

ELECTIONS FOR SALE

The Causes and Consequences of Vote Buying

edited by
Frederic Charles Schaffer



BOULDER
LONDON

Contents

Published in the United States of America in 2007 by
Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
1800 30th Street, Boulder, Colorado 80301
www.rienner.com

and in the United Kingdom by
Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
3 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 8LU

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Elections for sale : the causes and consequences of vote buying / edited by
Frederic Charles Schaffer.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-1-58826-434-3 (hardcover : alk. paper)

1. Elections—Corrupt practices. 2. Voting. I. Schaffer, Frederic Charles.

JF1083.E54 2006

364.1'324—dc22

2006022544

British Cataloguing in Publication Data

A Cataloguing in Publication record for this book
is available from the British Library.

Printed and bound in the United States of America

The paper used in this publication meets the requirements
of the American National Standard for Permanence of
Paper for Printed Library Materials Z39.48-1992.



5 4 3 2 1

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this point. See Chapter 6 for further discussion on the link between income and vote buying.

20. Note, though, that if the development hypothesis is correct, we should see strategies within urban areas varying according to differences in income levels. In fact, in his study of Thai elections, Sombat Chantornvong found just such a relationship. While noting that vote buying was not an effective strategy in most of Bangkok, he found that vote buying was a viable strategy in the poorer areas of the city (Sombat 1993).

21. District size can change due to the redrawing of district boundaries, population growth, or the enfranchisement of new voters. Large fluctuations in voter turnout also have the effect of increasing or decreasing the number of votes needed to win.

22. Population growth can eventually undermine even these personal strategies.

23. It is also possible to punish vote sellers, though examples of this are rare.

5

The Logistics: How to Buy Votes

Chin-Shou Wang & Charles Kurzman

Imagine that you are interested in buying votes. How do you go about it? Virtually everywhere in the world, vote buying is illegal, so you will need to be discreet. But it is difficult to reach large numbers of voters discreetly. To do so, you will need an extensive organization of brokers, each of whom will approach a small number of voters. This chapter discusses how one vote buying candidate running for county executive in Taiwan in 1993 found qualified brokers and kept them in line. This campaign faced certain challenges that were specific to the Taiwanese context, but the basic requirements of building a broker organization may be applicable to other places and times. It is hard to know just how representative this instance is, since the level of insider access gained by the first author of this chapter (Wang) has not been matched in other studies. Nonetheless, we offer the following hypotheses in the most general terms: that broker organization requires (1) campaign managers with tremendous local knowledge, (2) a significant budget, (3) networks of trust to claim broker loyalty, (4) a system to avoid duplication of effort, and (5) judicial protection. The campaign described here met these requirements, and won its election by a margin of votes lower than the number of votes bought. Despite this effectiveness, as discussed in a companion piece (Wang and Kurzman, forthcoming), the vote buying process was highly inefficient, with at least 45 percent of voters casting their ballots for a candidate other than the one who had paid for their vote.

Background

After retreating from the mainland of China to the island of Taiwan in 1949, the Kuomintang (Nationalist Party) faced a Taiwanese population with whom it had little previous connection. The intention of the Kuomintang in building an electoral institution was not to create a democratic system.

rather, national ruling elites viewed the establishment of electoral institutions as the only way to secure popular support and elicit cooperation from local elites (Wu 1987, 196–197). With few exceptions, elections were restricted to the local level for almost forty years. Citizens could elect local officeholders, from village executives to members of the provincial assembly, but the most important positions—president, members of the national congress, and governors—were unelected.

One of the Kuomintang's primary tools for electoral mobilization was vote buying.¹ "To mobilize voters," a Kuomintang campaign manager said in an interview, "is to build a vote-buying organization" (Interviewee 18). Even in the early years of democratization, after 1987, opposition candidates complained that "money is the meat on the faction skeleton; without money, factions are worthless bones" (Bosco 1994, 40–41).² Academic discussion of vote buying in Taiwan dates back to Bernard Gallin's 1968 analysis, in which he argued that vote buying had been a common practice throughout the country since the 1950s, when candidates gave voters a few packages of cigarettes or some bath towels and soap in exchange for votes. Since that time, however, aside from brief mentions (e.g., Jacobs 1980; Bosco 1994), vote buying has scarcely been included in English-language discussions of Taiwan's electoral process, though many scholars assume it exists. "It is hard to say which is more difficult: finding someone in Taiwan who denies that vote-buying exists, or finding concrete evidence to prove that it does" (Rigger 1999b, 94). In Taiwanese scholarship, however, such evidence is well established. In the 1990s, surveys in various cities in Taiwan found that a quarter to a half of respondents admitted to selling their vote in the most recent election: 24 percent of 1,618 respondents nationwide in 1992 (Yang 1994); 27 percent of 1,168 respondents in 1999 in Taichung County and Taichung City, Taiwan's third largest metropolis (Cheng, Wang, and Chen 2000); 30 percent of 1,198 respondents nationwide in 1992 (Chu 1994); and 45 percent of 1,263 respondents in 1992 in Kaohsiung, Taiwan's second largest city (Ho 1995).

In 1993, Taiwan held elections for county executives around the country. The case under study is a largely rural, agricultural county with a population at that time of close to 1 million. The structure of local factions in this county was typical of faction organization throughout Taiwan. There were two county-level factions, which the Kuomintang had to ask to cooperate with each other to mobilize votes for Kuomintang candidates. At the same time that they were asked to cooperate, the electoral system, involving the single nontransferable vote and multimember districts, frequently forced local factions to compete with each other for Kuomintang nominations and political positions. As noted by Allen Hicken in Chapter 4, single nontransferable vote electoral systems may be more likely to experience vote buying

than other systems. As it happens, though, the 1993 Taiwan case study involved a single seat, so single nontransferable vote dynamics were not particularly visible.

In this race, a non-Kuomintang official affiliated with the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was the incumbent in the county executive race under investigation, having won the 1989 election. Prior to that time, he was a provincial assembly representative and was highly praised not only in his home county but also elsewhere in Taiwan. Before the 1993 election, most surveys showed that he would likely win. Because this candidate was so strong, the Kuomintang mobilized more political and economic resources and personnel for this race than for any other county executive elections in the country.

The study of vote buying, like the study of other illegal activities, is by nature fraught with difficulties. This is one reason why there has been so little empirical research on the mechanics of vote buying. "Simply put, no one who stuffs the ballot box wants to leave a trail of incriminating evidence" (Lehoucq 2003, 233). Other researchers have used newspapers (Cox and Kousser 1981), legal documents (Lehoucq and Molina 2002), and interviews (Callahan and McCargo 1996) to study electoral fraud.

Our study uses observation and interviews, through which we gained the trust of key personnel in a 1993 Taiwanese electoral campaign through two months of work in the campaign headquarters and at a branch office in "Township 20." The first author (Wang) was introduced to campaign officials by an important local figure, and was allowed to observe many of the goings-on in the campaign office and speak informally with campaign workers. Several campaign staff knew the research purpose of Wang's observations and conversations, and did not object. Interviews with sixteen Kuomintang campaign officials, two DPP campaign officials, and two knowledgeable local observers were conducted after the election and the fieldwork had finished. More than a hundred further interviews were conducted in the region in subsequent years. These campaign officials and the documents that they made available open an unprecedented window onto the process of vote buying.

Vote buying was central to the Kuomintang's campaign in this 1993 election. An official in the mobilization department of campaign headquarters said succinctly in an interview that the most important duty of his unit was "to arrange the organization for vote-buying" (Interviewee 18). Accordingly, the Kuomintang arranged for vote buying throughout the county. This was arranged through campaign branch offices, one in each township, called Campaign Committees for the Kuomintang Candidate. These offices were each led by a campaign manager who was familiar with the local situation and was responsible for building the broker organization.

The Importance of the Campaign Manager

Campaign managers are crucial in any electoral contest. But different skills are involved when the campaign involves or does not involve vote buying. In a local election in Taiwan in 2001, for example, six of the seven successful candidates bought votes. The seventh candidate, affiliated with the DPP, refused. His campaign hired a manager and staff who were young, highly educated, and relatively unconnected with the local population. With few local supporters and little understanding of local politics, they focused their energies on crafting an idealistic platform, getting their candidate into the news, and producing high-quality flyers and brochures, which were widely said to be the best in the election.

The vote buying campaigns, by contrast, hired local politicians who had detailed knowledge of the local populations: who knew whom, who trusted whom, and how these relationships could be used to influence staff and voters.³ Ideological skills and media sophistication are useful as well, but vote buying campaigns do not rely exclusively on such impersonal connections with voters as brochures and media reports (for further analysis of different personal strategies, see Chapter 4). When the primary contact with voters is one-on-one, through the act of vote buying, the campaign manager has to be a walking encyclopedia of local knowledge.

The currents of local politics are complicated in many parts of Taiwan by the existence of multiple local factions that compete with one another for political advantage and are loath to cooperate. Yet Kuomintang candidates in the county under study, as elsewhere in Taiwan, could not afford to side with one faction and alienate the others. They had to be induced to work together—or at least to work in parallel. Towns without factions were an even greater challenge. At least the factions provided a ready-made source of brokers for vote buying. Where factions did not exist, campaign managers had to find brokers on their own.

It was not easy to find people with the political skills and local knowledge needed to fill the role of campaign manager. As a result, Kuomintang campaign offices went to great pains to get the best possible people for the most competitive races. For example, the president of the campaign committee in Township 20 spent much time searching for the proper person to hold the post of campaign manager, technically termed the “executive officer” of the campaign committee. The campaign manager who was eventually hired was highly qualified: he had never lost an election in his twenty-plus years of managing campaigns, and was widely praised as the best campaign manager in the township. People in town said that the Kuomintang candidate would not have won without him. This man was a Kuomintang member in 1993, but not a hard-core supporter. Indeed, he sympathized with the DPP’s “clean government” platform and often voted

for the DPP in national elections. In local elections, he had worked for several Kuomintang candidates, one DPP candidate, and one independent, following the widespread Taiwanese dictum, “In national elections, party first; in local ones, [candidate] first.” To encourage the manager to join the campaign, the president of the campaign committee, a local dignitary, visited him several times as a show of respect. In addition, the campaign could draw on the manager’s feelings of gratitude and debt toward a campaign committee official’s father who had procured a job for him a long time previously.

Township 3 during the 1993 elections provides an example of the great difficulty of managing local mobilization. Faction A tended to be pro-Kuomintang, but the Kuomintang approached Faction B first, because Faction B had won the Farmers Association election and was considered the dominant faction. The leaders of Faction A then intended to support the DPP candidate, and in fact the DPP approached Faction A for support (Interviewee 13). The campaign headquarters of the Kuomintang candidate tried to dissuade Faction A from supporting the DPP candidate, using a variety of connections, but failed. Finally, the manager at the campaign headquarters—a wily and experienced campaigner known locally as “little deity”—went to talk with a local political figure who had two generations of connections with the family of the founder of Faction A. The manager asked this man to persuade Faction A to take a neutral stance, at the least, and perhaps even to support the Kuomintang candidate. The strategy worked, and Faction A joined the Kuomintang campaign. This sort of local knowledge and political skill was crucial for close races.

In nonfactional townships, campaign managers have the primary responsibility for locating and hiring a sufficient number of brokers, a process that requires intimate knowledge of local personalities and relationships. For example, in Township 20 in the 1993 election, a local political figure offered to support the Kuomintang campaign, but the campaign manager did not trust him, since he had campaigned for DPP candidates in national elections. Only when the campaign manager learned that another political figure in town, a trustworthy Kuomintang supporter, had vouched for the other man did the manager agree to bring him into the campaign organization.

Local knowledge is important in any campaign, whether or not it plans to buy votes. But when vote buying is involved, the importance is all the greater. Every botched personnel decision carries the risk that the vote buying scheme will be discovered. In Taiwan, one could not always count on party loyalty, as local political figures were known to switch affiliations. Even the undefeated campaign manager in Township 20, for example, went on to manage a DPP campaign for township executive the following year.

Budgeting for Vote Buying

Vote buying can be expensive. In Township 20 in 1993, the Kuomintang bought 14,090 votes for 300 Taiwanese dollars each (about US\$10), equivalent to the cost of two meals in an inexpensive restaurant.⁴ This price was set by the campaign and was nonnegotiable, though not arbitrary, as it had grown out of the party's experience with the market in vote buying in this county over the previous decades. Campaign officials must have calculated that a smaller amount might have been considered an insult to the voters, and a larger amount would not have been worth the extra loyalty that it might have delivered.

Yet even this modest price generated a significant cost. In Township 20, the campaign bought 67 percent of the eligible votes; if this rate is extrapolated to the entire county, then the campaign spent more than US\$4 million on vote buying alone. This was an unusually high figure, and was due to the special attention given to this race. The Kuomintang had made this particular county executive campaign a national priority, because it wanted desperately to win back the office from the DPP. This was one of the few county-wide offices held by the DPP anywhere in Taiwan at that time. Locals called the 1993 race "the battle of the century."

Presumably, the Kuomintang drew on its national coffers to finance the county campaign, but we have no information on this. This subject was too sensitive to be raised in interviews, and was not observed during fieldwork in 1993. During a later election in the same county, a low-level campaign official suggested that the national Kuomintang headquarters gave the candidate a sum that is comparable to the US\$4 million figure we have estimated, but we cannot vouch for the reliability of this information.

Whatever its source, we can follow the money once it reached campaign headquarters. In consultation with local campaign officials, the campaign headquarters set target vote buying rates for each township in the county (Interviewee 18). For Township 20, for example, the campaign set a rate of 70–80 percent, and township campaign officials aimed to buy 75 percent of the vote (ending up with 67 percent). In areas where the campaign expected to encounter difficulties, the target rate might be higher, but the campaign worried that too high a rate would encourage brokers to feel that they could get away with embezzling the vote buying money, since the candidate would be sure to win a majority in the precinct (Interviewee 10).

The campaign then budgeted a 10 percent "commission" for local campaign operatives on top of the cost of buying votes. This commission has become conventional in almost all large-scale elections in this region of Taiwan, though it may be supplemented by cases of cigarettes or other gifts (Interviewees 8, 10). Campaign headquarters paid the commission to local campaign offices without stipulating how the money should be spent

The vote buying money was delivered to the township campaign offices in three installments. The first two were small, intended mainly to cover office work, and were sent two months and one month before the election, respectively. The third and main installment was supposed to arrive about ten days before the election. If it came too late, as it had in the 1989 county executive election in Township 20, one of the local campaign leaders could pocket the money and brokers or other local leaders would not have enough time to report the embezzlement to campaign headquarters in order to receive new funds prior to the election (Interviewee 14). To prevent embezzlement, campaign headquarters had adopted a strategy of asking four or five witnesses, such as factions leaders or local party officials, to observe the transfer of funds (Interviewee 18). In the 1993 election, the vote buying money arrived one week before the polling day.

In Township 20, the local campaign office then distributed the money to the precinct campaign directors in two installments, one fifty days prior to the election, to induce the brokers to visit voters, and one a week prior to the election, in amounts based on the number of voters in each precinct, averaging about 15,000 Taiwanese dollars (US\$500) per precinct. The first installment, called an "administration fee," was used to buy cigarettes, tea, and areca nut, which many Taiwanese chew socially. When brokers visited voters, they often gave each a cigarette and lit it, as a sign of respect. The second installment included an additional administration fee, twice the amount of the first installment; the brokers' commissions, which could be combined or replaced with the administration fee; and the money for buying votes.

The precinct campaign directors then distributed the money to the brokers. The amount per voter was fixed by headquarters, but the distribution of the commission was left to the discretion of the precinct directors. Each director handled the money differently. One threw luncheon parties for brokers (Interviewee 5), another bought cigarettes or gifts for brokers (Interviewees 6, 7), another bought them coupons to exchange for free gasoline (Interviewees 1, 7). The directors then passed along the remaining funds to the brokers in cash, sometimes proportional to the number of voters for whom a broker was responsible, and sometimes in equal amounts. The brokers in Township 20 generally received 500–2,000 Taiwanese dollars (US\$17–67) in commissions, but some received nothing, because they had been assigned so few voters.

In the 1993 election under study, the Kuomintang campaign created a further, unusual incentive system for brokers (Interviewee 1). After the election, the campaign compared the number of votes in each precinct with the number received by the Kuomintang candidate in the previous county executive election. The precinct's campaign workers received a bonus of 30,000 Taiwanese dollars (US\$1,000) if the number of votes increased by 50;

50,000 Taiwanese dollars (US\$1,667) if it increased by 100; and 100,000 Taiwanese dollars (US\$3,333) if it increased by 200. In Township 20, twelve of eighteen precincts qualified for these bonuses, the distribution of which was left to the precinct campaign directors. One director bought brokers a tourist trip, one bought brokers sportswear, and others donated to community welfare organizations, temples, or elder associations.

A few brokers asked for additional material rewards. One asked the campaign to promise that the government would finance a community project in his village, and a few asked for favors such as reassignment into a better government job. Yet the primary material rewards came in the form of expectations, sometimes explicit and often unspoken, that the successful candidate would reward followers after the election. Like "pork barrel" politics everywhere, campaign leaders stressed repeatedly that the candidate would do his best to bring government projects to constituents (Interviewee 2). In the month after he won the election, the Kuomintang candidate received hundreds of requests for jobs or financial support from campaign officials.

Nonetheless, material incentives alone were insufficient. The broker payments were not particularly large, even in a relatively poor county with an average annual income of approximately 225,000 Taiwanese dollars (US\$7,500). In fact, in some elections, certain officials even paid to participate in the campaign (Interviewees 5, 7). Mau-Kuei Chang and Chun-Chue Chen (1986) have noted that campaign mobilization in Taiwan draws on a combination of social relationships and financial incentives. In Township 20 in 1993, the social relationships far outweighed the financial incentives.

Finding Trustworthy Brokers

In Taiwan, the act of vote buying is conducted by brokers, called *tiau-a-ka* (literally, "pillars"; for a discussion of this role, see Rigger 1994, chaps. 4–5; Rigger 1999b, 87–102). The Kuomintang hires a large number of brokers, each of whom approaches a small number of voters (in one precinct in 1993, this number ranged from six to fifty-six, with a mean of twenty-one, according to a campaign document). The broker offers money in exchange for support on election day, and delivers the money from the campaign office to the voters on the eve of the elections. Given the secrecy of the ballot, brokers must guess which voters can be counted on to deliver votes. As a result, the vote buying operation is only as good as its brokers.⁵

Township 20 in 1993, for example, had no factions, so the Kuomintang had to create a broker organization from scratch. For a county election with approximately 21,000 eligible voters, the Kuomintang hired 522 brokers, plus 99 assistant directors (called "superbrokers") and 26 directors, all of

whom also served as brokers and bought votes. Three months before election day, Township 20's service station, the local branch of the Kuomintang party office, held a meeting for leading local supporters, during which the party office introduced the candidate and his platform to party members. One month later, the local party branch held another meeting, at which the president and vice presidents of the campaign committee were selected. The president then appointed a planning officer and other campaign officials. These officials and the vice presidents chose the directors, who then appointed assistant directors (Interviewee 11).

Personal connections were crucial in making these appointments. Of the 26 directors, 25 had social connections with top-level campaign officials: they were classmates in school, natives of the same small village, relatives, colleagues, or veterans of past Kuomintang mobilization networks. Where these ties were insufficient, the directors were mobilized by third parties who had close ties to the party leadership. With close associates making the request, few people refused to serve.

The directors and assistant directors then selected the brokers. Some used their institutional position. For example, one village chief used neighborhood chiefs as the primary source for brokers (Interviewee 19); the secretary-general of the local Farmers Association relied primarily on association staff members and activists (Interviewee 6). Others used personal ties, such as a director who asked his good friends to be brokers, including some who owed him favors (Interviewee 7). In addition, some people were selected simply because they were politically active and had an interest in the campaign, for one reason or another. Over time, experienced campaign officials get to know who these people are, since Taiwan holds elections almost every year. Brokers came from many social backgrounds, including farmers, fishermen, small business owners, governmental officials, and even teachers.

The campaign needed strong social ties to build a sufficient network of brokers for vote buying. The brokers had to be trustworthy enough that they would not divulge campaign secrets to the opposition or the authorities, or waste or embezzle the campaign's resources. The question of "honor among thieves" arises in any illegal collective action, and the Kuomintang used social ties and oversight mechanisms to try to address the constant fear that it would be cheated. There is an irony here: the efficient avoidance of external accountability required careful systems of internal accountability.

Even with strong social ties, trust was an ongoing concern. "Supporting the candidate is supporting me," one precinct director told his brokers (Interviewee 7). Other directors appealed to the prestige of the local campaign leader, a man who grew up in Township 20 and had remained active in local affairs, including the festivities in key temples. He was known to have used his connections in the government to obtain funds for infrastruc-

ture in the township. His friendship with the candidate was a major boon for the campaign.

From the campaign office, to the precinct directors, to brokers, to voters, each link in the vote buying chain involved the mobilization of social relations. The candidate did not establish a connection directly with voters, but only indirectly through a series of trusted intermediaries.

Managing the Brokers

The interests of the brokers and the interests of the campaign did not always match perfectly. Some brokers considered pocketing the money instead of passing it along to voters. Aside from outright embezzlement, some brokers wished to pad their own income by purchasing a large number of votes, though the campaign might not have trusted their ability to make good on their promise. Some brokers wanted to channel campaign money to their family or friends, even if these people had no intention of voting for the candidate. In addition, some brokers wished to repurchase votes of the same individuals, wasting campaign resources.

As a result, the campaign reserved the right to filter or add voters to the lists that the brokers drew up (Interviewee 1; Minute Books 3, 6).⁶ One month before the 1993 election, the campaign manager in one district gathered all the brokers in a single meeting and reviewed the voter lists. The group discussed whether each voter was a hard-core DPP supporter, and therefore not worth approaching. If the voter was not, the campaign officials solicited brokers who thought they could successfully buy this particular vote. If more than one broker volunteered, the campaign officials asked them about the kind of relationship they had with the voter, and how strong this relationship was.

Residential location was the most important factor in deciding how to distribute brokers among voters, simply because brokers would not need much time to visit their voters. Social networks were often residentially based, and many neighbors had preexisting social relationships of friendship or kinship.⁷ Therefore the campaign made an effort to select brokers who lived in each precinct in the electoral district. But sometimes a strong relationship might win out over residential proximity, for example if the broker and the voter were brothers. In one precinct, a voter who had recently arrived in the community had no strong relationship with the brokers who lived nearest to him, so a broker who lived farther away but who knew the voter from their common line of business, and had done the voter some favors, was assigned to him (Interviewee 20).

Frequently, brokers would be assigned to a household rather than an individual. One broker (Interviewee 20) who was active and popular in

local politics in Township 20, for example, was responsible for vote buying in ten households, in addition to his immediate family members. These households could be divided into three categories, according to their social relations with the broker: relatives, friends, and neighbors. In the case of this particular broker:

- *Relatives:* One voter was a nephew of the broker and helped the broker to buy votes in the families of the voter's brother and two daughters; another relative, a cousin, helped the broker deliver the vote buying money to the voter's neighbors.
- *Friends:* One voter not only accepted money from the broker, but also helped the broker distribute money to the voter's brothers.
- *Neighbors:* The broker bought votes from one neighboring household.

The last stage of the process was "vote calling," on election day. Brokers visited voters, secured their votes, responded to the voters' needs, and most importantly, amplified the effects of mobilization and vote buying as much as possible through their connections with the voters. They had to determine how many voters would be home, how many family members who were away would return to vote, and whether they would vote for the candidate whom the broker recommended. If a voter had not been persuaded by a particular broker, that broker would turn to another who might have closer ties to the voter. The link between brokers and voters was not simply a cash nexus; indeed, for vote buying to work, it had to be situated within a broader array of social relations between brokers and voters. From the campaign committee to the superbrokers, from the superbrokers to the brokers, and from the brokers to voters, the mobilization of social relations must extend in a smooth continuum for the system to be successful.

Judicial Protection

Vote buying has always been illegal in Taiwan. This was one reason to limit brokers' assignments to close social relations: doing so reduced the risk that a voter would report the practice to law enforcement authorities, in that such a report would be a breach of trust. Still, vote buying campaigns needed protection from judicial review if they were to operate successfully. In Thailand, and in the Philippines too, vote buying campaigns counted on the willingness of the local police to look the other way (Callahan and McCargo 1996, 390; Tordesillas 1998, 77). In Taiwan, Kuomintang campaign officials had little fear of being punished for vote buying, since they assumed that police and prosecutors would not take much of an interest

(Interviewees 1, 7). "Vote-buying is quite open," the campaign manager said in an interview. "Most candidates buy votes. People are rarely afraid of being caught" (Interviewee 1).

Prior to democratization, the Kuomintang rarely allowed the judiciary system to pursue vote buying allegations. One prosecutor investigated a vote buying case and caught five persons, but was blocked by his supervisor from further investigations, and never had the chance to question the Kuomintang candidate (Interviewee 116). Another prosecutor went straight to the county chair of the Kuomintang to report that he had received allegations of vote buying, essentially ratting out the whistleblower to the chief suspect (Huang 1997, 401–402). As late as 1995, the secretary of the Kuomintang's central committee, Shuei-De Shiu, bragged, "The courts are owned by the ruling party" (Yang 1995, 25).

In the mid-1990s, this was starting to change. With democratization, the DPP began to make vote buying, and corruption more generally, a campaign issue. In one local case in 1995, a young prosecutor's investigation managed to keep a powerful legislator from buying 50,000 votes; he only bought 30,000 votes, and was so shaken that he refused to run for reelection again (Interviewee 115). After the DPP won the 2000 presidential election and announced that it would investigate vote buying actively and seek jail time for brokers during the 2001 elections, some brokers panicked and abandoned vote buying campaigns (Interviewees 1, 51). Some campaign managers dared not hold broker meetings or discuss vote buying by telephone. They sought new ways to avoid suspicion, such as withdrawing cash from campaign bank accounts several months before election day so as not to create an obvious paper trail. They also tried not to generate incriminating documents, such as lists of brokers and their voters (Interviewee 1).

But in 1993, the Kuomintang campaign was more concerned about opposing candidates, rather than police or prosecutors, learning of its strategies. Meetings about vote buying were held in the basement of the campaign office, with no care taken to distance the campaign from the vote buying operation. Documents detailing the campaign's vote buying were kept in campaign offices, not destroyed. In past years, the local district attorney and several judges had been members of the Kuomintang campaign committee (we did not have access to the committee list for 1993).

One reason for discretion in vote buying was that if DPP supporters knew which broker was buying which votes, they might find someone with a strong social relationship with the broker or the voter and persuade them not to support the Kuomintang candidate. Indeed, several local DPP candidates also bought votes—in other elections, though not in 1993—and the Kuomintang campaign worried that their bought votes would be rebought by other campaigns. This was why Kuomintang brokers generally waited to

deliver money to voters until the eve of election day, on the supposition that the campaign that paid last, paid best (Interviewees 1, 7).

The Kuomintang also used its cozy relationship with the judiciary to attack DPP candidates. In one instance, the Kuomintang requested that the Bureau of Investigation and a local prosecutor investigate a city park project that the party felt would implicate a DPP incumbent official. In another investigation, the district attorney told prosecutors to detain a DPP county official suspected of granting illegal favors to a golf club, hoping to embarrass the DPP during campaign season. Both of these attempts failed. The DPP candidate was not indicted in either case: the prosecutor in the golf case refused to detain the DPP official, and the parks investigation backfired when a Kuomintang legislator was discovered to be involved. The Kuomintang then had the Bureau of Investigation agents reassigned, but the prosecutor leaked the information to a newspaper and the agents were returned to the parks case. By 1993, democratization had already brought some limits to Kuomintang manipulation of the judicial system.

Conclusion

In the 1993 election, the Kuomintang candidate defeated the DPP candidate, a highly praised incumbent, winning 51.3 percent of the vote. Vote buying worked. This study has suggested that five elements were crucial to this success: an excellent campaign manager, a generous budget, a sufficient number of trustworthy brokers, and a system to supervise them and avoid duplication of effort, and protection from a compliant judicial system. How generalizable are these findings?

Several factors make the campaign under study distinctive. First, the Kuomintang party committed disproportionate energy to this campaign, hoping to dislodge an incumbent from the opposition party. Most races in Taiwan at the time did not attract this much attention or resources. Second, the political system in Taiwan was undergoing significant changes, becoming more democratic. As a result, the vote buying system in 1993 may not be representative of vote buying systems before or since (on the transformation of electoral clientelism in Taiwan, see Wang 2004). Third, the political system in Taiwan is hardly representative of political systems around the world. Alternatives can be found for almost every element of the Kuomintang vote buying operation.

How Many Brokers Does a Vote Buying Campaign Need?

In Taiwan in the case under study, a large number of brokers each purchased a small number of votes. As a result, the campaign manager had to recruit

an extensive broker organization, which necessitated a detailed knowledge of the social and political personalities in the district. In some other countries, by contrast, a small number of brokers each purchase a large number of votes (Gay 1994, 1999, on Brazil; Landé 1965, 132, on the Philippines; Schmidt 1977, 305–306, on Colombia; Valenzuela 1977, 80–83, on Chile). In Brazil, for example, the leader of a poor *favela* (shantytown) neighborhood buys the entire community's votes, apparently without intermediaries (Gay 1994, 102).

Does the Vote Buying Campaign Rely on Preexisting Social Networks?

According to Fabrice Lehoucq (Chapter 3) and Susan Stokes (2005), dense social networks can be used by parties and politicians to overcome informational barriers to vote buying by finding out which voters would be amenable to selling their votes, and likely to follow through. In Taiwan in 1993, the Kuomintang organized its campaign wherever possible through preexisting "factions," but where these were not available, it built its own broker organization from scratch. In some other countries, it seems, campaigns rely exclusively on preexisting family networks as "gatekeepers" of the community, piggybacking on existing patronage structures within the community (Auyero 2000; Caciagli and Belloni 1981, 40–41; Knoke 1990, 144–146; Powell 1970, 413; Silverman 1977). Where this is the case, the campaign need only mobilize relationships of trust at the top of the hierarchy, leaving the lower-level brokers to be mobilized by patronage leaders.

Are Brokers Local Residents?

In Taiwan, yes. In Thailand, yes (Callahan and McCargo 1996, 383). In Mexico, not necessarily. In the latter country, in addition to brokers who are local residents, the longtime ruling party organizes brigades of *mapaches*, young people brought in from outside the community to visit voters' homes, offer money or construction materials in exchange for votes, transport voters to the polls on election day, and on occasion engage in ballot box fraud or coercion (Hernández Carrochano 2003, 1–2). Presumably these brigades' enthusiasm and party ambition outweigh their lack of local knowledge. Their relationship with voters involves a cash/barter nexus rather than neighborly or family trust.

Can Vote Buying Be Coercive?

As noted by Frederic Schaffer and Andreas Schedler in Chapter 2, vote buying is often accompanied by coercion. However, in Taiwan in 1993, coer-

cion played a very limited role in the Kuomintang campaign, though the Kuomintang would sometimes purge local factions by legal means (Wu 1987, 324–327). In some other countries, however, coercion is either common or commonly feared. A comparison of broker organizations in Taiwan and Mexico, for example, found that the use of coercion and other negative sanctions was far more frequent in the latter (Rigger 1999a). Indeed, scholars speak of a "fear vote" in Mexico that involves reprisals by the ruling party for supporting the opposition (Fox and Hernández 1995, 30; see also Cornelius 2004). In these situations, trust may be less important than fear.

Is Vote Buying Expensive?

In Taiwan in 1993, the amount paid per vote was low, compared with voters' annual income, but the campaign bought so many votes that the budget had to be considerable. Elsewhere, even lesser amounts may be paid to voters. In the Philippines in 1998, for example, the going rate was 100 Philippine pesos (less than US\$3) (Tordesillas 1998, 77; for further information, see Chapter 1 of this volume). In addition, some campaigns may keep costs down by targeting their vote buying efforts at swing voters, rather than wasting resources on ideologically or otherwise committed voters.

Are Brokers Independent Agents?

In Taiwan in 1993, relatively few brokers were staff employees of the Kuomintang, and many worked on occasion for non-Kuomintang candidates. In some other countries, this level of autonomy would be unthinkable: brokers are party employees, and disloyalty to the party is frowned upon, even punished. In a comparison of brokers in Mexico and Venezuela, for example, Michael Coppedge (1993) found that single-party dominance in Mexico (in the early 1990s) forced local political agents to ally with the ruling party, while the failure of single-party dominance in Venezuela allowed choice among multiple clientelistic hierarchies.

Are Opposition Parties Allowed to Compete?

As noted by Allen Hicken in Chapter 4, the degree of electoral competitiveness may affect candidates' incentives to mobilize personal strategies, including vote buying. In Taiwan in 1993, the Kuomintang tried to disrupt DPP campaigns in shady ways, such as opening Bureau of Investigation cases, but did not often cross the line into systematic repression of the opposition. Moreover, the Kuomintang allowed votes to be counted fairly: its vote buying efforts were not combined with other forms of fraud, such as ballot stuffing, stealing, or miscounting. In some other countries, ruling par-

ties are not so restrained. Those in power have resorted to a host of strategies for electoral manipulation, including reserving positions, reserving domains, excluding opposition forces, fragmenting opposition forces, repression, unfairness, formal and informal disfranchisement, coercion, corruption, electoral fraud, institutional bias, tutelage, and reversal of electoral results (Schedler 2002a).

Are Votes Anonymous?

Campaigns that cannot monitor the behavior of voters are less likely to buy votes, since they cannot ensure that their money will be well spent, as Lehoucq notes in Chapter 3. In Taiwan in 1993, voters could count on their votes being anonymous, at least at the individual level (as elsewhere, precinct-level results were publicly available). Therefore the brokers used social relations to overcome the uncertainty over whether voters would deliver the votes they had sold. The system was imperfect—a considerable portion of the electorate failed to vote for the Kuomintang after selling their votes to the party (Wang and Kurzman, forthcoming)—but the vote buying effort anticipated this and planned accordingly. Over the course of the twentieth century, almost all countries adopted the Australian ballot, which lists multiple candidates on a single card and therefore allows for a discreet selection, as opposed to earlier systems that required the voter to select one party's card (Fredman 1968; Markoff 1999, 674–677). With secret ballots, the price of a vote plummeted in some countries, since the purchasers could no longer be certain that they were receiving the services they paid for (Schaffer 2002b, 79).

Even with the Australian ballot, however, voters in some countries are not always certain that their individual vote will be secret if election personnel are ruling-party members (on ruling-party management of elections, see Lehoucq 2002). Indeed, election observers in Mexico found that 39 percent of polling stations in 1994 violated the secrecy of the ballot in one way or another (Lehoucq 2003, 248). Or the ruling party may be endowed with near-magical powers of surveillance that make individual votes known, as in Chiapas, Mexico, during the 2000 elections, when voters worried that the ruling party had a satellite watching the ballot box or that ballots could be linked to them by fingerprints (Hernández Carrochano 2003, 7).⁹

* * *

This list of exceptions suggests that the Taiwanese experience is not the only form that vote buying can take. Still, we propose that our basic findings may be applicable even to quite different vote buying systems. As compared with non-vote buying campaigns, vote buying involves more one-on-

one contact with voters. Regardless of whether this contact is made by a large or small number of brokers, from within or outside the party, and with or without coercion, vote buying campaigns need to build or tap into a system for reaching voters discreetly. They need skilled leaders who possess tremendous local knowledge, sufficient resources to make the vote buying worthwhile, and sufficient trust to minimize mishaps. They need protection from judicial systems. Vote buying campaigns, in short, may not be so different from other criminal enterprises: they make up for their legal vulnerabilities by ensconcing themselves in local networks of protection, and they administer resources to motivate these networks to protect them. This picture suggests that vote buying parties, even ruling parties, may not be so powerful as commonly perceived. If the legal apparatus of the state is on guard to prevent and prosecute vote buying, then even a ruling party such as the Kuomintang in Taiwan may have to work hard to avoid public scrutiny. As research continues on the subject of vote buying, insider information from a variety of contexts will corroborate or disconfirm these hypotheses.

Notes

1. Kuomintang candidates were not the only ones who bought votes; many other candidates did so as well, though usually on a smaller scale.
2. Factions are local sociopolitical organizations that the Kuomintang allied itself with to mobilize voters, beginning in the 1950s (Bosco 1992, 1994). The party rewarded local factions with various privileges, such as regional charters for banking, credit, and transport; advantage in government loans, procurement, contracts, and zoning; and protection of illegal business activities (Chen and Chu 1992; Chu 1989, 148–152). In return, local factions helped the party rule areas that it found difficult to penetrate. From 1954 to 1994, 61.9 percent of the party's nominees for Taiwan's provincial assembly had a local faction background, and 92.6 percent of those candidates were elected (Lin 1998, 164). In addition, the party controlled local factions through a variety of coercive, though almost always nonviolent, mechanisms (Wu 1987).
3. On the role of campaign managers in vote buying in other contexts, see Tordesillas 1998 on the Philippines, and Callahan and McCargo 1996 on Thailand.
4. In Township 17, two local dignitaries donated their own money to increase the payment to 500 Taiwanese dollars per vote (Interviewee 17).
5. For a similar point about vote buying brokers in Thailand, see Callahan and McCargo 1996, 382–383, 386.
6. The minutes are internal documents of the campaign committee in Township 20.
7. In Thailand, one interviewee in William Callahan's study (2002, 11) said that canvassers used "a more subtle direct sales method to buy votes from relatives and close friends who were unlikely to turn them into the ECT (Election Commission of Thailand)."
8. This tactic is also used in the Philippines (Tirol 1992).
9. Voting-booth secrecy can also be exploited for vote buying purposes. In the Philippines, for example, voters who had been bought would take a completed ballot

into the booth and turn it in as their own, and then take the blank ballot that they had been issued back out with them to give to the broker to fill in for the next voter (Hofileña 2001, 19; Tordesillas 1998, 77). Kuwaiti election officials countered this strategy with ballot booths that concealed voters' hands but not their arms and body, so as to make switching ballots visible (Tétreault 2000, 124–125).

Part 2

How Does Vote Buying Shape Politics and the Economy?

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