to life. Chen's son was sentenced to two and one-half years and his daughter-in-law to one year in prison. There seemed hardly anything good in Chen's legacy at this point. 58

In May 2010, the Chen family returned US$1 million of the $20 million it had stashed in a Swiss bank "hoping to return the rest soon." 59 In August, U.S. prosecutors and immigration officials visited Taiwan in connection with properties in the U.S. Chen and his wife allegedly purchased with money they had received in bribes when Chen was president. 60 In September, just a little more than two months from the voting, it was announced that Chen might be indicted for an additional crime—violating the National Security Information Protection Law. 61

In the weeks leading up to the election DPP leaders were hopeful that the "Chen problem" was fading from the public's mind. However, in early November, a local court acquitted former president Chen on bribery charges in connection with some large bank mergers. Though the decision did not have much weight in terms of the entire case against Chen it did stir up public ire to the advantage of the KMT. KMT Secretary General KING Pu-tsung announced his party would hold a rally in Taipei and that anti-corruption would be its theme. Taipei Mayor HAU Lung-bin spoke out in favor of working harder on judicial reform. DPP leaders, realizing the issue would hurt their candidates at the polls, took further measures to distance themselves from Chen. 62

Clearly the matter of former president CHEN Shui-bian's corruption and likewise that of his family and associates weighed heavily on the DPP. It was certain to hurt the party and its candidates in the November election.

58. Natalie Tso, "Ex-Taiwan President Chen Sentenced to Life," Time, September 11, 2009 (online at time.com).
60. "U.S. probes Chen Shui-bian case," Taipei Times, August 28, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).
III. PREDICTING THE ELECTIONS

Local as well as foreign scholars have advanced a number of theories regarding how to forecast the results of elections in Taiwan. Two rather simple theories based on past elections heard in Taiwan during recent election campaigns are the "pendulum theory" and the "watermelon theory." A third is the theory of "critical elections" that produce significant and durable realignments in the electorate. One not based directly on looking at past elections, though it can certainly be seen there, is the demographics of the electorate or the theory of "ethnic voting." Still another construct is the view that Taiwan's elections can be analyzed in terms of liberal and conservative blocs and trends therein. Of course, there is always the view that citizens "vote their pocketbook" or make their decisions at the polls based on economic conditions. Finally, there is the view that the candidate or party with the most money to use in the campaign will usually win.

According to the pendulum theory any party that wins an election does so based on promises it cannot keep, thereby abetting its critics once they are in office and making it easier for the opposition to win the next election. Meanwhile the opposition learns from its defeat and reenergizes itself if it had become lazy or self-complacent. An election defeat may also generate some sympathy vote. Another variable is that governance in Taiwan is difficult due to the pace of political change and the extreme politicization of some issues. Finally, the idea that too much power corrupts and a rotation of ruling parties prevents that, augments the pendulum theory.

The watermelon theory holds that, similar to a person eating a watermelon who wants to finish it because it tastes good, voters will cast their vote as they did the last time. As one would say in the West: Don't change horses in midstream. Keeping one party in power is also the thing to do if it has governed well and if one desires continuity and stability in politics. Further supporting the watermelon theory is the view that incumbency is important since it affords more media attention and better opportunities to raise money to one party and its candidates.

63. Clearly both Chen Shui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou overstated their ability to resolve many serious issues in recent presidential campaigns. See Dafydd J. Fell, "Taiwan's Democracy: Toward a Liberal Democracy or Authoritarianism," Journal of Current Chinese Affairs, Issue 2, 2010, p. 192.
64. See Copper, Taiwan's 2008 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election, pp. 3-4 for further discussion on this point.
65. Ibid.
The third theory is the “consequential election” theory. It holds that certain elections are critical trendsetters that impact politics and subsequent elections for some time. Thus a number (sometimes a large number) of subsequent elections can be predicted based on a “consequential election.” One writer views 2005 as a watershed: the KMT made a breakthrough in relations with China, took “ownership” of the corruption issue, acquired new leadership, absorbed the other conservative parties, and pushed constitutional reform (that the opposition had to acquiesce to since it had long propounded such reform) that produced a new electoral system that worked to its advantage at the polls. This led to the massive KMT election victories of 2008.

Yet another view is that most voters view politics through a prism of ethnicity and thus vote according to their ethnic group. This easily applies to Taiwan because while it was under Nationalist Party rule for four decades citizens were encouraged to self-identify on the basis of their ethnic group. As Taiwan democratized one of the major drivers was the Fukien Taiwanese who made the “Mainland Chinese dictatorship” and the discrimination against them in that system a defining issue. In fact, the large majority of independent politicians who contested elections in the 1960s and 1970s were

68. Taiwan’s population is comprised of Taiwanese, or Chinese who migrated to Taiwan in centuries past, Mainland Chinese, who went to Taiwan after World War II, and the Aborigines or the original inhabitants of Taiwan. Taiwanese are 84 percent of the population. The Mainland Chinese are about 14 percent and the Aborigines less than 2 percent. Hakka, who are one group of Taiwanese, comprise around 15 percent of the population. Fukien Taiwanese, or Fukienese (also called Hoklo) are nearly 70 percent of the population and are considered the majority ethnic group; the others are considered minorities. It is not accurate to see Taiwan’s ethnic relations in terms of the Mainland Chinese versus the Taiwanese, as many writers do. In past centuries the Hakka were displaced from their lands by Fukienese, creating ill feelings and even wars. During the February 1947 uprising Fukienese beat or killed both Mainland Chinese and Hakka. In ensuing years the Hakka supported the Mainland Chinese KMT much more than the Fukienese did. During the Chen era, because the president amplified ethnic differences and gave preferences to the Fukienese as a matter of policy, the Hakka and the Aborigines even more strongly supported the KMT.
69. Alan M. Wachman, Taiwan: National Identity and Democratization (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994), p. 57. The author notes that ethnic identity was a recent phenomenon in China stemming from Manchu rule from 1644 to 1911. Sun Yat-sen created the idea of “Chineseness” that the KMT brought to Taiwan. See pp. 86-87.
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Taiwan's election politics as its politics in general can be seen as mirroring a liberal-conservative dichotomy. The DPP is a liberal party and the KMT is a conservative party according to most, but not all, general criteria for defining each. The DPP appeals to less-educated, lower social class voters. It thus supports social programs and help for the poor and disadvantaged. This, however, cuts across two ethnic groups that are poorer (Hakkas and Aborigines), which favor the KMT for ethnic reasons. Also, in the 1980s and 90s the KMT "preempted" the DPP's advocacy of more welfare by creating a large number of social programs.

Having said this, liberal and conservative in Taiwan are to a large degree defined in terms of national identity—meaning advocating Taiwan should be separate from or closer to China or independence versus unification (the DPP advocating the former and the KMT the latter). Also, Taiwan's youth, who are generally liberal, view the KMT as more global and favor their policies in this regard. Thus the youth vote is basically independent or fluid. Women, who are attracted to liberal parties in many countries because of their social welfare and pro-female policies, are generally conservative in Taiwan. Labor does not figure as a voting bloc in Taiwan and has little political influence because businesses in Taiwan are largely small and family owned.

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72. In 2000, Chen Shui-bian won 60 percent of the youth vote. In 2008, Ma Ying-jeou won the support of 60 percent of the youth. See Damon Ferrara, "The Youth Vote: Republic of China, Taiwan 2008 Presidential Election," Report by the USC U.S.-China Institute (online at china.usc.edu).

73. The largest portion of the female vote went to James Soong in 2000 notwithstanding the fact Chen Shui-bian's running mate was Annette Lu. In 2008 Ma Ying-jeou took the female vote.

74. The reason for this is that most businesses in Taiwan are family owned and operated. In 1987 the Labor Party was formed and in 1989 the Workers Party was inaugurated. Neither succeeded. The KMT was seen as too pro-business. Workers viewed the DPP as too preoccupied with independence and other issues.
cause of Taiwan's traditional and conservative society, the right-left dichotomy favors the KMT and offsets the DPP's ethnic advantage.

Another theory is that voters in Taiwan, as in most democracies, vote more than anything else, or at least very heavily, according to their view of how the government has handled the economy and, in particular, how this has affected them personally. In other words, voters vote their pocketbook. In Taiwan's case some suggest this is too self-evident to call it a theory. Some also argue that it applied in the past when most citizens very strongly supported growth policies, which is no longer the case. Still others argue that winning elections depends on choosing the right issues and focusing too much on the economy can be a mistake.

A theory that also connects to money is that the party and/or the candidate with the most money will win elections a large majority of the time. In most democratic countries money plays a vital role in election campaigns and is known to impact the results in a majority of elections. In Taiwan the opposition long attributed KMT election victories to the fact that it had large sums of money to spend on campaigns. President CHEN Shui-bian was known to have professed that money is vital to election victories. In fact, some have argued this was the reason for his rampant corruption. The budgets of the parties are invariably mentioned during and/or after Taiwan's recent elections in explaining who won.

Still another theory (especially prominent during times when Taiwan has had two dominant parties or blocs) is that one party will win if the other party or bloc is divided. In fact, this has been the explanation for CHEN Shui-bian's win in the Taipei mayoral race in 1994 and his presidential victory in 2000, not to mention some

75. For an assessment of the how the economy affected previous elections, see the studies cited in footnote #1. For its impact on voters in the last important election, see Copper, Taiwan's 2008 Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections, pp. 14-23. Also see Eunjung Choi, "Economic Voting in Taiwan: The Significance of Education and Lifetime Economic Experiences," Asian Survey, October 2010.

76. Hong Chi-chang, "Economy key to looming elections," Taipei Times, September 20, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).

77. This is why Chen Shui-bian was not reelected mayor of Taipei in 1998 even though his record as mayor was good and he was popular. This then explains why Chen assumed that he would not be reelected president in 2004 and, according to some, why he staged the shooting (if it were not staged). Ibid., p. 68.

78. See Copper, Taiwan's 2008 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election, p. 24.

79. See sources cited in footnote #1.
other less important elections. In some cases, failure to split the opposition or the fact the other party was not as divided as it looked explains some election outcomes.

It needs also to be mentioned that there are regional voting preferences in Taiwan. The island is split north and south in terms of voting tendencies or the party or bloc most voters favor. Thus if one bloc or party seeks to make gains vis-à-vis the other they must make inroads into the other’s region thereby affecting the north-south balance.

Finally, there are “dominant issues” in almost all election campaigns, such as crime, social tranquility, and corruption. These may be called constant campaign issues. They usually favor one party or the other and certain candidates. Then there is protest voting which is present in all elections to some degree.

A look at Taiwan’s previous elections provides a backdrop and offers evidence regarding which of the above-cited theories are better predictors. The most recent elections likewise put the elections under study here in perspective.

The Japanese held elections in Taiwan during the latter part of their colonial rule from 1895 to 1945. Though they were not truly democratic in nature, they did generate some sense of national identity on the part of the Chinese residents of Taiwan and arguably herein lays the basis for ethnic voting. Taiwan had quite meaningful local electoral contests beginning in 1950 under Nationalist Chi-

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80. In both cases the KMT was divided before the election and during the campaign. See Larry Diamond, “Anatomy of an Electoral Earthquake: How the KMT Lost and the DPP won the 2000 Presidential Election,” in Muthiah Alagappa (ed.), Taiwan’s Presidential Politics: Democratization and Cross-Strait Relations in the Twenty-first Century (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2001), p. 51.
81. The north-south regional blocs are based on a number of differences. The south is more rural, more provincial and more Fukien Taiwanese. The population of the north is more educated and global in its thinking. Taipei is viewed as a pro-KMT area; Kaohsiung and Tainan “belong” to the DPP.
82. Opinion polls taken in Taiwan have shown that corruption is an issue in most election campaigns.
83. There are two kinds of protest voting in Taiwan. One, independent candidates and the DPP received a large number of votes wherein the voter was protesting against KMT rule. In fact, this is one of the components of democratization in Taiwan. This changed in 2000 when the DPP won the presidency and subsequently worked in reverse. The phenomenon of a certain percentage of voters casting votes to warn a party about their dissatisfaction even though they do not support the other party is well known. There have not been any careful studies to assess this.
84. See Copper with Chen, Taiwan’s Elections, p. 40. As noted earlier the Nationalist government increased ethnic identification when it took control of Taiwan in 1945.
nese rule. The Mainland Chinese-controlled KMT worked with local Taiwanese factions to win most local elections while tolerating a weak opposition, which was largely Fukien Taiwanese. Thus there grew a linkage between opposition politics and ethnicity. In 1980, Taiwan held its first national competitive democratic election. In 1986, after the founding of the DPP, Taiwan witnessed a two-party election. The DPP, however, was not well organized and did not perform well in that election. In 1989, the DPP did so well at the polls that pundits speculated, based on bloc ethnic voting (the Fukien Taiwanese) that favored the DPP, that the DPP might soon become the majority and ruling party.

In 1991 and 1992, Taiwan held plenary elections for the National Assembly and the Legislative Yuan after the “senior parliamentarians” resigned from both bodies. The KMT won the former election; the DPP won the latter. The KMT’s victory in 1991 was explained in large part by the fact that the DPP had long argued that the National Assembly should be abolished and, therefore, did not put forward its best candidates. The DPP’s victory in 1992 was explained in large part by the DPP putting forth its best candidates. In 1994, the KMT won races for the Taiwan governorship and one metropolitan city mayor; the DPP’s CHEN Shui-bian won the Taipei mayoral race in a three-way race after the conservative vote split. Dividing the opposition (actually the KMT did it to itself) worked for Chen. The fact that LEE Teng-hui, who was Taiwanese (but Hakka), succeeded to the presidency in 1988 changed ethnic politics in Taiwan to the disadvantage of the DPP. His backing of James Soong (a Mainland Chinese) for the governorship and Soong’s political acumen and campaigning ability gave the KMT the victory.

85. Ibid., p. 44
86. Ibid., chapter 4.
87. Copper, Taiwan’s Recent Elections, chapter 3.
88. Ibid., chapter 4.
89. Copper, Taiwan’s 1991 and 1992 Supplemental Elections, chapter 2 and 3.
90. See Copper, Taiwan’s Mid-1990s Elections, pp. 49-50
91. Lee spoke Taiwanese (the language of the Fukien Taiwanese) fluently; he did not speak Hakka. Thus, he “bridged” the ethnic gap or “confused” ethnic politics. Fukien Taiwanese who felt that Mainland Chinese should no longer lead the country supported him. This was a large portion of the population. This and the fact that under President Chiang Ching-kuo the KMT’s membership became more Taiwanese than Mainland Chinese meant that the KMT was a multiethnic party and the DPP could no longer claim to represent Taiwanese against a Mainland Chinese KMT.
92. See Copper, Taiwan’s Mid-1990s Elections, pp. 48-49
In 1996, after the National Assembly amended the Constitution to create a direct election system to select the president and vice president, the KMT’s incumbents LEE Teng-hui and LIEN Chan won the presidential and vice presidential election garnering more than fifty percent of the popular vote against three sets of opposing candidates that included the DPP’s pair and two opposition groups’ candidates. The watermelon theory seemed to be in play, though the vote can probably be explained by or perhaps better in ethnic terms (the KMT having evolved into a multi-ethnic party) and the advantages incumbency and money gave to Lee and Lien.

In 2000, CHEN Shui-bian was elected president in a historic election that ended more than a half-century of KMT rule. Observers had a field day explaining in theory why this happened. Some argued that Chen had managed to negate the KMT’s advantage as the party of economic growth by advancing the proposition that he could sustain growth while providing economic equality and helping the poor. Others argued Chen captured the youth vote and independents.

However, the best explanation is that Chen won because the conservative vote split just as it did when Chen was elected Taipei mayor in 1994. President Lee refused to nominate James Soong to be the KMT’s presidential candidate even though Soong was by a sizeable margin in the opinion polls Taiwan’s most popular politician and would most likely have won the election easily. So Soong ran as an independent. This divided the KMT’s (conservative) base and gave Chen the win. Chen also won with a large portion of the Fukien Taiwanese vote.

Chen’s mandate, however, was in question. He won the election with less than forty percent of the popular vote (not a mandate

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93. Ibid.
94. Lien Chan is also Taiwanese according to the view that ethnicity is determined by the father. Lien’s father was Taiwanese, his mother Mainland Chinese. Another variable in this election was the fact China showed its dislike of Lee during the campaign by doing missile tests near Taiwan’s shore causing the U.S. to send aircraft carriers to defend Taiwan. For details, see John F. Copper, Playing with Fire: The Looming War with China over Taiwan (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), chapter 1. Lee and Lien would undoubtedly have won the election had it not been for the “missile crisis” or the “China factor.” However, they would likely not have won a clear mandate (defined as more than fifty percent of the popular vote).
95. Copper, Taiwan’s 2000 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election, p. 44.
96. Ibid.
97. Ibid.
judging by the discussions during the previous election campaign defining this term). Moreover, Chen would not have been elected had there been a provision in the Election Law for a run-off election.98 His ability to govern was, in addition, seriously handicapped by the fact the DPP held less than one-third of the seats in the legislature. President Chen could certainly not reign as previous presidents had. So he gave up his position in the DPP and sought to rule as a non-party president. He also attempted to form a coalition government. He even tried cohabitation. But none of these tactics worked. Hence Chen relied on support from his ethnic group to govern.99

The legislative election that followed in 2001 saw the development of a new party makeup. This election was a four-party, two-bloc contest. Soong had formed his own party, the People First Party (PFP). Former president LEE Teng-hui also founded a party, the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU). The two blocs were the blue camp (the KMT and the PFP) on the right and the green bloc (the DPP and the TSU) on the left. The DPP’s gains were made by voter allocation (an undemocratic, but often used tactic of assigning party supporters a candidate to vote for so the party could win more seats) and playing the “ethnic card.” The DPP made big gains, but so did Soong’s PFP. The blue bloc or pan-blue, Chen’s opposition, still had a majority of seats in the legislature. The election was thus a defeat for President Chen since he still did not obtain the support of the legislature that he needed.100

In 2004 President Chen stood for reelection. A recession in 2001 and political paralysis (virtually none of Chen’s campaign promises made in 2000 were realized), plus the fact that Taiwan was center-right in terms of political culture, made it fairly certain he would not win a second term.101 The polls indicated pan-blue would win, as did the odds gamblers put on the election and the movement of stocks of companies linked to one political party or the other.102

98. A provision for a run-off election had been discussed during earlier constitutional reform. However, no such provision was put in the Constitution.

99. See Copper, *Taiwan’s Democracy on Trial*, pp. 96-97.

100. See Copper, *Taiwan’s 2001 Legislators, Magistrates and Mayors’ Elections*


102. See Copper, *Taiwan’s 2004 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election*, p. 73.
But Chen won. He and the vice president were shot just hours before the election, which generated a sympathy vote and motivated many DPP voters to go to the polls who might otherwise have stayed at home because of their disenchantment with Chen. In addition, President Chen ordered the military and the police to stay at their posts, thus disenfranchising them. They would have voted in larger numbers for the pan-blue candidates LIEN Chan and James Soong. Blue camp supporters protested *en masse* after the election, charging the shooting was set up and the election was conducted unfairly because large numbers of the military and police did not get to vote thereby changing the results.  

Before the legislative election in the fall of 2004 many pundits thought the DPP would win due to the fact that momentum (the watermelon theory) appeared to be on its side after just winning the presidential election. However, the opposite turned out to be true. Many voters believed the presidential contest had not been fair and began to perceive the Chen administration was deeply infected with corruption while Chen's relationship with the United States and China were unduly and seriously strained. The pendulum theory seems to have explained the results of the following election.

In 2005, local elections were held that gave the KMT another election victory. KMT candidates defined the election as a national one and ran on the issues of the DPP's inadequate management of the economy and poor relations with the U.S. and China. In retrospect the momentum had clearly shifted in the KMT's favor. In 2006, the KMT won its third election in a row, defeating the DPP in metropolitan mayoral and city council races. The results were in some ways ominous. Frank Hsieh, former mayor of Kaohsiung and a star among DPP politicians, lost in Taipei. KMT candidates gained more city council seats. Many observers said the election was a predictor of the 2008 legislative and presidential elections.

The saving grace for the DPP was its win in the Kaohsiung mayoral

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103. Ibid.
105. Copper, “The Taiwan Factor in U.S.-China Relations.”
106. The reasons for the momentum shift are suggested by Fell in his article cited earlier in this section.
107. See Copper, *Taiwan's 2006 Metropolitan Mayoral and City Council Elections and the Politics of Corruption*, p. 3. Fell's theory of critical elections and the 2005 being that seems to have been shown to have validity by this election.
contest, suggesting to some that it still controlled the Taiwan identity issue and could win elections by playing the ethnic card in south Taiwan. Ethnic voting made a difference there; otherwise the watermelon theory seemed to be operating in force.

In January 2008, the KMT won the Legislative Yuan election. It was an overwhelming KMT victory and an election disaster for the DPP. The KMT won eighty-one seats; the DPP got only twenty-seven. Only two DPP candidates won in all of north, west, and east Taiwan. Some observers said the DPP now had support only in Taiwan's far south or that the KMT was “conquering Taiwan” from the north to the south. The election gave the KMT more than a two-thirds majority in the legislature, enabling it to pass bills almost unimpeded by the DPP. Again the watermelon theory seemed to be at play, though perhaps the significant election theory was also at work. Alternatively there was a very dominant issue: corruption (in the Chen administration and the DPP).

Just two months later, the KMT won a resounding victory in the presidential and vice presidential election. MA Ying-jeou and his running mate Vincent Siew won big on the issues of President CHEN Shui-bian’s corruption and their presumed ability to promote economic development of the kind the KMT had engineered in the past. The KMT was on a roll; the watermelon theory was working while the pendulum theory was not. The ethnic voting theory and the idea that the winner was the richest party were also discredited by this election. However, the corruption issue loomed very large. Some voiced the opinion that the DPP “interlude” was over and a “new KMT era” had begun. The KMT, in other words, would dominate Taiwan's politics in the foreseeable future.

In March 2009, however, in a by-election in Miaoli County a KMT candidate suffered a narrow defeat to an independent candidate. The KMT had held the seat and the district was said to have a large portion of KMT voters. The explanation for the loss was that

108. Ibid. p. 57.
110. It was reported at this time that the KMT has lost or spent much of its money and it was not in good financial shape. For a while it had not paid its employees. It also had to sell its headquarters building.
111. There were various explanations for this KMT victory in terms of the theories about elections. It should be noted, however, that Fell predicted this accurately.
the KMT legislator had been convicted of election rigging and this soured voters in the county on the KMT. Also voter turnout was low, indicating KMT supporters voted absent that day. After the election KMT chairman WU Po-hsiung declared the loss must serve as a warning to the party. A DPP spokesperson attributed the loss to the KMT’s lack of capable officials and candidates.

Later that month, the KMT took a seven-candidate legislative by-election in the Daan District of Taipei. CHIANG Nai-hsin won election with 48.91 percent of the vote. He replaced Diane Lee, who stepped down after evidence surfaced that she held U.S. citizenship, which is not legal for people in high office. Notwithstanding the win, the KMT vote tally declined markedly while the DPP increased its take by six percent. Because of the decline in its percentage of the vote and the low voter turnout in a KMT stronghold district, Wu said that the party should assess what it had not done well enough.

In September the KMT lost another legislative seat, this time in Yunlin County. Three months earlier, in June, Taiwan’s High Court had annulled the KMT’s candidate’s victory in the 2008 legislative election for vote buying. This required that a new election be held. The DPP’s LIU Chien-kuo won by a huge margin over the KMT’s candidate and an independent. After the election, Liu declared that residents’ hope for a better democracy, clean politics, and disgust with vote buying and smear campaigns gave him the victory. Analysts suggested the DPP’s win was a result of the KMT’s voting base being split by a KMT official entering the race as an independent, the KMT’s sullied reputation over vote-buying, and a decline in the Ma administration’s popularity due to the economy—mostly the latter two factors. Liu’s win had particular sali-

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113. Ibid.
114. “DPP takes comfort from 6 percent gain in support in Daan,” China Post, March 29, 2009 (online at chinapost.com.tw).
118. Ibid. Also see DPP’s Liu Chien-kuo wins Yunlin legislative by-election,” China Post, September 27, 2009 (online at chinapost.com.tw). Liu won by more votes that the total of the other two candidates.
ence as it raised the DPP’s presence in the Legislative Yuan to one-quarter; this meant that it could now propose a recall of the president or vice president and propose constitutional amendments.  

On December 5, 2009 Taiwan held “three-in-one” local elections. In popular vote, the KMT won 47.87 percent and the DPP won 45.321 percent. For the KMT the figure was down from 2005—from 50.96 percent. It was up for the DPP: from 41.95 percent. The KMT dominated in north Taiwan except for Yilan County, which is traditionally a DPP stronghold.

While the KMT technically won the elections, the decline in the percentage of the popular vote it received and increases the DPP obtained signaled that the KMT had not won and that the party was in trouble. Some of the DPP wins were also significant. In Keelung City in the north all of the nine DPP candidates for the city council won election. In Hsinchu City the DPP elected seven and in Yunlin County it elected thirteen. After the elections, President Ma characterized the election results as a defeat for the KMT and pledged continued reform and a thorough party review of administrative policies. He attributed the election setback in part to the economy. The DPP said the election results indicated that the Ma administration had alienated the people and that voters had registered “a vote of no confidence” in the Ma government. Chairwoman Tsai cited the bad economy, high unemployment, and the government’s slow response to Typhoon Morakot.

After the setbacks President Ma appointed a new KMT secretary general.

In by-elections in early 2010, the KMT suffered more losses. In January, the KMT lost three legislative seats to the DPP—one in Taitung, Taichung County, and Taoyuan County. In February, the KMT lost three out of four by-election seats contested—one in

\[119. \text{Ibid. This gave the DPP twenty-eight legislators of 113 in the legislative body.}
\[120. \text{The metropolitan cities that are the focus here were not included, including those that were to be defined as metropolitan cities. At play were county magistrates and city mayors, county and city councils, and township chiefs.}
\[121. \text{Vincent Y. Chao, “2009 Elections: South stays mostly green as KMT keeps Chiayi City,”} \textit{Taipei Times}, \textit{December 6, 2009} \text{(online at taitpeitimes.com).}
\[122. \text{Loa Lok-sin, “2009 Election: DPP makes significant progress in local elections,”} \textit{Taipei Times}, \textit{December 7, 2009} \text{(online at taitpeitimes.com).}
\[123. \text{“Results were unsatisfactory: Ma,”} \textit{China Post}, \textit{December 6, 2009} \text{(online at chinapost.com.tw).}
\[124. \text{“Votes show Ma no-confidence: DPP,”} \textit{China Post}, \textit{December 6, 2009} \text{(online at chinapost.com.tw).}
\[125. \text{“KMT set back again,”} \textit{China Post}, \textit{January 10, 2010} \text{(online at chinapost.com.tw).} \]
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Taoyuan, Hsinchu and Chiayi; the KMT won in Hualien. This put the DPP seats in the legislature at thirty-three (the KMT had seventy-five and independents five). Counter to usual explanations for the election losses some critics said that President Ma, who is also chairman of the KMT, was pursuing a nominating strategy that selected ultra-clean candidates many of whom were scholars that lacked campaign experience, and that was the reason for the losses.

Looking at all of these elections, it appears that the watermelon theory was valid at times and the pendulum theory worked at other times. Neither, however, serves as a general explanation for Taiwan's elections. The critical election theory predicted what happened from 2004 to 2008 but does not serve very well to explain what happened before 2004 or after 2008. The pocketbook theory works to explain most elections, but was countered with appeals for greater economic equity and the need to help the poor in 2000 and to some extent after that. Ethnic and regional voting explains some elections, but better after the fact than before. The LEE Teng-hui presidency made ethnic voting less clear. Corruption has been a paramount issue in a number of elections; but it has helped and hurt both parties. In short, there are a variety of ideas and theories to predict and explain Taiwan's voting. Most of them are useful, but none of them prevail over the others or work most or all of the time. After the 2008 elections, the DPP won (or at least the KMT did not win) all of the local elections subsequent the November 2010 elections. The watermelon theory seemed to be at work. The question at the time was: Would it continue to?

IV. THE CANDIDATES AND THE PARTIES' STRATEGIES

The five elections under study here attracted an array of candidates. Assessing their experience, qualifications, political views, party affiliations, positions held, etc. will facilitate understanding both the election campaign and its results. The analysis will begin with incumbents starting in the north.

Eric Chu (CHU Li-luan) was born in Taoyuan County in 1961. He earned a B.A. degree at National Taiwan University after which

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127. Ibid.
128. There was no incumbent in Xinbei. The highest official in Taipei County at the time represented the KMT.
he studied at New York University (NYU) earning an M.A. degree in finance and a PhD degree in accounting. He taught at NYU for a short time and then returned to Taiwan to join the faculty at National Taiwan University, where he was promoted to full professor at the young age of thirty-six. In 2001, he entered the political arena, running successfully for the position of Taoyuan magistrate. He was reelected in 2005. In 2009, President Ma appointed Chu deputy premier. In 2010, Chu resigned from that position to run for mayor of Xinbei.129

TSAI Ing-wen was born in Pingtung, but moved to Taipei when she was eleven. She graduated from the College of Law at National Taiwan University, after which she received an M.A. degree in Legal Science from Cornell University Law School and a PhD degree from the London School of Economics. She returned to Taiwan and taught at Soochow University and National Taiwan University. In 2000, she was appointed chairwoman of the Mainland Affairs Council. In 2004, she joined the DPP and was selected by the party to be a legislator-at-large member of the Legislative Yuan. In 2006, she was appointed vice premier. In 2008, she was elected the DPP’s chairwoman.130

During the campaign analysts looking at the two candidates for mayor of Xinbei noted that they were very similar in many ways. They noted the following: Both are “parachute candidates” (not natives of the city). Both have very good educational backgrounds. Both are moderates. Both promise clean campaigns. Both are young and have promising political careers.131

HAU Lung-bin, the incumbent mayor of Taipei, is the son of the former Premier HAU Pei-tsun.132 He graduated from National

129. Background information on this and other candidates can be found in The Republic of China Yearbook 2010 (Taipei: Government Information Office, 2010) and John F. Copper, Historical Dictionary of Taiwan (Republic of China) (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007). Also see “2010 ELECTIONS: PROFILE: Eric Chu tries to step beyond ideology,” Taipei Times, November 22, 2010 and Vincent Y. Chao, “KMT Sinbei candidate Chu focuses on education, seeks to build more schools,” Taipei Times, August 9, 1010 (online at taipeitimes.com).
130. “2010 ELECTIONS: PROFILE: Tsai seeking to change the face of campaigning in politics,” Taipei Times, November 23, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).
132. Hau Pei-tsun was premier from 1990 to 1993 during the Lee Teng-hui presidency. He had a distinguished military career and served as Minister of Defense from 1989 to 1990. During his tenure as premier he often disagreed with President Lee, sometimes in public. Some observers said this was because he was Mainland Chinese and President Lee was Taiwanese. The Democratic Progressive Party assailed Hau for
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Taiwan University in 1975 with a degree in agricultural chemistry. He then attended the University of Massachusetts in the U.S., receiving a PhD degree in food science and technology. He returned to Taiwan to teach at National Taiwan University and became a member of the Nationalist Party but left in the early 1990s to join the New Party. In 1995, he was elected to the Legislative Yuan. In 2001, President CHEN Shui-bian appointed him to head the Environmental Protection Agency where he served for two years. By taking that position Hau became controversial, especially because some supporters saw him as “helping the other side.” Hau was also secretary-general of the Taiwan Red Cross.

In 1995, he was elected to the Legislative Yuan. In 2001, President CHEN Shui-bian appointed him to head the Environmental Protection Agency where he served for two years. By taking that position Hau became controversial, especially because some supporters saw him as “helping the other side.” Hau was also secretary-general of the Taiwan Red Cross.

In 2006, Hau was elected mayor of Taipei, receiving 53.8 percent of the vote in a six-way race, though the only other serious candidate was Frank Hsieh of the DPP who won 40% of the vote. It was a big win for Hau. As mayor he was praised for his “can do” approach to political problems. In 2003, he implemented a ban on plastic bags that angered plastic manufacturers and vendors but earned him acclaim from environmentalists.

SU Tseng-chang, one of DPP’s most experienced politicians and certainly the most veteran candidate in this race or in any of the races under study here, was Hau’s opponent. Su graduated from National Taiwan University and practiced law before entering politics. He defended dissidents in court that were indicted following the Kaohsiung Incident in 1979. In 1986, he was one of the founders what they called his overzealous efforts to deal with crime and maintain social order. In 1995, he gave up his membership in the Nationalist Party to run for vice-president with Lin Yang-kang, both running as independents though with support from the New Party.

133. The New Party was formed in 1993 by members of the KMT’s Non-Mainstream faction who were dissatisfied with President Lee Teng-hui’s stance on Taiwan’s independence among other things. They advocated a strict adherence to Sun Yat-sen’s teachings. In 1996 the party did well at the polls, but in 2000 it did not. By 2005 most of its members had returned to the KMT.

134. See Republic of China Yearbook 2010 and Copper, Historical Dictionary of Taiwan.


136. Ibid.

137. In late 1979, the Formosa Group, a pro-Taiwan independence group, organized a protest demonstration in Kaohsiung on Human Rights Day—December 10. Violence broke out and one hundred and eighty-three police were reported injured (though only a few seriously); no demonstrators were hurt. Whether the violence was planned, happened when the crowd panicked, or was precipitated by gangs is uncertain. In any event, most people in Taiwan sympathized with the movement but changed their view as a result of the violence. Authorities arrested a number of the leaders of the protest
Su served as magistrate of Pingtung County (his home) from 1989 to 1993 and Taipei County magistrate from 1997 to 2004. In 2004, he was picked to be chairman of the DPP when President Chen stepped down to take responsibility for a Legislative Yuan election loss that year. In 2005, Su resigned to take the blame for the party’s losses in mayoral and city council elections. The next year, in 2006, he was appointed premier by President CHEN Shui-bian and served until 2007. In 2008, Su ran for vice president (with Frank Hsieh) representing the DPP.138

Su’s decision to run for Taipei mayor caused problems for the DPP. Early in the year Su spoke about running for office, declaring specifically he would compete for the job of mayor of Taipei City, “if the party needed him.”139 He then registered as a candidate. This made the nominating process more complicated for the DPP because of uncertainty concerning what TSAI Ing-wen’s plans were. His decision also led to questions about his relationship with Tsai.

Su had been popular when he was magistrate in Taipei County and many in the party felt his chances of winning in Xinbei were higher than in the Taipei City race. Hence some observers suggested that Su reckoned that winning the election would be a disadvantage since he would have to quit during his tenure if he decided to seek the party’s nomination for the presidential race in 2012.140 Also losing (assuming his performance was credible or good) to the incumbent KMT mayor would not hurt him politically. Su perceived, some said, that with the popular former Vice Premier Eric Chu in the race for Xinbei he might lose that contest to a non-incumbent, which would be more damaging to his efforts to run for president.141

and put them on trial the next year. Some observers said the event was a setback for democratization in Taiwan, but President Chiang Ching-kuo soon met with opposition leaders and worked out compromises that led to Taiwan’s first national competitive election in 1980. See Copper, Historical Dictionary of Taiwan (Republic of China), pp. 152-53.

140. Su anticipated that the KMT would ask him to pledge to complete his term as mayor if he was elected and they did that.
In any case, some pundits opined that Su's decision preempted DPP Chairwoman TSAI Ing-wen's plan to run. Tsai forthwith announced she was running for another term as party head. She said she had to deal with preparations for the year-end elections and that running for mayor of Xinbei was a non-issue. She said the job "is too big for me to manage and I am not interested." Of course, she changed her mind about this.

The Taipei City mayoral contest was thus between the incumbent Taipei mayor (Hau) representing the KMT, who some said was not a good campaigner, and one of, perhaps the best, DPP politicians and a popular figure in Taiwan politics, and a possible candidate for president in 2012 (Su). There were three other candidates, but they were not contending seriously.

Jason Hu (HU Chih-chiang), representing the KMT in the Taichung race, was born in Beijing a year before CHIANG Kai-shek fled to Taiwan. He grew up in Taichung and graduated from National Chengchi University with a degree in diplomatic studies. He went to England for further study and in 1984 received his PhD degree from Oxford University in International Relations. He returned to Taiwan and taught at National SUN Yat-sen University. In 1990 he entered politics and the next year was appointed director of the Government Information Office. He moved up to serve as Taiwan's representative to the U.S. in 1996, Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1997 to 1999, and subsequently Deputy Secretary General of the KMT, and Director General of the Cultural and Communication Affairs Committee of the KMT. In 2001, he was elected mayor of Taichung.

SU Jia-chyuan, representing the DPP, received his M.A. degree from the Institute of Public Affairs Management at National SUN Yat-sen University. He served as Minister of Interior from 2004 to 2006 and Minister of the Council of Agriculture from 2006 to 2008, both during the CHEN Shui-bian presidency. At the time

143. An opinion poll done on March 10, 2010 by the United Daily News showed Su leading Ma Ying-jeou in a presidential preference poll by 38 percent to 29 percent. (online at kmt.org.tw).
144. See Fong, "Taipei City mayoral election outlook."
of his nomination for mayor of Taichung metro he was General-Secretary of the DPP.\(^{146}\)

The KMT felt that Hu, being a very popular incumbent mayor, would win reelection easily. DPP leaders, however, thought that since Su had considerable experience and would be a good challenger he might win. They perceived that Hu was vulnerable because of concerns about his health and the fact many believed that he had served as mayor for eight years and that was long enough.\(^{147}\)

William Lai (LAI Ching-te), the DPP's candidate for mayor of Tainan Metropolitan, was born in Taipei County. He studied at both National Cheng Kung University in Tainan and National Taiwan University in Taipei. He subsequently went to Harvard University for an M.A. in Public Health. In 1994, he assisted CHEN Ding-nan in an unsuccessful bid for the position of governor of Taiwan. In 1996, Lai won a seat in the National Assembly and in 1998 he ran successfully for a seat in the Legislative Yuan. He was reelected three times, serving a total of eleven years in the legislature. He was selected Taiwan's "Best Legislator" four times by NGO Citizen Congress Watch.\(^{148}\)

KUO Tien-tsai, the KMT's candidate, was born into a poor family in Tainan County in 1962. He attended school locally and went to National Kaohsiung Normal University on scholarship where he received an M.A. degree in education. He served as director of the Changhua County Bureau of Education from 1996 to 2001 and was a legislator from 2001 to 2005. From 2005 to 2010, he was the vice president of Taiwan Shoufu University. During the campaign Kuo touted his local roots and love for the city.\(^{149}\)

CHEN Chu, the incumbent mayor and the DPP's candidate, was born in Yilan County in 1950. She went to school locally and received an M.A. from National SUN Yat-sen University in Kaohsiung. In 1979, she participated in demonstrations that led to the well-known Kaohsiung Incident. In fact, she was one of the "Kaohsiung Eight" that received stiff penalties from the court the next

\(^{146}\) "2010 Elections: PROFILE: Boy named Su heads to Taichung," *Taipei Times*, November 20, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).

\(^{147}\) "DPP settles on 4 of 5 candidates," *China Post*, May 12, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw).


\(^{149}\) "2010 ELECTIONS: PROFILE: KMT Greater Tainan candidate touts bonds," *Taipei Times*, November 15, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).
year.\textsuperscript{150} She spent six years in prison. After her release she served as director of the Taiwan Association of Human Rights and became chairwoman from 1992 to 1994. In 1994, CHEN Shui-bian was elected mayor of Taipei and appointed her to head the city's Department of Social Welfare. Later Frank Hsieh, when he was elected mayor of Kaohsiung, appointed her to head the city's Bureau of Social Affairs. When CHEN Shui-bian was president he appointed her Minister of the Council of Labor Affairs.\textsuperscript{151}

In 2006, CHEN Chu was elected mayor of Kaohsiung in a very close race. After the election her opponent filed a lawsuit contending that she had illegally used a video in the last days of the campaign that resulted in his loss. He won the suit. Chen appealed and got the decision reversed. In 2009, she travelled to China to promote the World Games to be held in Kaohsiung. She met the mayors of Beijing and Shanghai and some other high officials. Supporters of Taiwan's independence, including leaders of the TSU, criticized her for making the trip. She replied that she wanted to promote Kaohsiung. The World Games held in the city turned out to be a resounding success. In September 2010, Chen was criticized for napping when Typhoon Fanapi caused flooding in the city. A DPP borough chief even sued her and the city over damage.\textsuperscript{152}

The KMT's candidate, HUANG Chao-shun, age fifty-seven, was born in Changhua in central Taiwan in 1953. She received an EMBA from National SUN Yat-sen University and a B.S. degree in pharmacology from Kaohsiung Medical School. She served as director of the Women Workers' Committee and deputy director of the Policy Planning Committee of the KMT. She was also a Kaohsiung City councilor. She built a reputation for supporting women's issues and for her success in passing important legislation helping women.\textsuperscript{153}

YANG Chiu-hsing, a former member of the DPP who ran as an independent, received the second largest number of votes. He received his college education at National Taiwan University in civil

\textsuperscript{151} In March 1980, eight of the "instigators" of the Kaohsiung Incident were sentenced to terms ranging from twelve years to life for their roles. A number of the eight became top leaders in the DPP. Those sentenced attained a special status among the opposition to KMT rule and advocates of Taiwan's independence.

\textsuperscript{152} "2010 ELECTIONS: PROFILE: 'Mother Flower' Chen's roller-coaster ride of a life," \textit{Taipei Times}, November 19, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).

\textsuperscript{153} Flora Wang, "Huang: Kaohsiung's 'Iron Woman,'" \textit{Taipei Times}, November 18, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).
engineering. He worked for engineering firms, the Kaohsiung county government, and the Pingtung county government, was a member of the Taiwan Provincial Assembly, and was elected to the national legislature. He was also a member of the DPP’s Central Standing Committee and a Kaohsiung County magistrate.154

In August, after failing to get the DPP’s nomination, Yang stated he would run anyway. At the time it appeared this might divide the DPP vote to the KMT’s advantage. TSAI Ing-wen tried to persuade him not to run. On the other hand, Yang was endorsed by James Soong of the People First Party; this threatened to divide the pan-blue vote. The concern over Yang splitting the DPP vote seemed unwarranted as the opinion surveys at the time showed that CHEN Chu would still win by a good margin.155

In terms of a general party strategy the KMT put most of its energy and campaign funds into promoting the recent good news about the economy, political stability, honesty in government (contrasting the Ma administration with its corrupt predecessor), and the proper conduct of foreign relations. Almost on a daily basis KMT spokespersons provided economic data to the media and to their candidates. They interpreted the good economic data as evidence of the Ma administration’s ability to manage the economy and viewed it as proof Ma had gotten Taiwan out of recession. They spoke of continued future growth under the KMT’s stewardship. Often KMT spokespersons evoked the name of former president Chen and talked about his corruption, a plethora of evidence of which had come out in recent investigations and trials. President Ma, many in his administration and the candidates spoke regularly about the corruption in the Chen years and how that had hurt Taiwan and discredited the DPP. They spoke of judicial reform that was still needed and promised action on this. The KMT boasted good relations with the United States and with China and the fact that there was no longer a danger of war with China as there had been during the Chen presidency. KMT official frequently mentioned the arm sales agreement with the U.S. that was in progress, interpreting it as a sign of good relations with Washington and America’s support for Taiwan.156

156. Mo Yan-chih, “Ma stumps for candidates, ECFA,” *Taipei Times*, July 4, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).
President Ma and top officials in his administration campaigned for KMT candidates, even though the Administration’s poll numbers were not high. The reason for this was that the KMT sought to depict the elections as having national significance. Party leaders frequently mentioned ties between the metropolitan city governments and the national government, the role the cities would play and the advantages they would gain by helping implement Taiwan’s economic growth. The KMT also advanced the view that it and its candidates were better educated, more cosmopolitan, and sought to bring prosperity to Taiwan through trade and openness, in contrast to the DPP, which the KMT characterized as provincial and a party favoring a closed-door policy.  

In terms of specific topics, KMT spokespersons frequently cited the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), which they noted the U.S. and other countries applauded and its promise to bring jobs and prosperity Taiwan. They perceived that the DPP was on the defensive on this issue. They noted that the Association of Southeast Asian countries concluded a very important agreement with China in January linking them in a kind of common market arrangement with China.  

If Taiwan did not reach the ECFA deal with China it would experience serious difficulties in dealing with the Southeast Asian countries economically. This would hurt Taiwan badly. Some KMT officials put the matter this way: If, as the DPP argued, Taiwan was in danger of becoming dangerously dependent on China because of ECFA, what about all of the countries of Southeast Asia?  

Another specific topic that KMT officials often brought up during the campaign was absentee voting. While not possible for this election the KMT advertised that it supported a system whereby citizens not present in Taiwan at the time of the election could mail in a vote. The DPP strongly opposed this knowing that such a change favored the KMT due to the million or more citizens residing in China who would likely vote for KMT candidates. KMT advocates pointed out that those voters that are not physically present to vote are not disenfranchised in most democracies and it is


not proper or constitutional to prohibit them from voting in Taiwan.159

DPP strategists, in contrast to the KMT, endeavored to make the elections local in nature. The DPP’s campaign was decentralized or unique to each district. Party leaders cited regional differences in Taiwan and the importance of looking local. For example, DPP candidates in south Taiwan used the national identity issue or independence in their campaigns. They associated with the party more and even praised CHEN Shui-bian. They did this less in central Taiwan. In north Taiwan they avoided the independence issue and former president Chen and talked governance. They also spoke less of their party affiliation in the north.160

If there was a common theme in the DPP’s campaign it was good governance.161 They touted the DPP’s quality of the officials in local office asserting that their record of dealing with local issues was better than the KMT’s. They cited various reports and opinion surveys to prove this. Party leaders tried to connect good governance with the idea that the DPP was more determined to resolve local problems and improve the governments they controlled.162 DPP leaders and its candidates addressed the issues of unemployment, housing, drainage, traffic, roads and bridges, and infrastructure in the metropolitan cities.

Another election issue for the DPP was the matter of the widening gap between the rich and the poor. Although the disparity had widened during the Chen presidency, the DPP felt this was a good issue and would help solidify its base due to the fact differences in income were still growing as a result of the recession. In the meantime, DPP leaders countered the KMT’s claims of getting the economy back on track and promoting growth by arguing the growth in question had not narrowed the gulf between rich and poor and had accentuated the gap between large and small businesses and between north and south.

The DPP advocated higher taxes for the rich, specifically pointing to the need for a tax on dividend income. If the government

159. “Taiwan needs absentee voting system,” China Post, October 6, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw).
160. Tsai Ing-wen and Su Tseng-chang did not use the DPP color green in many of their campaign placards, etc. They often used pink.
161. For details on this issue, see Chu Yun-han, “Taiwan falling behind Hong Kong,” Taipei Times, January 26, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).
really wants to make good on its determination to bring about reform and diminish the wealth gap, it should apply taxes to income streams, DPP officials proclaimed. DPP spokespersons and candidates frequently cited official data to make this argument. Ministry of Finance taxation statistics showed that stock dividends account for 30 percent of the income for people with an annual income of between NT$3.72 million (US$120,155) and NT$5 million, 39 percent for those with an income of between NT$5 million and NT$10 million and 71 percent for those with incomes above NT$10 million.163

When confronted with the “Chen problem” DPP party spokespersons generally tried to avoid it. DPP Secretary-General WU Nai-jen called it a “lazy issue”—meaning one used to avoid addressing real election issues.164 All of the DPP’s candidates replied when asked about the Chen issue that Chen had rights under the Constitution and that the judiciary would handle the problem. On some occasions the DPP cited KMT vote buying in recent elections.

Both parties made personnel changes or brought in new people to help manage the campaigns. The notable changes for the KMT were the appointment of the party’s Secretary-General KING Pu-tsung in December 2009 to manage the campaigns overall. JAW Shaw-kong was later called upon to help direct the campaigns in Taipei, especially HAU Lung-bin’s efforts. Jaw was a former New Party leader and he was sought to help solidify the KMT’s base. Frank Hsieh was enlisted by the DPP to assist SU Jia-chyuan’s campaign in Taichung. Various opinions were expressed concerning how effective these people were in helping their party win.165

163. Lu Chun-wei, “Getting to the heart of Taiwan’s wealth gap,” Taipei Times, October 5, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).


165. Critics in the DPP pointed out that the KMT had lost every election since King was appointed. Jaw was said to be the KMT’s enemy that split the conservative vote in 1994 giving Chen Shui-bian the election victory for Taipei mayor. KMT spokespersons noted that Frank Hsieh had promised to get out of politics forever after he lost the presidential election in 2008—but didn’t. For the DPP’s criticism, see “KMT’s 5-City Campaign Strategy: Admit Incompetence on All Fronts,” Echo Taiwan, June 26, 2010 (online at echotaiwan.blogspot.com). Also see Claudia Jean, “Frank Hsieh’s campaign genius, starting with the 2010 Taichung mayoral election campaign,” in Claudia Jean’s Eyes, December 12, 2010 (online at claudiajean.worldpress.com).
V. THE CAMPAIGN

On October 29, according to tradition in Taiwan the candidates were assigned numbers to use during the campaign. Officially the campaign began on November 12 and lasted for fifteen days. Campaigning was restricted to the hours of 7 am to 10 pm daily. The number of candidates totaled 7,917: 14 for five mayoral positions, 649 for 314 city council seats, and 7,254 for 3,758 borough chief posts.

In reality the campaign started much earlier. Some observers opined that it began with a debate over what many thought would be the central issue during the campaign: the ECFA, an accord on trade, investment, and other commercial relations negotiated with China during the first part of the year and finalized in June.

Pundits opined it would succor KMT candidates in the November election. ECFA reduced tariffs on a host of products Taiwan exports to China, Taiwan’s biggest and fastest growing trading partner. The deal was certain to help Taiwan’s economy grow. In fact, it was predicted it would increase Taiwan’s GDP by 1.7 percent and create 260,000 jobs. ECFA hence generated public support. KMT spokespersons said it would help bring good economic growth to Taiwan that President Ma had promised during the 2008 campaign. The president said it would end Taiwan’s economic isolation, make Taiwan competitive in the global economy, and facilitate the signing of free trade agreements with other countries.

During the negotiations that resulted in the agreement, it was said that the DPP had been controlling the political debate and that ECFA might be a “game changer.” At the time ECFA was finalized, Ma supporters noted the opposition was anxious about its po-

168. Polls on this issue and more information from opinion surveys will be cited below.
169. For details on the political aspects of the agreement, see John F. Copper, The China-Taiwan Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement: Politics Not Just Economics, Background Brief (East Asian Institute), August 6, 2010.
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Clearly the deal improved the images of both the Ma Administration and the KMT as reflected in polls. Ma’s numbers also improved through winning by all accounts, a debate with DPP Chairperson TSAI Ing-wen on the ECFA issue.\(^{173}\)

Notwithstanding the substantial public support for ECFA, the DPP opposed it. In fact, DPP activists organized protests against the agreement charging it would create a one-China market and that it was a “Chinese plot” hatched by MA Ying-jeou.\(^{174}\) DPP chairperson TSAI Ing-wen said if the DPP were to regain the presidency in 2012 her party would suspend the agreement or make adjustments after a referendum.\(^{175}\)

In early October, observers said the campaign shifted to an even more “active phase” when KMT councilors in Kaohsiung publicly excoriated Mayor CHEN Chu for having gone home to take a nap during a typhoon that caused serious flooding and other damage in the city and in south Taiwan. They demanded she resign, noting Premier LIU Chao-shiuan and his secretary-general HSUEH Hsiang-chuan had stepped down following criticism of their neglect of duties during Typhoon Morakot.\(^{176}\)

Almost tit for tat, the DPP berated Taipei Mayor Hau for over-spending on the Taipei International Flora Expo that opened at this time. They assailed Hau for wasting money on lavish energy-saving technology and very costly plant exhibits. They also accused him of corruption involving the contracts to build the expo. Enough of the public believed the criticism to cause a drop of the mayor’s approval ratings in the polls from 46 to 41 percent.\(^{177}\)

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173. The poll was done by TVBS on April 26, 2010. The percent change was based on a similar poll conducted four days earlier. Before the debate 24 percent thought Ma would do better than Tsai; 28 percent thought she would do better. After the debate 46 percent said Ma did better—a gain of 22 percent. These data are available online at www.kmt.org.tw/english/page.aspx?type=article&mnum=114&anum=7962).


175. “Tsai Ing-wen: With ECFA, US will be marginalized; If regaining power, DPP may repeal ECFA unilaterally,” KMT News Network, April 30, 2010 (online at kmt.com.tw).

176. “Kaohsiung councilors step up calls for mayor’s resignation,” China Post, October 1, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw).

Prosecutors then filed charges against Taipei City’s Secretariat Director YANG Hsi-an saying he had contacted contractors before bidding on the Xinsheng Overpass project. Investigators raided his office and residence. Since Yang was responsible for much of the mayor’s official business there was speculation that Mayor Hau might be the next target of the investigation. Hau promised publicly to resign if he were found to have been involved in the project scandal.\textsuperscript{178}

Shortly after this Mayor Hau announced that his campaign was going on the offensive and he would enlist members of the legislature to help him. Soon the campaign got even more spirited. Hau said that his opponent SU Tseng-chang had “left a trail” after every office he had served in. One of Hau’s supporters said that Su should stop “hiding behind the skirt” of the DPP chairwoman. Another said the DPP’s position on the debates showed that “losers favor group fights.” Su responded that the KMT was resorting to “old tricks” and that Hau should “look in the mirror” and talk about his performance in office.\textsuperscript{179}

On October 3, Taipei Mayor HAU Lung-bin opened his campaign headquarters in Taipei at the same place he used four years earlier when he defeated Frank Hsieh for the position. Hau declared that the choice between him and his opponent SU Tseng-chang was between an open mind and closed-door policies. He made special reference to the ECFA, saying it would bring NT$70 billion to the city and create 18,500 jobs for residents of Taipei. President Ma arrived and praised Hau, saying he was hardworking, had opened twelve sports stadiums while mayor, had initiated the 1999 Citizens Hotline, and opened flights from Songshan Airport in Taipei to Shanghai in June and flights to Tokyo that will begin soon.\textsuperscript{180}

SU Tseng-chang responded with a development proposal that he said would provide for a sustainable environment and social justice. Su added that Hau had failed in his urban development efforts

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{178} Mo Yan-chih and Rich Chang, “Hau to quit if guilty in overpass scandal,” \textit{Taipei Times}, October 7, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).
  \item \textsuperscript{179} Ko Shu-ling, “Taipei mayor announces counterattack,” \textit{Taipei Times}, October 12, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).
  \item \textsuperscript{180} “Hau vows to accelerate development,” \textit{China Post}, October 4, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw).
\end{itemize}
as evidenced by the fact that none of his five earlier proposals had been completed.181

At this juncture the DPP announced it would launch a multi-million media blitz to improve the party’s image. DPP Secretary-General WU Nai-jen revealed that the party planned to spend half of its budget of NT$70 million (US$2.2 million) that had been allocated in July for this. He added that party finances were not good as the DPP had only recently paid off a NT$100 million debt left over from the 2008 election and that the party had to depend upon rolling funds or donations as they came in.182 It was uncertain what the true state of the DPP’s finances were at this time; the KMT likewise.183

In terms of a party campaign platform, the DPP focused on local issues, including its ability to govern. DPP spokespersons said the party would advertise their candidates’ abilities for getting things done, the record of their officials in office for good governance, and their better grasp of problems in the districts. The DPP concentrated more of its efforts on Taipei and Xinbei, the party leadership concluding that the other cities would not be in play. Even before the official campaigning began DPP Secretary-General Wu said that Tainan and Kaohsiung were “as good as won.” Taichung, where the polls consistently showed Jason Hu ahead by double digits was not very hopeful, though Wu noted that the gap was closing. He said that in Taipei and Xinbei DPP would win and thus could claim a general victory in the elections.184 The DPP appealed to the youth (using the internet to get out its campaign messages).185

The KMT’s hope was to mold the campaign debate to focus on national issues (which helped in its victory in local elections in 2005), employ Ma administration officials and KMT legislators to help candidates, and use large rallies to attract voters.186 The party

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183. The matter of the two parties’ finances and their spending on the election will be discussed below.
185. For details on the latter point, see Vincent Y. Chao, “DPP pinning hopes on young Internet users,” *Taipei Times*, November 25, 2010, p. 3.
employed trucks installed with sound equipment to spread their message. Voice recordings of President Ma were used extensively. KMT strategists used polling to adjust their campaign to fit voters' concerns. They purchased spot advertising on television while giving the campaign common issues that applied to all of the election races.¹⁸⁷

In early September Apple Daily interviewed DPP Chairwoman TSAI Ing-wen during which she refuted her earlier statements about ECFA. She said that the DPP would not put the ECFA to a referendum even if the DPP wins the 2012 election. She further declared that after the November 27th election the DPP would publish a ten-year party platform that would detail its China policy. Thus she effectively shelved two major issues DPP candidates might have used in the campaign. Her statements riled party hardliners.¹⁸⁸

Later in the month the DPP celebrated its twenty-fourth anniversary. Party Chairwoman TSAI Ing-wen declared that it was her duty to restore pride in Taiwan after two years of disappointment in government under the KMT. Tsai boasted of DPP victories in legislative by-elections and in other recent local elections. She noted that Global Views Survey Research Center reported Taiwan's top six mayors were all from the DPP and that public confidence in her leadership was higher than President Ma's (51.2 percent versus 45.6 percent) and trust in the DPP was higher than trust in the KMT (42.5 percent compared to 41.2 percent).¹⁸⁹

Tsai also stated that, notwithstanding the KMT's “harping” on the Chen family corruption, opinion polls forecasted the DPP winning three and perhaps four of the metropolitan city elections in November.¹⁹⁰ Tsai went on to say that the DPP should aim at “recovering” Taiwan, a challenging task in view of the consolidation of city governments. She spoke of a “Taiwan centered” vision and put forth the slogan “Green Administration is quality guaranteed.”¹⁹¹

The DPP and KMT discussed public debates between the candidates and the voters expected them. But hopes for debates were dashed in early October when the parties failed to agree on a for-

¹⁸⁹ See various Global Views Survey Research Center polls (online at gvm.com.tw).
¹⁹⁰ “DPP must show voters how to revive Taiwan,” Taiwan News, September 28, 2010 (online at taiwannews.com.tw).
¹⁹¹ Ibid.
mat. The KMT wanted the media present to ask questions, arguing that the public should be informed of issues this way. The DPP demanded that the candidates be able to quiz each other to make the debate more meaningful and bring out the real heart of the issues. A blame game ensued. KMT leaders questioned the DPP's sincerity about wanting debates. The DPP replied that the KMT had not adhered to previous agreements. DPP spokespersons said the KMT did not want to face voters; the KMT said that the DPP wanted to exclude the media.

At this point, former president LEE Teng-hui came out in support of TSAI Ing-wen. Lee called her a "new leader" saying she has promoted solidarity and reform in Taiwan. Almost in the same breath Lee criticized President Ma for policies that "have led democratic Taiwan down the wrong path." Lee said that his party (the TSU) would support Tsai for mayor of Xinbei and suggested that she even seek votes from KMT members.

Tsai’s opponent Eric Chu responded saying that he respected former president Lee and maintained a good relationship with him. He then shifted the topic to his proposed special fund to safeguard workers’ interests. Chu also said that he supported investigations into companies that cheated on government contracts (apparently in response to a recent Next magazine article accusing him of helping a food company set up a factory on protected riverbank areas).

In mid-October TSAI Ing-wen accused the Taoyuan county government of giving her opponent preferential treatment when it criticized the DPP saying it had "held back" the area’s development. Officials in the county government also said that the DPP had "badmouthed" the county and that former president CHEN Shui-bian had "laughed at" its prospects. It defended Eric Chu for not completing a Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) line during his tenure as Taoyuan County commissioner, saying it was because the DPP had rejected the idea. The DPP charged that what the Taoyuan gov-

195. Ibid.
ernment did was clearly illegal as it violated the Civil Service Administrative Neutrality Act.\textsuperscript{197}

In mid-November, televised debates were held between mayoral candidates in Kaohsiung. Incumbent Mayor CHEN Chu exuded confidence, asking voters to keep her in office and give her more than fifty-percent of the vote. She criticized independent YANG Chiu-hsing for opportunism and inconsistency. She ignored the KMT's candidate HUANG Chao-shun.\textsuperscript{198}

As Election Day approached SU Tseng-chang invoked the results of the just concluded mid-term election in the U.S., saying that the people should decide and there should be change in a city "dominated by the Chinese Nationalist Party." Scholars and other pundits weighed in on what impact the U.S. would have on the election. More favored the view that the U.S. election would influence Taiwan's voters to favor the DPP.\textsuperscript{199}

This point deserves further elaboration. Clearly, the United States has long comprised the major external factor in the campaign influencing how voters looked at the candidates and how they voted. In 2000, the U.S. expressed its approval of the Chen victory, but soon took a different view of President Chen, perceiving that Chen sought to provoke conflict with China for his own political gain. Washington, involved in conflicts in the Middle East at the time, did not like this. In subsequent elections the U.S. favored the KMT. It was quite evident during the 2008 presidential election campaign that the U.S. hoped MA Ying-jeou would win.\textsuperscript{200}

From the onset of the Obama Administration Taiwan watched for any change in U.S.-Taiwan policy. There grew concern in Taiwan that the new U.S. president lacked an Asian focus (though it was evident this also applied to China) and was not giving much attention to U.S.-Taiwan policy.\textsuperscript{201} In November 2009, President Obama travelled to China and while there concurred with top Chinese leaders that Taiwan is a Chinese "core interest"—seemingly surrendering to a Chinese demand. This generated consternation in

\textsuperscript{197} Vincent Y. Chao, "Taoyuan's support for Chu questioned," \textit{Taipei Times}, October 13, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).

\textsuperscript{198} Shih Hsiu-chuan, "2010 ELECTIONS: Greater Kaohsiung mayor debate held," \textit{Taipei Times}, November 24, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).

\textsuperscript{199} This view is based on speaking to a number of Taiwan scholars in Taiwan and the U.S.

\textsuperscript{200} Copper, \textit{Taiwan's 2008 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election}, p.12.

\textsuperscript{201} "Obama needs to review U.S. Taiwan policy," \textit{Taiwan News}, February 2, 2009 (online at taiwannews.com.tw).
Taiwan that America’s commitment to Taiwan had been downgraded. This was not good news for the Ma administration, which had boasted of its ability to maintain good relations with the U.S. (as the Chen administration had failed to do).

Yet the United States government seemed to weigh in during this election on the KMT’s side—still viewing the DPP as supporting Taiwan’s independence and provoking China. Former president Bill Clinton visited Taiwan less than two weeks before the election and lauded President Ma’s policies toward China that, he suggested, had fostered tranquility in the Taiwan Strait. Clinton even called Ma’s accomplishments a “model of peaceful coexistence” for the rest of the world and spoke of ECFA as a “positive thing.” Even closer to voting day the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission published its annual report and in it recommended that Congress direct the Pentagon to address the issue of Taiwan’s air defense capabilities and encourage the White House to improve relations between the U.S and Taiwan.

Meanwhile, pro-DPP organizations stated that a Republican election victory would be good for Taiwan. Specifically mentioned was Republican representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Florida Republican, who would likely assume the chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee. She was considered pro-Taiwan. Some DPP leaders said that with more Republicans in Congress there would be increased pressure on President Obama to sell advanced F-16 fighters to Taiwan and take a more pro-Taiwan stance on free trade and on Taipei joining some international organizations. Some DPP leaders even said that Americans voting strongly for Republicans


203. Flora Wang, “Clinton lauds Ma in flying visit,” Taipei Times, November 15, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).


207. Ibid.
would serve as a model for voters in Taiwan to express their dissatisfaction with the ruling party.\textsuperscript{208}

DPP candidates on the stump cited the election results in the U.S., which took place just days before Taiwan's. Most spoke of it as one in which the voters expressed dissatisfaction with the national leadership and sought change. This seemed to have resonance. Scholars debated the issue, but most seemed to think the U.S. election results favored DPP candidates.\textsuperscript{209}

China also influenced the elections. Unlike China's earlier attempts to influence Taiwan's voters with intimidation, this time Chinese leaders took a soft approach. During the campaign the main "China issue" was ECFA. China's spokespersons, apparently attuned to Taiwan's politics, mentioned the generosity in the accord and Beijing's desire for more friendly relations with Taiwan. This certainly helped President Ma and the KMT.

China's missiles aimed at Taiwan was another issue. In September China's Premier WEN Jiabao, when he was visiting the United States, broached the possibility of removing them.\textsuperscript{210} President Ma mentioned the issue in his National Day speech on October 10, noting that he had asked China to do this many times.\textsuperscript{211} The DPP seemed to be on the defensive and responded by recommending "negotiations with China with a timetable."\textsuperscript{212}

It was still uncertain, though, how warming relations with China were playing out in Taiwan politics. Public opinion polls taken two months before the election showed the number of supporters of independence increased by four points from 12 percent in 2000 to 16 percent in September. The number favoring the status quo, however, increased considerably more: from 32 percent to 51 percent.\textsuperscript{213} This seemed to suggest China's rise, its growing influ-

\textsuperscript{208} Several pro-DPP scholars told the author this.
\textsuperscript{209} I spoke to a number of scholars in Taiwan and in the U.S. about this and they generally agreed with the perception that the U.S. election would help DPP candidates.
\textsuperscript{210} This view is based on interviews I had with officials in Taipei in October. Also see "Taiwan welcomes Wen's remarks on missiles," \textit{China Post}, September 25, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw). For a different view see Vincent C. Chao, "KMT hails missiles hint, DPP scoffs," \textit{Taipei Times}, September 25, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).
\textsuperscript{211} Ko Su-ling, "Ma calls on China to remove missiles," \textit{Taipei Times}, October 11, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).
\textsuperscript{212} Vincent Y. Chao, "Timetable needed for missile talks," \textit{Taipei Times}, October 12, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).
\textsuperscript{213} Jens Kastner and Wang Jyh-Perng, " Taiwanese cool to China's overtures," \textit{Asia Times}, October 1, 2010 (online at atimes.com).
ence over Taiwan, and warmer relations were fine with the public in Taiwan, though there was also a perception that things were going too fast and there was still some apprehension of China.

In spite of more friendly relations there was some questioning of China's less than veiled efforts to help Ma and the KMT and the possibility that Beijing might put more pressure on both, and the government in general, especially if Taiwan did not show more friendliness toward China. There were those who felt Chinese leaders were under stress to show results in this realm. Finally, there was speculation at the time that China's civilian government was being increasingly influenced by the military, which is known to take an aggressive stance on the Taiwan issue.

In the final days of the campaign, the Taipei election contest became even more heated. SU Tseng-chang blasted Mayor Hau for "making everything partisan," declaring that citizens were "sick and tired of political infighting." Hau's supporters responded with acid comments and accusations. One KMT legislator called Su a "humbug" saying that he reneged on a promise in early 2006 to step down as premier if public security were not improved in six months—which it wasn't according to opinion polls. He also said that when Su was Taipei County Commissioner 40 percent of crimes were not resolved. Another lawmaker said that Su had spent more than NT$36 million on a project in Taipei and only a quarter of it was finished. The more aggressive stance from the Hau campaign seemed to help him overcome the image of not being aggressive enough and thus aided his election prospects.

Meanwhile both HAU Lung-bin and Eric Chu benefitted from KMT heavyweights joining their campaigns and the party organiz-

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214. Ibid.
215. Jeremy Page, "PLA gains political clout," Wall Street Journal, October 5, 2010, p. 4; Joseph Kurlantzick, "A Beijing Backlash," Newsweek, October 11, 2010, pp. 41-42. Page cited as evidence China's more aggressive posture in foreign policy and General Zhu Chenghu, who in 2005 told journalists that China would destroy hundreds of U.S. cities with nuclear weapons if Washington intervened in a conflict over Taiwan. He also cites a China scholar who observed that President Hu Jintao was too busy to control the Chinese Communist Party's Military Affairs Commission where he is the only civilian. Kurlantzick believes that the coming succession issue in the Party and Xi Jinping is expected to replace Hu Jintao (and neither have much influence with the military) is the main reason behind the military exerting more say.
218. Several Taiwan scholars observing the election told the author this was the case.
ing huge rallies in Taipei. President Ma, Vice President Siew and Premier Wu appeared at some of them. On one occasion the KMT turned out thousands to join a public march. Hau spoke in defense of his record, including the Taipei International Flora Expo (demanding an apology for criticizing the event).\footnote{219}

At this time KMT leaders found a new issue: to defend YANG Shu-chun, a Taiwan athlete participating in a taekwondo event at the Guangzhou Asian Games who was disqualified for not wearing proper footwear. This generated considerable emotion in Taiwan. SU Tseng-chang did not do anything to counter Hau's public support for Yang. TSAI Ing-wen said little. It appeared that both KMT candidates gained some points as a result.\footnote{220}

The last day of the campaign, on November 26, LIEN Sheng-wen (also known as Sean Lien), the eldest son of former Vice President LIEN Chan, was shot at close range while campaigning in Yonghe in Taipei County on behalf of CHEN Hung-yuan, who was running for a city council seat in Xinbei. The bullet hit Lien in his left cheek and exited through his right temple. He was taken to the hospital immediately where it was determined the wound somehow was not life threatening. The assailant, LIN Cheng-wei, also shot and killed a person in the audience. Lin, a member of a local gang, was arrested on the spot.\footnote{221}

Subsequently, Lien, Chen and the assailant gave contradictory statements about the event. The assailant said that he was aiming at Chen because he was involved in a dispute with his father. Chen, however, said that he did not know Lin and that neither he nor his father had any dispute with him. Lien said the assailant had called his name and cursed at him before shooting him.\footnote{222}

In any event, to some it seemed clear that the shooting would have an impact on the voting. Some opined it might even give the KMT a victory or victories it might not otherwise obtain. Many compared it to the shooting of President CHEN Shui-bian and Vice

\footnote{219}{"Taipei mayor rejects Flora Expo criticism,” \textit{China Post}, August 22, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw).}

\footnote{220}{Mo Yan-chih, “Decked-out KMT politicos stage rally in Taipei,” \textit{Taipei Times}, November 22, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com); Grace Kuo, “KMT, DPP step up final campaigning,” \textit{Taiwan Today}, November 22, 2010 (online at taiwantoday.tw).}

\footnote{221}{Janet Ong and Weiyi Lim, “Taiwan Holds Mayoral Elections After Shooting at Kuomintang Campaign Rally,” Bloomberg, November 26, 2010 (online at bloomberg.com).}

\footnote{222}{“Gunman called my name before he shot me: Sean Lien,” \textit{China Post}, November 28, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw).}
President Annette Lu on the eve of the 2004 presidential election. At the time of the voting the details of the shooting were still somewhat murky.

VI. THE ELECTIONS' RESULTS

After the vote tallies were done, observers began their analysis. What was very apparent was that they disagreed about how to interpret the results: whether it was a victory for the KMT, or the DPP, or if it was a draw. Hence the results and the arguments need to be looked at in detail.

Beginning with Xinbei, the largest of Taiwan's metropolitan cities, the KMT's Eric Chu won the mayorsship over TSAI Ing-wen of the DPP with 1,115,536 votes compared to Tsai's 1,004,900, or 52.61 percent to 47.39 percent. Chu attained victory in spite of low opinion ratings for his predecessor and a close primary race. Winning the first mayors race for a municipality of 3.9 million, which is a “snapshot” of Taiwan (for its urban districts, rural townships and nature reserves), was important for the KMT. In fact, it was widely reported that Chu's victory is expected to help the KMT in 2012. The win also made Chu a rising star in the party. Especially noteworthy is the fact Chu defeated the DPP's chairperson. After the election there were calls for Tsai to resign as chairwoman of the DPP because of her defeat.

Doubting whether it was a clear-cut KMT victory, some observers noted that Chu won by just over five percent of the votes, whereas the KMT won Taipei County in 2005 by a margin of 10.57 percent. Also, TSAI Ing-wen's loss was by only a small margin in a pan-blue area and the Lien shooting, it was opined, helped her

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225. Ibid.
226. Former vice president Annette Lu questioned her ability to lead the party in 2012. Other DPP members called for her to resign because of her defeat and the poor showing of the DPP overall. A group loyal to former president Chen spoke of fielding their own candidate in 2012. See “The DPP's next steps are crucial,” *Taipei Times*, December 6, 2010, p. 8. There were, of course, were others who voiced strong support for Tsai as will be noted below.
opponent win votes. She overcame some confusion at the time of entering the race and came from behind to almost win. Moreover, notwithstanding calls for Tsai’s resignation, according to most observers, she strengthened her position as DPP leader while making her a likely DPP candidate for president in 2012 owing to her “good performance.”

In the Taipei contest HAU Lung-bin received 797,865 votes compared to SU Tseng-chang’s 628,129, or 55.65 percent of the popular vote versus Su’s 43.81 percent. Hau won ten of the twelve districts in the metropolis. Su won only in DPP stronghold districts. Hau defeated what many said was the DPP’s most seasoned politician and its best campaigner. He said that he would turn Taipei into a "first class" city that is passionate, friendly, and prosperous.

Questioning the magnitude of Hau’s victory, critics noted that he received one percent less of the popular vote than he did four years earlier against Frank Hsieh and was not close to MA Ying-jeou’s twenty-eight-point victory in 2002 against CHEN Shui-bian. Also Hau had the advantage of being an incumbent in a district that was pan-blue. Finally, some argued that Hau received a lot more votes than he would have otherwise gotten because of the shooting of Sean Lien the day before the election.

In the Taichung race Jason Hu representing the KMT garnered 730,284 votes or 51.12 percent of the total against the DPP’s SU Jia-chuan. He said after the election that he thought that some of his supporters did not vote, thinking the election would not be close. This was likely true as Hu was way ahead in the polls throughout much of the campaign.

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228. “Shooting incident helps mobilize KMT supporters: pundits,” Focus Taiwan (news channel), November 27, 2010 (online at focustaiwan.tw); Mo Yan-chih, “Hau Lung-bin wins in Taipei,” Taipei Times, November 28, 2010, p. 2. Tsai said the shooting had a significant impact on the elections. See “Lien Chan’s son shot in the face,” Topics, December 2010 (online at amcham.com.tw)

229. David Young, “Mayoral elections show increase in support for DPP,” China Post, November 28, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw). Some said that the calls for her to resign were not meaningful since there was no such sentiment in the party generally and some were based only on the fact that often heads of the party resigned over an election defeat—and overall the DPP did not suffer a loss.


231. Ibid.

Putting a different spin on his victory, Hu won some sympathy votes because he and his wife were severely injured in an auto accident in late 2006—after which doctors removed Hu’s wife’s spleen and amputated her left forearm. Hu’s victory was also far short of his win in 2006 and much closer than expected. Su had been in the race for only six months yet won almost every township in the county. Su’s performance was seen as so good it gave him a bright political future.

In Tainan, William Lai of the DPP won 619,897 votes compared to his opponent KUO Tien-tsai’s 213,701, or by 29.82 points. Lai won by the largest margin of votes of any of the victorious metropolitan mayoral candidates. After the election results were in Lai pledged to make Greater Tainan a “cultural capital.” Some pundits said that it was Lai’s mission to win by a big leeway to increase the DPP’s total vote count and he accomplished that.

Looking at Tainan’s election results differently, Lai won in a very green (or pro-DPP) area. The KMT has not won an election there since 1993. Hence nothing changed. Also, the size of Lai’s victory can to some extent be explained by the failure of the KMT leadership to effectively organize local factions.

In Kaohsiung, CHEN Chu won 821,089 votes or 52.8 percent of the votes cast in a three-way race. Kaohsiung County Commissioner YANG Chiu-hsiung, running as an independent, took 26.68 percent. The KMT’s candidate got but 20.52 percent of the vote. In other words, Chen won more than both of the other contestants together. She also received more votes than the DPP won in the previous election. Finally, she prevailed notwithstanding the bad publicity she received over her handling of a typhoon that put nearly half of the city underwater. The only things that might be said to contradict the view that it was a big victory for Chen was the

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236. Ibid.
fact Kaohsiung, like Tainan, is a DPP stronghold and the split in the opposition vote clearly advantaged her.239

In the city council races the KMT was victorious in four cities (Taipei, Xinbei, Taichung and Kaohsiung); the DPP prevailed in one (Tainan). The two parties tied in total city council seats with each winning three hundred and fourteen. The KMT, however, won the most votes with 2,889,210 or 38.63 percent compared to the DPP’s 2,642,846 or 35.34 percent. Independents won forty-five seats, the New Party won three, the People First Party won four, and the Taiwan Solidarity Union took two.240 City council candidate CHEN Hung-yuan, for whom Sean Lien was campaigning when he was shot, won a seat on the Taipei city council. CHEN Chih-chung, former president CHEN Shui-bian’s son, running as an independent, won a city council seat in Kaohsiung obtaining the largest number of votes in the district notwithstanding the fact he had been convicted of helping his parents launder money abroad and had recently lost a libel suit against a local publication that had reported he had hired prostitutes.241

Given that the KMT won the mayoral elections in north Taiwan, the most cosmopolitan, best educated, and forward looking part of the island and the site of the capital city as well as central Taiwan, and won control of four city councils and more popular votes in the council races, it appears a general or overall KMT win.242 The KMT’s “victory” seemed even more poignant in view of the fact that these elections were collectively seen as a mid-term election for the KMT, elections that the ruling party usually loses and should have lost given the fact that ruling parties throughout the world were losing ground.243 Judging from the above, one could say the KMT unquestionably won the election.

Also the KMT’s hope was to win three mayoral races.244 It accomplished that. DPP leaders spoke of winning three or even four;

239. Ibid.
241. Ibid. Chen Hung-yuan won the third largest number of votes in his district. Chen Chih-chung, running as an independent, won the largest number of votes.
243. It is usual for the ruling party in most democracies to lose seats in mid-term or elections following the election of the chief executive. It was more pronounced in 2009 and 2010 due to the global recession.
they did not do that. Thus one might again conclude that the KMT won the election since winning the mayoral seats was the main objective. In the process the KMT broke a losing streak in local. A large number of election analysts said the KMT won, as did many media outlets. Former president CHEN Shui-bian said the KMT won. The majority of the foreign media viewed the election as a KMT victory.

But there was evidence to suggest otherwise. The overall vote count in the mayoral contests favored the DPP by more than five points. The KMT won 3.369 million votes or 44.54 percent of the total votes. The DPP won 3.772 million or 49.87 percent. Independents won 0.42 million or 5.59 percent. This discrepancy in the DPP losing three mayoral races but obtaining more of the popular vote is explained by the large margins of victories the DPP won versus the close races the KMT won. A “DPP victory” when defined by percentage of the popular vote is also striking if comparing the 41.55 percent it won as opposed to 58.45 percent the KMT won in the 2008 presidential election. Finally, the DPP tied the KMT in city council seat wins. This was unprecedented; the KMT had always won more city council seats. The total vote count and the number of city council seats won together suggest a DPP overall victory.

There are still other arguments. DPP strategists talked about winning three or four mayoral races, but they also talked about the popular vote. Heard often after the elections were comments about the gains the DPP made in the popular vote. Comparing the popular vote tally with the most recent major election, the presidential

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247. See, for example, “Taiwan’s ruling party wins 3 of 5 mayoral races in boost ahead of presidential poll,” Associated Press, November 27, 2010, “Narrow win for ruling party in Taiwan local elections (Roundup),” Deutsche Presse-Agentur, November 27, 2010, and “Taiwan: Ruling Kuomintang boosted in mayor elections,” BBC News, November 27, 2010. Many newspapers around the world based their stories on these reports. Also see “Editorial: Taiwan mayor elections,” asahi.com, November 30, 2010 (online at asahi.com). Most foreign papers that commented on the election took the “KMT victory” as good for peace in the region. For a different view, see Julian Baum, “Gains of Taiwan’s anti-unification DPP could rattle relations with China,” Christian Science Monitor, December 10, 2010 (online at csmonitor.com).
248. “KMT holds northern, central cities, but loses overall vote count,” Focus Taiwan, November 27, 2010 (online at focustaiwan.tw).
249. Ibid.
election in 2008 or the last metropolitan city elections, the DPP made major gains. The DPP gained voter share in all three metropolitan cities that the KMT won. As a matter of fact, a number of commentators said the DPP won the elections based on the total vote tally.250

The above analysis indicates that the KMT and the DPP could both reasonably claim victory. Thus it is instructive to look beyond the usual arguments and examine the handicaps each suffered during the campaign, their election strategies, and some other variables. This will provide a broader, and perhaps better, picture of the elections’ results.

In terms of handicaps going into the campaign, the KMT suffered from widespread blame for the very hurtful recession, the public’s perception of its bad governance, a weakening or even the loss of the corruption issue to use against the DPP (because of corruption issues that caused the party to lose local elections leading up to this campaign and scandals in cities it controlled during the campaign period, especially in Taipei), and reportedly less campaign money than the DPP.251 Yet it “won” the elections. This would indicate the KMT had overcome difficulties or there was a major turnaround for the party. Some details bring these arguments into focus.

The economy was a major election issue and the turnaround in late 2009 should have given the KMT campaign a big advantage. As noted earlier in most elections voters vote their pocketbook. In other words, how voters view the economy is a big factor in their picking candidates. In this election the KMT thus began the campaign period (assuming it started much earlier than the official campaigning) with the wind at its back on this issue. It should have been a game changer.

But what should have advantaged the KMT in a major way was offset by the fact that many voters were not convinced that the Ma administration had made up for its poor performance in late 2008 and 2009 and still felt it had not lived up to its campaign promises. In addition, the DPP did a yeoman’s job in countering the KMT’s message that it had fixed the economy. One of the DPP campaign messages was the question: “Are you better off than you were two

251. “DPP receives NT$179.6 million donations last year: Control Yuan,” *Taiwan News*, August 31, 2010 (online at etaiwanews.com.tw). This report contradicts what DPP spokespersons said during the campaign and what several DPP members told this writer.
years ago?” Since the current rapid economic upturn was not being felt by many citizens the answer to that question for most was no. The data support the DPP’s position. The latest figures on income disparity in Taiwan shows a 6.34 times difference between the top twenty percent of wage earners (by household); the gap was 5.98 in 2007. Unemployment was above five percent for 22 months and probably (so said DPP candidates and voters believed them) fell below that only because of the government providing short-term jobs. In any case, the jobless rate was 3.8 percent when former president Chen left office. (DPP candidates cited this figure during the campaign.) Wages had not increased very much especially in the public sector, while commodity and housing prices has risen noticeably.

The DPP’s spokespersons also very effectively made the following pitches: in the south they said the economy had turned around only in the north, to poor people they pointed out that the gap between rich and poor continued to widen, and they showed evidence to small businesses that only large businesses had benefited from the economic turnaround. Thus the DPP’s counter to the KMT’s boasting of economic gains was very convincing.

It is even questionable how effective ECFA was for the KMT in winning votes. It helped the KMT and President Ma’s image. But did it influence voters much? Polls done shortly before the election showed that most citizens still favored the status quo (as opposed to unification or independence)—by 86.2 percent. Also, 47.5 percent considered China “unfriendly” as opposed to 34 percent that saw China as friendly. Experts opined that the government handled the negotiations well and explained its advantages, but did not ad-

253. Ibid.
254. The gap between the top twenty percent of citizens compared to the lowest twenty percent in 2010 was 6.34 percent (the highest since 2001) according to the Director General of the Budget. The government said this matched a global trend. *Apple Daily*, however, attributed it mainly to increasing trade and other commercial relations with China. See “Record Taiwan income gap blamed on China ties,” *Channel NewsAsia*, August 20, 2010 (online at channelnewsasia.com).
255. See Takio Morakami, “China tries to buy Taiwan hearts on reunification,” *Asahi*, January 8, 2011 (online at asahi.com).
dress very well questions citizens had about the agreement.\textsuperscript{256} Thus ECFA may have helped the KMT little if at all in winning votes.\textsuperscript{257}

It is also questionable whether the issue of Taiwan’s taekwondo contestant being disqualified during the Asian Games in Guangzhou helped the KMT. KMT strategists organized a rally in Taipei that brought out a large audience. But DPP spokespersons countered with criticism of President Ma for not acting quickly enough (reminding listeners of Typhoon Morakot) and attacked China for likely influencing the decision; since a Chinese player won this had resonance.\textsuperscript{258} The issue may have helped the KMT in northern Taiwan, but probably had the opposite effect elsewhere.

The big puzzle about the election was whether the shooting of Sean Lien impacted the election results in favor of the KMT and if it might have changed who won in one or more of the races, perhaps even three. It obviously had an impact on the voters. Most citizens in Taiwan abhor violence. Many saw this as the worst kind of violent crime.\textsuperscript{259} Judging from the voter turnout of 71 percent compared to 65 percent in the previous elections, the shooting of Sean Lien brought KMT voters out that might have stayed home.

But it is unlikely that the incident determined a metropolitan mayoral race.\textsuperscript{260} Those who won would have won anyway. The latest polls favored all three victorious KMT candidates. Hau Lung-bin had the momentum going into voting day and won by a large margin. The shooting could not have accounted for his twelve-point margin of victory. In Xinbei the result was closer but not close enough to say that the shooting changed the results.\textsuperscript{261} The tally in

\textsuperscript{256} Mo Yan-chih, “ANALYSIS: KMT might not win votes by pushing ECFA: analysts,” \textit{Taipei Times}, August 16, 2010 (online at taitaimes.com). Several observers told this writer that the evidence ECFA would help Taiwan economically yet they were apprehensive of getting closer to China.

\textsuperscript{257} This was the opinion of several think tanks in Taiwan. See Hsiao, “The Changing Political Landscape in Taiwan.”


\textsuperscript{259} The fact that this violent action was seen to have impacted voters was demonstrated by the fact that Tsai Ing-wen immediately condemned the act while Hau Lung-bin called it the worst case of violence in Taiwan’s history. See “Sean Lien shot in the head at rally,” \textit{China Post}, November 27, 2010, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{260} Several observers estimated that the incident added three percent to the KMT’s vote in northern Taiwan. See “Shooting incident helps mobilize KMT supporters: pundits,” \textit{Focus Taiwan}, November 27, 2010 (online at focustaiwan.tw).

\textsuperscript{261} Several experts weighed in on this question. Most said the effect was two to three percent in north Taiwan. The highest was four to five. See Michael Hsiao, “The Changing Political Landscape in Taiwan: Implications of the Special Municipality Elec-
Taichung was even closer, but it being distant from Taipei, voters were not likely affected so much. Former president CHEN Shui-bian opined that the shooting did not affect the election results. There may even have been a backlash from the shooting that favored the DPP since many thought it was staged.

More needs to be said about the shooting since many citizens saw it as a repeat of what happened in 2004. Was it? The similarities were that both were violent acts that happened the day before an important election; otherwise they were quite different events. In 2004, President CHEN Shui-bian and Vice President Annette Lu, according to the polls were going to lose the election. The gamblers' odds said the same thing, including the odds of gamblers in London (where it is legal to bet on elections). The rise or fall of the stocks of companies that were close to the KMT and the DPP also indicated the DPP candidates would lose. President Chen ordered the police and military to remain at their posts; thus they could not vote. They would have voted largely for LIEN Chan and James Soong. Chen won by 30,000 votes out of thirteen million or 0.22 percent.

The Chen and Lu shootings were followed by widespread doubt about what happened. The police did not find the shell casings; a child did. The two casings were not the same. The president and vice-president’s wounds suggested the shells did not have much powder in them and were not intended to do serious damage much less kill. President Chen did not go to the nearest hospital; he went to a hospital owned by a friend. No bullet hole was found in his clothes; nor was there any blood. The assailant was not apprehended. Many months later the police reported they had cracked the case, but the person who committed the acts was dead. His wife reported that he told her he had shot the president and vice president; but she later recanted this saying the police had coerced her to say that.

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263. After the election, *China Times* cited a DPP poll reflecting seventy percent of people thought the shooting was staged. See *China Times* (chungkuo shihpao), January 2, 2011.
265. “Probe queries shooting of ex-Taiwan president, Channel News Asia, November 12, 2009 (online at channelnewsasia.com).
In the case of the Sean Lien shooting the shooter used powerful shells, with enough powder to cause the bullet to go through Lien’s head and in the case of another person kill him. The assailant was captured on the spot and was questioned by the police. There were videotapes of what happened. President MA Ying-jeou responded saying the event was very unfortunate and would be investigated at the highest level. He did not say or do anything that might have influenced the results of the election.266

The shooting of Sean Lien certainly didn’t cancel previous issues. The DPP suffered from serious handicaps during the campaign. The most salient one was that the party had to cope before and throughout the campaign with the Chen legacy. CHEN Shuibian was Taiwan’s first and only president indicted for high crimes and sent to prison. He thoroughly embarrassed and discredited the party. This had a deep and enduring impact, with news about him appearing almost daily in the media. Making the “Chen factor” worse, he had a number of followers in spite of everything. TSAI Ing-wen had to deal with this. Moreover, she was new to leadership of the DPP and the first woman to head the party, a party known for its male chauvinism.267

Yet she was almost able to turn adversity into an advantage. She launched the party on a new course, reinvigorated the party, and improved its morale. This was a sine qua non for doing well in the elections. She astutely designed a strategy that avoided the China issue and Taiwan independence. Candidates in northern and central Taiwan, where this mattered, followed her lead. She focused on problems close to voters. This was a prescient strategy; since the DPP origins are in local politics it is more talented relative to the KMT in dealing with local matters and better able to fight local political battles. Under Tsai the DPP tailored its election tactics to fit the district, which was vastly different from north to south. The DPP carried out well-run distinct campaigns in the five districts.268

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266. “Taiwan Holds Mayoral Elections After Shooting at Kuomintang Campaign Rally,” Bloomberg, November 26, 2020 (online at bloomberg.com).

267. This is widely believed in Taiwan. Evidence for this is the fact the KMT generally wins the female vote and the difficulties Annette Lu had as vice president. The explanation is the fact Fukien Taiwanese that make up the DPP’s leadership and its voting base adopted much more of Japanese culture than the other ethnic groups, especially Mainland Chinese.

268. “‘Happy life’ is new campaign slogan for municipality election,” China Post, May 21, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw).
Taiwan's 2010 Metropolitan City Elections

The DPP's election strategy to some extent also focused more on winning votes rather than winning mayors races. Had it not been, the party would have diverted more of its resources into the Xinbei, Taipei and Taichung races and not tried to win in Tainan and Kaohsiung by large margins. Some observers speculated that DPP planners may have even perceived that winning any of the races it lost would be a disadvantage since the party's candidate would have to govern going into the 2012 elections and it was better to remain in opposition. The DPP is certainly more capable than the KMT in opposition (protest, demonstrations, etc.). Giving more attention to total votes (which suggests the DPP’s growing popularity) may also reflect momentum and voting trends both favoring the DPP. In view of this, it may be said the DPP won the election.

Looking beyond the question of picking a winner, which admittedly is difficult, the elections are a cause of optimism regarding Taiwan's democracy. The voter turnout overall was 71.7 percent. In Xinbei it was 73.1 percent, in Taipei it was 71.2 percent, in Taichung 73.1 percent, Tainan 71 percent and in Kaohsiung 72.5 percent, according to the Central Election Commission. There were few election law violations or incidents during the voting. It was a two-party contest, which many scholars have argued would be better for Taiwan. These matters speak well of Taiwan's continuing progress in democratization.

Finally, the opinion surveys conducted before and during the campaign (remember they cannot by law be published during the last ten days of the campaign) were generally accurate. There were, however, some discrepancies. For example, in the Xinbei race, a DPP poll was published showing TSAI Ing-wen just 0.9 percent below Eric Chu in the race. A United Daily News poll indicated a 17-point difference. China Times polls and TVBS and some other polls indicted a spread of from one to seven points.

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269. The author heard this opinion from several Taiwan scholars and election observers. Obviously winning in their districts would have presented a problem for Tsai Ing-wen and Su Tseng-chang in that they would have had to break an election promise and resign in order to run for president.


273. “Tsai, Chu about tie in Xinbei race survey: DPP,” China: Post, October 1, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw). Interestingly Tsai was favored by men and Chu by wo-
The elections assessed here were widely viewed as a bellwether of what is to come in Taiwan politically, especially in 2012. Leaders of both political parties stated this often. The question that must be asked is: What prognostications do these elections’ results justify about the coming legislative and presidential elections? To answer that question it is necessary also to consider how the coming elections will be different.

Since these elections were essentially two-party contests and the next ones will be too, and because the coming elections will be combined legislative and presidential elections, it is likely that all of the candidates will be affected in a like manner by these elections.

One can argue that the KMT’s victories in 2010 will succor KMT candidates in the legislative election campaigns in 2012 as well as President Ma when he runs for reelection. (Most observers assume that he will run again.) Beating the DPP in three mayoral races gave the KMT a boost in a number of ways. The post-election polls indicated the KMT and President Ma are favored by voters (which was not the case before the elections). These elections made the difference.

Conversely had the KMT won only one or two mayoral races it would have been a serious blow for Ma and for the KMT. A victory for Tsai and/or Su would have vastly improved their chances in running against Ma and would have helped their party’s prospects in the coming national elections. Breaking a string of election defeats (or cancelling the watermelon theory) was also important for both President Ma and the KMT.

The wins also give the ruling party another opportunity to demonstrate the ability of KMT mayors in north and central Taiwan to govern. These metro cities will work closely with the Ma administration, in particular in managing economic matters, and the mayors should be able to help improve the party’s image. Had men, while Tsai was supported more by younger and older voters and Chu by ages in between.

274. See “Opinion Poll on 2012 Presidential Election,” TVBS, January 25, 2010 (online at kmt.org.tw). The question was asked: If you were to vote tomorrow, which of the candidates would you vote for. Ma beat Tsai Ing-wen by more than ten points. He defeated Su Tseng-chang by a lesser margin.

the DPP won in Xinbei or Taipei, President Ma’s strategy of improving relations with China would have been challenged.²⁷⁶

The Ma administration can fix some of the problems that have plagued it in recent months. It can turn around its poor image for governance, repair relations with local factions, and improve its public opinion poll ratings.²⁷⁷ Had the DPP candidates won in Xinbei, Taipei or Taichung, the DPP’s case that it is superior to the KMT in governance would have been confirmed.

President Ma likely will be able to maintain good relations with China and the United States. He thus will be able to boast of keeping the peace in the Taiwan Strait. Relations with the United States, Taiwan’s protector, deteriorated badly during the Chen years and improved markedly since MA Ying-jeou became president. The same can be said of relations with China. The KMT will certainly advertise this in the 2012 campaign. In 2012 the DPP will not be able to shun discussions of foreign policy issues as it did in this election.

It seems probable that in 2012 Ma and the KMT will be in a better position to convince voters of their ability to promote economic growth (with a longer period of growth behind them to support this claim) and, in addition, refute the points the DPP made in riposte to the Ma administration boasting of economic good times. The ruling party can take measures to help small businesses, assist the poor (as it did in the past) and close the north-south gap. The forecasts for Taiwan’s economy are for respectable growth in 2011 and 2012.²⁷⁸ Business leaders in Taiwan, as of the end of 2010, were showing an increasing optimism about the economy.²⁷⁹ Ma may also be able to negotiate some free trade agreements.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁷. There is evidence this has already happened. Ma’s approval ratings went up by 5.7 percentage points in January while his disapproval ratings fell by 7.1 percent according to the GVSRC.
²⁷⁸. Citibank predicts Taiwan’s growth rate in 2011 will be 4.2 percent and 5 percent respectively. This compares to 3.4 and 3.8 percent for the global economy. See “Citi projects 10 percent Taiwan GDP growth for 2010.” China Post, December 9, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw).
²⁷⁹. According to an American Chamber of Commerce in Taiwan poll, 81 percent of those surveyed expressed optimism about the future. See “What the Survey Tells Us,” Topics, December 2010 (online at amcham.com.tw).
²⁸⁰. So-Heng Chang, “The Political Implications of Taiwan’s Big Five Mayoral Elections,” Foreign Policy Research Institute (E-Note), December 30, 2010 (online at fpri.org).
The KMT may push through legislation for absentee voting. The KMT has promoted an absentee voting process. Absentee voting is done in most democracies and arguably was missed in Taiwan's road to democratization. Making the case will portray the KMT as the party of democracy. Even if the KMT fails to get absentee voting more voters will likely return home to vote in a national election than returned to vote in this election.

But will the KMT and President Ma be able to do all of these things? That is unlikely. Politics in Taiwan are too difficult for that. Also there are many unknowns. Another global economic downturn is not to be discounted. Taiwan's relationship with China is difficult to manage and predict. U.S.-China relations are not as smooth as they have been.

President Ma must also deal with the thorny issue of corruption. It seems to some extent it is beyond his control. If he pays attention to it the KMT will nominate less experienced candidates. The DPP must also be careful not to allow it to be portrayed as a corrupt party as happened during and after the Chen presidency. President Ma will have to deal with both the U.S. and China. If friction between them increases this will be difficult. The KMT will have to increase its ability to connect with voters. It will need to improve its relations with local factions.

In 2012, President Ma may not be running against a DPP candidate perceived as close to former president Chen and thus not tainted, namely TSAI Ing-wen. She is not seen as a CHEN Shuibian crony. She is of a new generation and is considered intelligent and moderate. She engineered shrewd campaigns in a string of election victories after 2008. The KMT and Ma will also have to vie against a party that will likely have to a large extent put the Chen legacy behind it.

282. Most of Taiwan’s citizens abroad who return to vote will be coming from China. There are a million, some say two million, residing in China. They are predominantly pro-KMT.
283. “KMT needs to be closer to the people: Huang,” China Post, November 29, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw).
284. Most observers see Tsai as the DPP’s presidential candidate in 2012 because the DPP won a number of elections after 2008 under her leadership. Also Su Tseng-chang lost by an unexpected twelve percentage points in the Taipei election. See, for example, Peter Enav, “Taiwan’s ruling party wins 3 of 5 mayoral races,” Associated Press, November 27, 2010 (online at taiwannews.com.tw).
The DPP winning the popular vote in these elections says a lot about the DPP's chances in the next legislative and presidential elections. Many observers viewed this as a better predictor of the vote in 2012 than the KMT winning three mayoral races because it reflects voting trends.\textsuperscript{285} One certainly has to look at the DPP's odds for winning with some optimism. This was the view of DPP leaders and pundits alike after the election.\textsuperscript{286} Comments on the election results by KMT officials and KMT supporters indicated they have grave concerns about 2012.\textsuperscript{287}

But the DPP will not be advantaged in tailoring its campaign to local conditions in 2012. It will have to design a new campaign strategy. The DPP used the issue of governance as an effective talking point in these election campaigns. If it uses governance as a part of its election strategy in the coming national elections, notably the presidential election, the KMT's candidates will no doubt again compare the KMT's past and present performance with the DPP under President Chen.

DPP leaders will find it more difficult to promote independence in 2012 since they abandoned it in this election. Also the DPP cannot rationally promote independence without support from the U.S. given Washington's protector role and the U.S. is almost certain to maintain its anti-independence policy. Nor can the DPP avoid the China issue as it did in this election. It plans to devise a new China policy; but it will be difficult to make one acceptable to most of its members.\textsuperscript{288} In fact, this threatens to split the DPP. If it abandons the cause of \textit{de jure} independence in favor of \textit{de facto} independence, which is the policy of the KMT, and the U.S. (and perhaps China at least for a while), it will lose part of its iden-

\textsuperscript{285} Ko Shu-ling, “DPP more likely to win in 2012: center,” \textit{Taipei Times}, November 29, 2010 (online at taipeitimes.com).
\textsuperscript{286} See, for example, “Sliding KMT vote count leaves its future uncertain: pundits,” \textit{Focus Taiwan}, November 28, 2010 (online at focustaiwan.tw).
\textsuperscript{287} The National Chengchi University's Prediction Market Center made this prediction. It should be noted, however, that the Center predicted Tsai Ing-wen and Su Tseng-chang would win and that Jason Hu would obtain 67 percent of the vote. See “Prediction market for the five cities election” (online at glob.taiwan-guide.org/2010/10/prediction-five-cities-election/comment-page-1/).
\textsuperscript{288} The problem involves dealing with thirty-five to forty percent of the party that favors independence. Tsai essentially delayed dealing with the issue during the election campaign and promised to create a think tank to deal with China policy. See “DPP's electoral success hard to recreate: former envoy,” \textit{Taipei Times}, January 4, 2011 (online at taipeitimes.com).
Hardliners in the party will not accept this and may even refuse to support the DPP leadership or form a new party.

This problem must be seen in context. The DPP has a history of factionalism and there was evidence of disunity during this campaign. Chen loyalists reportedly won a quarter of the DPP's city council seats in these elections. Disagreements with Tsai's policies were quite evident. After the election former president Chen said that his approach of going on the offensive was correct and the party's central command approach explains why the DPP won only two mayoral races. If Chen's son CHEN Chih-chung, who won a city council seat in Kaohsiung as an independent by a wide margin, advances the cause of the "one side, one country" supporters and wins adherents it may well split the DPP.

There are other reasons for concern about a pending DPP party split judging from the campaigns for these elections. The party pursued two different strategies in the north and in the south of Taiwan. The northern strategy was moderate on the independence issue and conciliatory on relations with China. In the south the candidates spoke differently.

Another problem is that the DPP does not have a shoo-in candidate for president. TSAI Ing-wen appeared to be the favorite after the elections. But SU Tseng-chang is still a strong contender. In fact, some opinion surveys done shortly after these elections showed Su was favored over Tsai and Su was seen as more likely to be able to defeat Ma than Tsai.293

289. The issue of the 1992 consensus (wherein both Beijing and Taipei agreed on one China but their own interpretations of the mean of China) is also a difficult one. The DPP might choose to update its 1999 Resolution on Taiwan's Future, which takes a strong independence stand. But that will be difficult for many members to accept. Frank Hsieh has spoken of a "constitutional one China" to resolve the issue; but this has not gained much support. See David G. Brown, "Thinking about al Future DPP Government," PacNet (Pacific Forum CSIS), March 23, 2010. Since the election, Hsieh has advocated the concept of an "overlapping constitutional consensus" for the DPP's China policy and to unify independence and status quo advocates. See Frank Hsieh, "Seeking an overlapping consensus," Taipei Times, January 19, 2011 (online at taipei times.com).

290. For background on factionalism in the DPP, see Shelley Rigger, From Opposition to Power: Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party (Boulder, CO: Lynn Rienner, 2001), pp. 25-35 and chapter 5.


Election results in other countries, including the U.S., probably helped the DPP in these elections. A number of pundits said this. SU Tseng-chang said this about the U.S. election. There was a climate of uncertainty throughout the world and in Taiwan. There were a number of mid-term elections that constituted referendums on the party in power and due to the global recession in most cases the ruling party lost ground. The mid-term election in the U.S. (just over three weeks before Taiwan's elections) was a big victory for the party out of power and this likely worked in favor of the DPP. The mantra of vote for change used by the Republicans in the campaign fit Taiwan. In other words, there was a “curse of incumbency” around the world and it affected Taiwan. Likely this will not be the case in 2012.

It is, of course, possible for the DPP to deal with all of these issues. The party may be able to avoid a split over candidates and issues. However, the DPP’s problems seem more serious than the KMT’s.

There are also some caveats to either scenario of the KMT or the DPP being able to do better in elections in 2012. One is the fact that many more voters in Taiwan identify as independents as compared to the past. It has been nearly a third according to various opinion polls.

This can be explained by the fact that many citizens have been displeased with both parties: the KMT over the economic decline and poor governance and the DPP because of the record of Chen presidency. It may also reflect the evolution of Taiwan’s democracy. Likely both parties will make a bid for independent voters in the coming elections, which will complicate their election strategies and perhaps even divide the parties from their bases.

There are some other observations that are worth mentioning. The DPP’s candidates in this election were well educated and many had foreign experience. Does this mark a permanent change? It comported well with Tsai’s strategy of avoiding the local identity/Taiwan independence issues. Is it a trend? Will it divide the party? The older DPP leaders and supporters have long mocked the KMT’s highly educated leaders.

Another issue is Taiwan’s demographics. During the campaign, Chairwoman Tsai was aware of Taiwan’s very low birthrate and the fact Taiwan will have to import workers and other immigrants that

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will not possess a local identity or support independence as does the DPP's base. Was this behind her decision to drop the independence issue and promise a new policy on China? It is hard to say; but it will be a factor for the DPP to ponder on.295

Still another interesting point about the election was China's response. It was different than what was expected. As anticipated, the Chinese media reported that the elections' results were a win for the KMT. But media sources also mentioned the DPP gains in total votes was meaningful. During the campaign there was almost no condemnation of the DPP as a party advocating independence. The explanation may be that Chinese leaders perceive they will have to deal with the DPP in the future. More likely they were pleased with the fact the DPP abandoned independence as part of its platform and see no reason not to try to build ties more with DPP leaders.296

Last but not least, the elections afforded evidence of Taiwan's further democratization. The campaign was raucous, candidates sued other candidates and people were shot. In spite of this, campaign rules were generally obeyed, the candidates talked about issues, and the voter turnout was high. The candidates were well qualified to serve in office and will likely perform well. But, perhaps the most salient point about these elections is that they show that Taiwan's democracy is safe and sound and is improving—which is quite different from the situation in much of the rest of the world.297

295. During the campaign the media reported that Taiwan's birthrate was the lowest in the world. See “Taiwan's fertility rate lowest in the world: poll,” China Post, September 20, 2010 (online at chinapost.com.tw). This means that both foreign workers and immigrants will likely increase in number. Both groups have voted more for the KMT than the DPP. It is worth noting that in the past the DPP perceived it had an advantage because of demographic trends because the birth rate of Fukien Taiwanese was higher than Mainland Chinese. The author had some discussions with some pro-DPP citizens in Taiwan during the campaign and they were aware and expressed concern about this demographic news.

296. See “Taiwan's ruling KMT wins 3 of 5 mayoral seats,” China Daily, November 27, 2010 (online at chinadaily.com.cn) and “A 'Normal' Election Shows Taiwan's Progress. Several top DPP officials have advocated closer ties with China and a number have spoken of traveling to China.

GLOSSARY
Selected Chinese Names

Lien, Chan  连 戰  Lee, Teng-hui  李登輝
Lien, Sean  连 勝文  Lai, William  賴清德
Chen, Chu  陈 菊  Lin, Cheng-wei  林正偉
Chen, Eric  陈瑞仁  Liu, Chao-shiuan  劉兆玄
Chen, Hung-yuan  陈鴻源  Liu, Chien-kuo  劉建國
Chen, Shui-bian  陈水扁  Lu, Annette  吕秀蓮
Chen, Yunlin  陳雲林  Ma, Ying-jeou  馬英九
Chiou, I-jen  邱義仁  Siew, Vincent  蕭萬長
Chu, Eric  朱立倫  Soong, James  宋楚瑜
Hau, Lung-bin  郝龍斌  Su, Jia-chyuan  蘇嘉全
Hau, Pei-tsun  郝柏村  Su, Tseng-chang  蘇貞昌
Hsiao, Helen  蕭淑華  Tsai, Ing-wen  蔡英文
Hsieh, Frank  謝長廷  Wen, Jiabao  溫家寶
Hsueh, Hsiang-chuan  薛香川  Wu, Francis  吳武明
Hu, Jason  胡志強  Wu, Nai-jen  吳乃仁
Huang, Chao-shun  黃昭順  Wu, Po-hsiung  吳伯雄
Jaw, Shaw-kong  趙少康  Wu, Yan-cheng  吳炎成
King, Pu-tsung  金溥聰  Yang, Chiu-hsing  楊秋興
Kuo, Tien-tsai  郭添財  Yang, Shu-chun  楊淑君
Lee, Diana  李慶安