Chapter 3

Electoral Campaigning in Taiwan

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Taiwan's political environment has undergone manifold changes during the last few decades. It developed from an authoritarian polity into one of Asia's most vibrant democracies. Since the early days of Taiwan's democratic development, elections have played a vital role in building and fostering democratic institutions. Socio-economic changes have not only contributed to Taiwan's rapid political development, but also influenced the nature of electoral campaigns. Taiwan's development of political marketing can be divided into two stages, namely into the martial law and the post-martial law era.

Martial law period (1949–1987)

During World War II, the United States reached an agreement with Chiang Kai-shek providing that Taiwan would be returned to China after the war. The agreement was confirmed in the Potsdam Declaration of July 1945. Soon afterwards, Chiang Kai-shek appointed a committee headed by Chen Yi to take over the island's administration. The regime's strategy was to infiltrate Taiwan's society by means of public participation in state-controlled elections and expanding the Kuomintang's party network. The first elections at grassroots level were held in 1946. Taiwan's local elite was not satisfied with these rather meaningless grassroots elections and asked for direct elections of all chief executive positions, such as the mayors of the island's largest cities and county magistrates. Rumors about a new constitution requesting direct elections of all executives including such positions as county magistrates, provincial municipality mayors and provincial governors let the Taiwanese vest new hope in the regime. After the new and permanent constitution of the republic came into force in 1947, the regime under Governor Chen Yi announced, however, that local self-governance as stipulated by the new constitution could not be implemented before the end of 1949 (Stuart, 1947). This and other overtly negative policies of the new regime culminated in the 2-28 Incident, in which mainland Chinese troops brutally killed several thousand Taiwanese. Aside from grassroots elections, national elections were held in 1947/1948, but there was hardly any campaigning. A year later, Chiang Kai-shek lost the civil war in China and martial law was declared in Taiwan.

Electoral campaigning in the 1950s: Gentry politics versus machine politics

In the early 1950s, chief executives of counties and the island's largest cities were elected directly for the first time as part of the newly implemented local self-governance law. In the mid-1960s, local scholars separated the first fifteen years of the new local self-governance system into three periods (Huang and Cheng, 1991: 16). During the first, candidates were well known for their expertise in fields valuable to the electorate, such as lawyers and doctors, or because of their previous engagement in community work. The second period started between the third and fourth elections of county councilors (1954–1958). Machine politics began to replace gentry politics, and with it the candidates' financial capabilities became one of the most crucial factors in electoral campaigns. In the beginning, the investments paid off. The electorate increasingly supported candidates because of their 'financial contributions' to the community. Less privileged but better qualified candidates got disillusioned or were discouraged by the new electoral culture. In the early 1960s—the third period—financial contributions were nothing special. On the contrary, they were commonplace and no longer guaranteed a candidate's success at the polls. Consequently, candidates nominated by the regime started to hire criminals to threaten other hopefuls and to convince undecided voters.

The Korean War (1950–1953) strengthened the diplomatic relations between the regime and the US, and highlighted the strategic importance of Taiwan. US support added to the legitimacy of the regime and provided it with new opportunities to suppress the people of Taiwan. The Kuomintang (KMT) more and more turned into a propaganda machine deeply rooted in Taiwan's society. Whenever there was an election, the regime would mobilize its party, military and governmental network at provincial, county and grassroots levels to guarantee the success of its candidates (Huang and Cheng, 1991: 18).

The worsening political culture of the late 1950s was addressed by a group of upper-class intellectuals who formed the first meaningful opposition movement in postwar Taiwan. At the core centre of the group was Lei Chen, a senior KMT member. The group started as a loosely connected network of several members of the two other legal political parties and unaffiliated local politicians. The major news organ of the movement was the bimonthly *Free China*. Lei Chen was the chief executive of the magazine and Hu Shi, another Mainland Chinese intellectual, the spiritual leader. The first edition was published in November 1949. About 260 issues were released until September 1960, when the KMT regime banned the magazine. Each issue had a circulation of between ten and twenty thousand copies (Pan et al, 2003: i–iii). In the beginning, the magazine was part of the KMT's anti-communist propaganda. After a year, however, the articles published in *Free China* were rather critical of the KMT and its organizations. In 1955, Lei Chen was expelled from the KMT and put under close surveillance by the Garrison Command, Taiwan's secret police. It was about that time that the magazine started to publish articles criticizing the nature of local elections and that Lei Chen seriously thought about the formation of an opposition party (Pan et al, 2003; Huang and Cheng, 1991: 22;

Lu, 1997: 26–32). Political analysts and local politicians contributed to *Free China*. Their essays highlighted the true nature of local electoral campaigning and how local self-governance (*difang zizhi*) developed into local party-governance (*difang dangzhi*) (Pan et al, 2003: xxii). According to the magazine, the KMT's interference in the electoral process ranged from kidnapping, physical attacks, bribery, and vote rigging to the involvement of the military. Lei Chen and his followers thought that a powerful opposition party could put pressure on the regime to improve the overall electoral process and eradicate obstacles to free and fair electoral campaigns (Pan et al, 2003; Lei, 2003). Over 30 non-KMT mayors, provincial assembly members and county magistrates joined the initiative. The KMT regime finally imprisoned Lei Chen and other senior members of the opposition camp and the hopes for a cleaner election environment were gone.

The 1960s: No sign of improvement

Throughout the 1960s, electoral campaigns did not change much. Leaflets, public speeches, magazines, and campaign vehicles were the only campaign tools available to opposition candidates. Nevertheless, a growing number of opposition candidates, influenced by US presidential campaigning, requested the holding of public debates between candidates, and some even asked for mass media advertising (Huang and Cheng, 1991; Chang, 1992).

The utilization of mass media was unrealistic for several reasons, though. First, the KMT would not have significantly benefited from political advertisements. Second, the KMT regime relied more on propaganda and traditional grassroots mobilization than on political marketing. Third, mass media advertising was in general restricted. There was a quota system in place, which only allowed for a certain number of ads per media, industry, and day. Political ads would have intensified the existing rough competition. Fourth, in the 1960s, there were only a few advertising agencies and the entire advertising industry was influenced by Japan rather than the United States. Fifth, advertisements would have been too expensive to become an alternative to conventional campaigning (Kuo, 2001: 8–9; Wang, 2002).

Debates between KMT and opposition candidates constituted a more reasonable approach and most of the opposition candidates challenged their rivals to join them. Opposition candidates needed the debates to get media exposure. During the election campaign, journalists were assigned to each of the KMT candidates. Their job was to write favorable stories about them. Opposition candidates, on the other hand, could only get media coverage by confronting their KMT rivals. Debates were one of the rare ways to get this confrontation. KMT candidates, however, were mostly reluctant to take part in debates for two reasons. First, they considered them as unnecessary. Second, they believed that by joining a debate they would put themselves on an equal footing with the other obviously inferior candidate. In all cases, the KMT candidates denied the requests; in several cases, the denial was used to attack the candidate, and

in some, such as the mayoral elections in Taipei (1964) and Kaoshiung (1968), the attack led to the defeat of the KMT candidate (Chang, 1992: 137–43).[1]

The 1970s: A decade full of campaign innovations

At the end of 1969, limited parliamentary elections were held for the first time during the martial period. Further national elections were held in 1972 and 1975. The newly elected opposition figures were mainly individualistic and localized powerbrokers, such as Kang Ning-hsiang (Ai, 1997: 127–9).

Although there was no breakthrough in terms of freer and fairer electoral campaigns, there were several notable changes. First, appearance began to play a more decisive role in the selection of candidates. The ideal KMT candidate at that time had to be educated, handsome, and Taiwanese, which was a phenomenon frequently referred to as the *cui tai qing* (handsome, Taiwanese, young) syndrome, from the name of a singer and movie star (Ai, 1997: 112). The KMT's new approach was part of an attempt to replace candidates nominated by local faction leaders with party cadres. Opposition candidates at that time paid less attention to appearance

[1] In 1964, the KMT nominated Chou Pai-lian. His rival candidate was independent Kao Yu-shu, who served as mayor of Taipei between 1954 and 1957. Since his defeat in 1957 (his re-election bid) the KMT controlled the city. Chou's success at the polls seemed to be a foregone conclusion. He was very wealthy and well-connected with the business community. Moreover, grassroots support was guaranteed by the borough chiefs who by that time were almost exclusively KMT members. Ten years ago things were different and it was much easier for Kao to escape the KMT's network. Kao knew that the only way to win was to focus his campaign on propaganda. His key strategy was to challenge Chou by requesting a public debate about the city's problems in one of Taipei's most popular temples. Kao asked for a debate similar to those held in the US during presidential campaigns. Chou responded by saying that the people would only have to elect a mayor of a small city and that there was thus no need for a debate. He agreed to send his campaign assistant to join the debate if Kao still insisted on it. Kao said he could also send his campaign worker but what would be the point of such a debate. He said that the candidates must of course take part in the debate themselves. The dispute caused a lot of media attention and the public felt that Kao was right and Chou too sure of victory. Kao unexpectedly won the election. Four years later, Chen Wu-chang was the KMT's hopeful in the Kaoshiung mayoral race. His challenger was Yang Chin-hu. Yang lost three times in the previous elections. Chen, like Chou, was financially well off and had the support of the entire KMT apparatus. Yang adopted Kao's campaign strategy and requested a debate at a stadium. Chen, aware of Yang's strategy, did not reply. He simply ignored Yang. Subsequently, Yang spread the rumor that Chen did not have the guts to join a debate. The negative voices got louder and louder but Chen kept silent. One day before the election, he finally agreed to a debate, but it proved to be too late. His campaign advisors could not but acknowledge that Chen's refusal to respond to Yang's demand worsened his image and finally led to his election defeat.

than the KMT. There were, however, some opposition candidates, such as Chao Hsiu-wa, who were elected just because of their looks (Chang, 1992: 145–7).[2]

Another change was that opposition candidates more openly criticized individual KMT politicians and government policies. The regime was more tolerable than a decade ago, but still would immediately imprison anyone criticizing the central leadership or openly questioning the legitimacy of the KMT government. In the early and mid-1970s, opposition candidates explored their boundaries, and some had no other campaign strategy than to attack local governments and their representatives. Chao Hsiu-wa, for instance, won her re-election bid just by verbally attacking the mayor of Kaoshiung (Chang, 1992: 147–9).[3]

Moreover, opposition candidates began to use the people's compassion as a tool to get elected. One of the early examples is independent candidate Tseng Wen-po. In 1972, he contested in the city council elections in Taichung City. He was anything but a promising candidate. His educational background was said to have been the only thing he could be proud of: Tseng graduated from National Taiwan University. His appearance and ability to speak in public were not good either. Nevertheless, Tseng succeeded in gaining publicity by distributing a pamphlet criticizing the government. Secret police asked him to suspend his activities or face imprisonment. For the rest of the campaign period, Tseng was not seen and there were rumors that secret police had caught him. He was also absent at the official political views presentations organized by the election commission. People began to feel sympathetic towards him. On election eve, he suddenly appeared. Few wondered where he had been, most were relieved that he was still alive. On election day, Tseng received enough sympathy votes to get elected. Five years later, Tseng challenged Chen Tuan-tang, incumbent mayor of Taichung, using a similar strategy. Chen's campaign managers predicted that he would receive overwhelming support at the polls. During his campaign activities, Chen would stand on his campaign truck, raise his hands and show the V-sign. Tseng, on the other hand, spread the rumor that he would possibly be caught by the secret police if not elected. He was frequently seen on his campaign truck together with his wife. Both were casually dressed. Tseng

[2] Chao Hsiu-wa got elected to the Provincial Assembly representing the industrial city of Kaoshiung in 1972. Aged 23, she was the youngest and probably most beautiful member of the assembly.

[3] Chao Hsiu-wa got elected in the 1972 Provincial Assembly election just because of her looks. Five years later, she contested again to win her re-election bid. Her advisors told her quite frankly that she could not run a successful campaign based on her beauty again as she had turned older and appeared to be less attractive. Chao had to change her strategy and find a new and unique way to attract the masses. Her solution was to attack the incumbent mayor of Kaoshiung, Wang Yu-yun. Wang had a good record as mayor, but Chao thought that there would always be people who did not approve of him. The district magnitude in her constituency was five, and Chao calculated that she would only have to get the support of one fifth of the electorate. For the entire campaign period, Chao did nothing but condemn Wang Yu-yun. Her strategy worked out and she indeed won the election.

would look rather depressed and repeat his slogan '*dajia de wenbo*,' which means 'our Wen-po.' Unexpectedly, Tseng won the election (Chang, 1992: 153–9).

Tseng's case says much about the hidden power of the people's compassion. In the 1970s, this strategy was still at an experimental stage with only few candidates relying on it. A decade later, however, several dozen opposition candidates discovered the effectiveness of such a strategy, and in most cases, it was the only strategy the candidates had to offer.

The above-mentioned changes were mostly the results of the changing economic, social, and political environment. Politically, the KMT government under Chiang Kai-shek was more and more isolated. The dramatic decrease in the number of nations recognizing the legitimacy of the KMT government and the final expulsion from the UN put great pressure on the leadership. Chiang Kai-shek (and his successor) had to liberalize Taiwan's political system so as not to lose the support of the United States. Free and fair elections were one of the prerequisites for continuing US commitment to Taiwan.

Apart from the worsening international status, the KMT government's economic, social, and educational policies brought about several significant societal changes that were for the first time observable in the mid-1970s. The rising social problems were, however, hardly addressed by the candidates of the KMT. On the contrary, the KMT made every effort to discourage socially concerned politicians (scholars) from running for office and tried to diffuse criticism. The government, for instance, implemented 'reform' programs to meet with the growing discontent of factory workers. The *Teacher Chang* counseling program, for example, aimed at training college students to become volunteer counselors to workers. Their mission was not to solve conflicts but to emphasize that workers had to adjust to factory life. Candidates of the opposition took advantage of the KMT's ignorance and soon social problems and the government's failure to deal with them became a central theme among the new opposition. The time appeared to be ripe to address social issues and mingle them with political ones. Most of the opposition candidates were hardly interested in socialism. They rather tried to explore the power of the people; as one activist noted: 'A person with only a little capital and some education and earthy knack for speech-making can ride the wave of popular resentment against the regime in elections. Though the population generally appears cowed and quiescent, there is admiration and secret support for those who dare to step forward' (Ai, 1997: 107, 119).

Hsu Hsin-liang is certainly the best example here. Some say he was the first successful populist. Hsu was elected to the Provincial Assembly in 1972 under the KMT banner. He was a very ambitious young politician who sought to reach out to the masses. In this constituency, Taoyuan County, he spent hours talking with people from different walks of life. The farmers loved him and said that he was one of them. The business community loved him and said that he was one of them (Ai, 1997: 117). Wherever he gave a speech, he would make sure to mention the problems of the ordinary people, the *laobaixing*. In 1976, Hsu began to prepare for his participation in the 1977 county magistrate election. The KMT did not nominate him: Hsu appeared to be too critical of the KMT and its policies. Notwithstanding, Hsu took part as an independent and worked out a campaign strategy that turned him into the political marketer of the century.

He first relied on one simple book (*feng yu zhi sheng*), analyzing Taiwan's various problems, to boost his popularity. Hsu's publication was strongly criticized by other members of the assembly. The print media reported extensively on Hsu's new book and all the criticism. After a few days, Hsu was not only a well-known local politician but also a national hero. His popularity made him convinced that he could win the magistracy of Taoyuan, his home county. Things did not seem gloomy for Hsu Hsin-liang when he started his campaign, though. In Taoyuan, the KMT worked hard to discourage businessmen and property owners from renting offices to Hsu. But how could he run a successful campaign without a campaign headquarters? People felt sympathetic towards him but did not dare to challenge the KMT regime. Finally, Hsu rented a piece of land and erected a tent. His campaign headquarters looked like a trade fair. Huge banners, posters, and flowers were placed around the tent attracting the masses. His trade show had much to offer. Apart from a large variety of different campaign literature, local people would donate all types of food and drink, and spend hours at the campaign headquarters talking about life and politics. To attract different crowds of people, the decoration and the banners were changed every day. The electorate was curious to know what the slogan of today was, and marched in masses to the trade fair. The atmosphere at Hsu's campaign headquarters was beyond description. It was a 24-hour campaign event. Hsu's trade fair was the campaign invention of the decade, and his victory a foregone conclusion. The KMT tried to counter Hsu's campaign strategy by applying its traditional campaign techniques, such as vote rigging and buying, but massive protests against the rigged result forced the leadership to accept the victory of Hsu Hsin-liang (Chang, 1992: 193–8; Huang and Cheng, 1991: 35; New Taiwan Cultural Foundation, 1999b: 11–16). Hsu Hsin-liang's successful and extraordinary campaign style was part of the first campaign manual published on the island. After the 1977 election, Lin Cheng-chie and Chang Fu-chong traveled around Taoyuan and did extensive research on Hsu's campaign innovations. The government seized over ten thousand copies of their book entitled *Elections Forever* (*xuanju wanwansui*) in an attempt to prevent it from getting into the hands of future and current hopefuls. The book, nevertheless, was reprinted and distributed around the island and indeed served as a campaign manual (New Taiwan Cultural Foundation, 1999b: 44–5).

The 1977 local elections were a watershed in Taiwan's political development. Opposition candidates won two out of sixteen magistracies, two out of four mayoral posts, and twenty-one out of seventy-seven provincial assembly seats. This unprecedented electoral success gave the opposition confidence to challenge the KMT's ban on political parties. In the past, opposition candidates could not form coalitions, nor could they run on a common platform. They were isolated warriors. Any attempt to break these rules ended in unfortunate accidents. The campaigns for the 1978 parliamentary elections (National Assembly and Legislative Yuan) were groundbreaking. Several opposition leaders, such as Huang Hsin-chieh and Shih Ming-teh, jointly founded a special electoral campaign committee (*dangwai*

zhuxuan tuan). The aim of the committee was to maximize the support of the opposition candidates and to co-ordinate campaign activities throughout the island. Well-known opposition figures, such as independent legislator Huang Hsin-chieh, toured the island in a united effort to canvass votes. The committee also organized a series of fundraising banquets, which was still something new in Taiwan's electoral campaigns. (Opposition candidate Chang Chun-hong was the first politician in the country to hold fundraising banquets during his electoral campaign in 1973.) Another invention was the use of a common logo printed on all the various campaign materials (New Taiwan Cultural Foundation, 1999a: 21–3, 63–5).

In general, the electoral campaign environment appeared to be much freer than in previous elections. Opposition candidates were even allowed to make public the committee's common platform. US President Carter's decision to recognize the regime in Beijing and de-recognize Taipei as the only legitimate government of China just a few days before the election was a shock to the KMT government, and elections were postponed indefinitely. (In December 1980 the elections finally took place.) A year after the postponed elections, the opposition founded the *Formosa Magazine*. Branch offices were established around the island. The magazine sold well and focused on social, economic, and political problems. The *Formosa Magazine* was more than just a publication; its branch offices soon developed into community help centers, where ordinary people could get advice on legal, social and economic issues (Ai, 1997: 148–58). The KMT regime was aware of the fact that the magazine was a political party in disguise and staged the so-called Kaoshiung Incident to obtain legitimacy for the imprisonment of the magazine's leaders.

The 1980s: A new era of campaigning

On May 14, 1980, a new election law was promulgated by presidential decree. The law governed elections of public officials at all levels; it was thus the first unified law. The law was revised in 1983. Most of the 1983 revisions dealt with campaign activities and the punishment of offenses against election and recall. Article 45 originally only outlined the length of election campaign activities. The revision added further restrictions on campaign expenditures and demanded the keeping of records on campaign funds. The election law demanded the creation of a central election commission under the Ministry of the Interior (Article 8). It put restrictions on the duration of campaign activities: fifteen days for candidates of parliamentary elections, ten days for elections at provincial level, and five days for elections at local levels except for elections of borough and neighborhood chiefs (three days). For the first time, campaign expenditures were specifically mentioned in an election law. The maximum expenditure was calculated by a specific formula that included the total population, the number of officials to be elected, a basic amount, and the cost of living. The exact figures had to be announced by the election commission (Article 45-1). The law specifically mentioned what was legal and illegal in campaigns. Legal campaign activities included (Article 46):

- establishing campaign headquarters and employing campaign assistants
- holding political views presentations
- printing and disseminating name cards and handouts
- operating campaign vehicles and loudspeakers
- canvassing and visiting the electors in the candidate's constituency.

Moreover, the law stipulated that handouts printed and disseminated by a candidate had to be signed in person by the candidate. Name cards and handouts were not allowed to be posted at places other than those approved or assigned by the election commission. The sizes of name cards and handouts had to be decided by the election commission. The number of campaign vehicles was restricted. The exact number depended on the constituency and ranged from five to two. Candidates and campaign aides were not allowed to:

- incite people to commit offenses against the internal security or external security of the state
- incite people to undermine social order with violence
- commit other offenses set forth in the criminal code.

Moreover, it was not allowed to assemble a crowd for a parade or utilize the mass media for political advertising. There was thus still a complete ban on political advertising in newspapers, magazines, on radio and television. These restrictions disadvantaged the opposition since Taiwan's media was entirely controlled by the ruling KMT and opposition magazines were banned.

Passion, stunt politics, handbills, and social movements

Until the lifting of the martial law decree in 1987, several changes in electoral campaigning occurred. Attracting the people's compassion, for instance, turned into one of the most frequently used electoral strategies after the Kaoshiung Incident. In 1980, a year after the incident, the relatives of the imprisoned democracy activists participated in national elections in an attempt to keep the movement alive. Whenever there was a campaign activity, they only had to play the popular song *Hope You'll be Back Soon* (*wang ni zao gui*) and people would feel sympathetic enough to cast their votes for the relatives.

Another group of opposition activists, riding the wave of the people's compassion, comprised the defense lawyers of the indicted activists of the Kaoshiung Incident. Among the most prominent were You Ching, Chen Shui-bian, Hsieh Chang-ting, Su Chen-chang, Chiang Peng-chian, and Chang Chun-hsiung. All of them won elections consecutively; most of them were the highest vote getters in their constituencies. Their campaign strategy was to present themselves as the defenders of human rights. It was because of their willingness to defend the *Formosa* activists that the electorate was convinced about their honesty and commitment to democracy. Their popularity was beyond description. No matter where they went to give speeches,

tens of thousands of people would cheer enthusiastically (Chang, 1992: 185–92; Huang and Cheng, 1991: 150).

A further interesting development was the occurrence of stunt politics in electoral campaigns. The first cited example was the attempted return of blacklisted Hsu Hsin-liang in 1986, a few days before voting day. Thousands of supporters gathered around the airport to welcome Hsu. Cathay Pacific, however, refused to allow Hsu Hsin-liang to board a flight from Manila to Taipei allegedly at the request of the KMT government, which angered Hsu's supporters and led to violent clashes with security forces. Hsu's attempted return and the KMT's reaction boosted the popularity of the opposition. Hsu Hsin-liang once more proved that he was the master of electioneering.

Although handbills were not an invention of the 1980s, they revived in popularity during the closing years of the martial law era. Handbills proved to be extremely effective if spread widely, quickly and shortly before election day. The most frequently cited successful cases were the 1981 magistrate election in Changhua County, and the 1986 parliamentary elections. In 1981, independent candidate Huang Shi-cheng distributed handbills attacking the KMT's centralized nomination system two days before the election in every one of the over twenty towns and townships of Changhua county.[4] In 1986, three hopefuls contesting in the National Assembly election distributed identical handbills in their constituencies.[5] The handbill was entitled 'We don't need a piglet president.' The candidates criticized the fact that the president was still elected by the National Assembly and not by the people. They argued that indirect elections would only lead to bribery and finally produce piglet presidents. The leaflet was extremely controversial, attracted the attention of the electorate, and all three candidates were elected partly because of it (Chang, 1992: 161–8, 211–18).

Campaign slogans became an important—in several cases, the most decisive—factor in elections of the 1980s. They substituted the lack of campaign issues and/or electoral experience. The 1981 magistrate election in Yilan County is a textbook example illustrating the power of a good campaign slogan. There was little doubt that the KMT nominee, Lee Tsan-cheng, would win. The opposition was short of well known and experienced candidates who could challenge Lee. Chen Ting-nan seemed

[4] The handbill contained a table illustrating the fact that four of the five candidates the KMT nominated in recent national and local elections were natives of either Ershui Township or the neighboring town of Tianchong. The table showed that 94 percent of the county population lived in the other 24 townships of Changhua and posed the question why most nominees came from a township where only 6 percent of the population resides. The answer was that Vice-President Hsieh Tong-min was born in Ershui Township and that he wielded direct control over the nomination process, which angered not only opposition candidates but also a group of 39 local KMT politicians. The handbill was very convincing, stirred resentment against the KMT, and made the people reluctant to vote once more a candidate from one of the two townships into office. Consequently, independent Huang Shi-cheng won the election.

[5] Hong Chi-chang (Taipei County), Weng Chin-chu (Changhua County), and Huang Chao-hui (Kaoshiung City).

to be the only possible candidate. Although Chen had gained some experience in electoral campaigning when he worked as a campaign assistant a year earlier, he was unfamiliar with elections. Unlike Lee, Chen lacked the institutionalized support of a powerful party. Chen nevertheless won the race. The only thing he did was create a slogan that would ridicule his opponent. The slogan was based on his rival's given name *zan cheng*, which happens to mean 'to be in favor of' or 'support.' Within a few days, the slogan '*li zan cheng, wo bu zan cheng, da jia dou bu zan cheng*' could be heard throughout the county of Yilan. The meaning of the slogan is very simple: 'Lee Tsan-cheng. I do not support, we all don't support.' Lee contested again in 1983 and 1989. In both cases, the slogan was used once more by opponents and led to his defeat.

A further new development was the increasing involvement of social movements in electoral campaigns. Between the mid-1950s and the mid-1980s, the working class increased from less than 15 percent to more than 40 percent of the total population, while Taiwan's middle class rose from about 20 percent to more than 30 percent (Hsiao, 1989: 157). Taiwan's middle class of the 1980s was characterized by Michael Hsiao, Taiwan's leading sociologist, as being pragmatic in expressing their opinion on political issues, supportive of political reform but by no means susceptible to any radical appeals (Hsiao, 1989: 159). The term 'middle class' was rather unknown to the public and scarcely used by politicians, the media, and the business sector in the 1970s. A decade later, it emerged as the catchword in all sorts of advertisements and speeches given by politicians. The opposition and the government tried to gain the support of the expanding middle class (Hsiao, 1989: 161). The middle class was the foundation of numerous emerging social movements. In the 1980s, there were at least eight major social movements promoting the interests of consumers, environmentalists, laborers, women, aborigines, farmers, students, and teachers. Even though some of these movements emerged earlier than the 1980s, they all gained considerable political significance in that decade. Moreover, they succeeded in determining election issues and thus the political agenda of the regime. In the 1983 national election campaign, consumer protection emerged as the issue. Three years later, 'environmental protection was the issue raised by almost every candidate' (Chang, 1994: 57). Opposition candidates benefited from the increase in social protests and the rising power of the movements. There was mutual support between the movements and opposition figures. Social movements helped the opposition candidates to enlarge popular support at constituencies previously controlled by the KMT, such as the functional parliamentary seats for labor organizations (Huang and Cheng, 1991: 148–50).

Post martial law era

In 1987, martial law was lifted. The first five years after the lifting brought about significant changes in electioneering.

Dramatized events, strippers, and direct action

The most obvious change was that it became more difficult for candidates to mobilize voters. During the martial law period, any political activity was severely restricted or even illegal, and thus was something out of the ordinary. Whenever a politician of the opposition camp appeared at a public place, openly attacking the government, 30 to 50 thousand people would show up to listen. After the lifting of martial law, things changed. Whenever a candidate could attract a crowd of 200 people, he or she was said to be fortunate. A speech attacking the ruling KMT was suddenly not enough to have tens of thousands cheering enthusiastically (Chang, 1992: 212).

The opposition adjusted itself to the changing environment by either holding a series of smaller events or by creating political stunts. Both of these new approaches became common at the end of the 1980s. Any election rally had to be dramatic, mysterious, and something out of the ordinary to attract the masses. Hsu Hsin-liang's failed attempt to return to Taiwan in 1986 and the subsequent riots that helped the opposition to win popular support soon served as a model. Numerous opposition figures of the late 1980s experimented with this promising campaign innovation. The most successful publicity stunt certainly was the Kuo Pei-hong case. Kuo was blacklisted by the KMT because of his involvement in Taiwan's opposition movement while studying in the US and banned from entering the country. Lu Hsiu-yi and Chou Hui-ying, both opposition candidates in the 1989 elections, announced days before their campaign rally in Taipei County that Kuo would show up and give a speech there. Thousands of people queued up in front of the stadium where Kuo's speech was to be held to find out whether Kuo Pei-hong indeed succeeded in illegally entering the country and whether he dared to give a speech in public. At 7.50 pm on November 22, 1989, Lu Hsiu-yi and Chou Hui-ying began with their campaign speeches. Several thousand people were already inside the stadium, and the number of people trying to enter the scene was increasing steadily. It was not before 9.20 pm that Kuo Pei-hong appeared on stage and delivered a highly emotional speech. The atmosphere was indescribable. Kuo's speech and his successful escape from the scene made news stories, and paved the way for Lu Hsiu- yi and Chou Hui-ying's election victory (Chang, 1992: 225–31).

The ruling KMT, on the other hand, adapted itself to the changing political environment in a different way: candidates fielded by the party had few policy issues to offer at campaign rallies. They began to hire professional entertainers instead. Campaign rallies resembled variety shows featuring pop stars and scantily dressed singers. Campaign strategists referred to them as *gewuxiu*, literally meaning singing, dancing, and acting. The candidates' campaign speeches were merely introductory. Some candidates of the ruling party even hired strippers to entertain the electorate. Wang Chun-yuan's variety-show style rally in the 1991 national elections, for instance, attracted huge crowds and news reporters. Media outlets soon discovered the hidden interest in news stories about strippers and scantily dressed singers. Candidates, consequently, got the needed media coverage and publicity. In the case of Wang Chun-yuan, the *China Times Express*, a mass circulation evening newspaper, carried a front-page story about the event. The article included a large-size photo showing the nude stripper on stage and in the back a huge banner that was supposed to introduce the candidate. The banner read 'Graduate of National Taiwan University, Department of Political Science,' which caused amusement among the readers and extended Wang Chun-yuan's fame (Huang and Cheng, 1991: 145–6).

Minor parties adopted similar campaign strategies. The Labor Party, for example, fielded Hsu Hsiao-tan, an artist and former high-school teacher, who undressed publicly on various occasions and promised an *open* campaign. The party's strategy almost worked out in the 1992 parliamentary election, when Hsu succeeded in getting 32,349 votes and would have needed another 108 votes for her victory.

Direct action was another form of political campaigning that proved highly effective during the first few years after the lifting of the martial law decree. A number of politicians gained cult status through violence. The most prominent case certainly was DPP legislator Zhu Gao-zheng. His campaign promise was to 'make noise' until those members of parliament elected on the mainland be expelled from office (*yao jiang wan nian guohui naofan tian*) (Peng, 1994: 79). Zhu used violence not only in parliament but also in his home county of Yunlin to force the KMT regime to alter its policies. The voters in Yunlin were all well acquainted with Zhu's outbursts of violence during the various local protests he led. Zhu's violence turned him into a national hero, and he was frequently referred to as 'Taiwan Number One Battleship' (*taiwan di yi zhanjian*) (Peng, 1994). Direct action as an electoral tool lost most of its fame in the mid-1990s, though.

The emergence of political advertising

The lifting of martial law was expected to have a profound impact on the utilization of mass media for campaign purposes. At the end of the 1980s, Taiwan had three terrestrial television stations and several mass-circulation newspapers. All of these TV stations and most of the newspapers were either directly controlled by the KMT or favorable to it (Wang, 2002: 392-459).

Political advertisements seemed to be one way for the opposition to make use of Taiwan's mass media for campaign purposes. During the martial law era, political ads were illegal. Notwithstanding, political ads in newspapers could be found in the mid-1980s. Most of those ads were placed by candidates loyal to the KMT regime. It was difficult for opposition candidates to find newspapers willing to print their ads. In the 1986 national elections, for instance, only one mass-circulation paper, the *Independence Evening Post*, agreed to print ads placed by the opposition.[6] It was not before 1989 that the election law was revised, allowing candidates to place political ads in newspapers and magazines. Newspaper advertising was first legally used in political campaigns in the 1989 local and national elections. Campaigning officially started on November 23, and the election took place on December 3. During the campaign, more than one thousand political ads were counted in Taiwan's leading

6 *Taiwan Communiqué*, January 1987 (28).

newspapers. Some 53 percent were front-page ads, and 48 percent in color. More than half of the ads were posted by parliamentary hopefuls, 38 percent by candidates of council races, and 6 percent by participants of the mayor and magistrate elections. Thirty-six percent of the ads were placed by KMT hopefuls, 45 percent by the DPP, 3 percent by other parties, such as the Labor Party, and 15 percent by independents (Chen and Chen, 1992a: 158; Chen and Chen,1992b: 120–21).

Televised political ads were illegal until 1991, when the election commission made public several regulations governing the use of terrestrial television stations to air propaganda videos of political parties in the year-end National Assembly election. It was the first time in the history of Taiwan that television could legally be used to broadcast political ads. In the past, only political advertising in magazines and newspapers was legal. Each of Taiwan's three nationwide terrestrial TV stations, Taiwan Television, China Television and Chinese Television System, were allocated ninety minutes to air the political ads of those parties nominating at least ten candidates. The exact time each party could use was proportional to the number of nominees. In the 1991 National Assembly, only four of the seventeen participating parties fulfilled these requirements, the ruling KMT, the DPP, and two minor parties. The aired political ads of the KMT put emphasis on the party's ability to transform Taiwan from an agrarian society into a modern state. The dominant theme was that the KMT stands for reform, stability, and prosperity, and that the KMT should be viewed as 'a faithful old friend.' Moreover, the ads pointed out that a vote for the DPP would imply a vote for a future full of social and economic disorders. This was illustrated by dramatic scenes of suffering, civil war and chaos in other countries such as Haiti, Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. The DPP in their ads questioned the KMT's interpretation of 'stability' and its implications for Taiwan's society by showing images of raised chickens living in cages juxtaposed with chickens allowed to run free. The ad continued by telling the audience that stability is more than living in affluence and that man needs freedom and dignity besides stability and prosperity.[7] The political ads of the parties had a viewing rate of about 20 percent. In general, people who watched the ads tended to have a more favorable impression towards the KMT and the CDSP than towards the DPP (Peng, 1992: 233).

In the mid-1990s, public funded TV ads lost in importance. In 1991, there were only three terrestrial TV stations. A few years later, cable TV emerged and was legalized. Political ads could soon be seen months ahead of the official ten-day parliamentary election campaign period. Unlike the public-funded ones, these ads do not differ much from commercial ones and are not aired separately. The electorate is thus more likely to watch candidate and party-sponsored political ads than public-funded ones. In the 2004 parliamentary election, the latter only had viewing rates far below one percent and thus can be considered insignificant in Taiwan's electoral campaigns of the twenty-first century (XKM, 2004).

[7] *Free China Journal*, December 17, 1991.

Underground radio and taxi drivers

Although the political ads helped the opposition to influence the voting behavior of the masses, there were critical voices demanding the liberalization of the broadcasting industry. In the early 1990s, opposition figures attempted to break the KMT monopoly on the island's broadcast media by illegally setting up their own TV and radio stations. Soon, underground radio stations and later cable TV networks became an important and new campaign tool.

The first important underground radio stations went into operation in 1992. All People Radio was one of them. Chang Chun-hong, a DPP candidate contesting the year-end national elections, set up the station. Hsieh Chang-ting and Chou Hui-ying, both DPP hopefuls, followed the example of Chang and launched their own underground radio station in Taipei County. It could be heard within a range of 60 kilometers, and was shut down after the election (Chen, 1994: 15).

In 1993 and 1994, several dozen other underground radio stations went into operation around the island. Some of these were set up by opposition candidates following the example of Chan Chun-hong. Taiwan independence activist Chang Chin-tse, for instance, operated the People's Voice (*qunzhong zhi sheng*) to boost his popularity in Taipei County where he contested the 1994 Provincial Assembly election. Legislator Weng Chin-chu's Greater Changhua (*da zhanghua*) broadcast in central Taiwan. In the south, Chen Kuang-fu and Chen Che-nan established the Voice of Sweet Potato (*fanshu zhi sheng*), and legislator Huang Chao-hui together with National Assembly member Chen Chu the Voice of Southern Taiwan (*nantaiwan zhi sheng)*. Other radio stations were partially financed by opposition figures, such as TNT Radio (*baodao xinsheng TNT zhadan diantai*), the Hsinchu and Miaoli branch of Sweet Potato, and the Voice of Formosa (*meilidao zhengyi zhi sheng*).[8] All of these underground radio stations were anti-KMT and supportive of the DPP, except for one: New Thought (*xin siwei zhi sheng*). In 1993, the New Party, a KMT splinter, was founded. The party first distanced itself from underground radio stations, but soon discovered its usefulness in countering the KMT-controlled legal media outlets. In September 1994, party members led by Lee Cheng-long began to operate the first and only important underground radio station that would target both the KMT government and Taiwan's largest opposition party, the DPP. The station served primarily as a campaign tool for Jaw Shao-kang, the party's candidate in the year-end Taipei mayoral election. New Thought became very popular with the residents of Taipei and soon developed into the New Party's major news organ (Chen, 1994: 51–68).

[8] TNT broadcast in the Taipei area. Chen Shui-bian and Peng Pai-hsien, both DPP legislators, were among the major financial contributors. Sweet Potato was sponsored by several local politicians, such as Ke Chian-ming, Ling Kuang-hua, Du Wen-chin, and Wu Chiu-ku, and served as a common platform for opposition figures in Hsinchu and Miaoli. The Voice of Formosa was mostly financed by local DPP officials, Chou Chia-chi, a delegate to the National Assembly, and Lin Fong-hsi, a county councilor (Chen, 1994: 51, 61, 62).