

Summer 2023

THIRD PARTY POWERHOUSE: Ko Wen-je's Rise in Taiwanese Politics

Walter Stackler

Follow this and additional works at: https://soundideas.pugetsound.edu/summer_research



Part of the [Asian History Commons](#), and the [Political History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Stackler, Walter, "THIRD PARTY POWERHOUSE: Ko Wen-je's Rise in Taiwanese Politics" (2023). *Summer Research*. 465.

https://soundideas.pugetsound.edu/summer_research/465

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Sound Ideas. It has been accepted for inclusion in Summer Research by an authorized administrator of Sound Ideas. For more information, please contact soundideas@pugetsound.edu.

THIRD PARTY POWERHOUSE: Ko Wen-je's Rise in Taiwanese Politics

Walter Stackler

Summer Research 2023

History Department

Faculty Advisor: Jennifer Neighbors

Since Taiwan's first direct and democratic elections in 1996, two parties have dominated Taiwan's political spectrum. The right-wing Kuomintang (KMT) ruled mainland China from 1928-1949 through one-party rule, and subsequently ruled Taiwan from 1949-1987 through martial law. Today, the KMT has generally good relations with mainland China, partially due to the KMT's opposition to formal Taiwanese independence. By contrast, the left-wing Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was founded as an opposition party in 1986, and is the party of the current outgoing Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen. Today, the DPP has generally poorer relations with mainland China than the KMT, partially due to the DPP's opposition to strengthening cross-strait relations.

Third parties have played a small role in Taiwan's legislature and have never seriously contested a presidential election. However, recently Taiwan's two-party dynamic has been shaken up by the emergence of the Taiwan People's Party (TPP), led by former Taipei mayor and independent politician Ko Wen-je. Founded in 2019, the TPP is largely seen as a vehicle for Ko to launch a serious challenge for the Taiwanese presidency. So far, the TPP has seen success far above any other third party in Taiwanese history. In the words of one of Ko's critics, "Ko most likely will become the biggest variable in the 2024 presidential election."¹

The TPP has drawn a high volume of comparison with other third parties in Taiwanese politics, such as the New Power Party (NPP). A December 2019 article on the Taiwan People's Party (TPP) by Brian Hioe in the magazine *New Bloom* cast doubt on the TPP and Ko to succeed any longer than the floundering NPP. Additionally, a June 2023 article on Ko by Pan Wei-yiu in

¹ Hioe, Brian. "With Kinmen Comments, Ko Wen-Je Dives into Cross-Strait Debate." *The Diplomat*. July 01, 2022.

the *Taipei Times* hinted that voters would be skeptical of Ko due to issues from his time as mayor of Taipei and his common crass statements. However, Hioe is mistaken in equating the future prospects of the TPP with those of the NPP, while Pan mistakes Ko's common controversial comments as a weakness, where it is in fact a strength.

Unlike the NPP, the TPP is centered around one person (Ko), rather than being founded as a movement party. While the NPP was specifically created to focus on left-wing social issues, Ko founded the TPP to poach votes from both the pan-Green and pan-Blue camps. Ko has managed to maintain high levels of support from voters under 40, stemming from his good track record in support of gay marriage and labor rights during his time as mayor of Taipei. At the same time, Ko has drifted closer to the pan-Blue coalition and taken up moderate versions of stances usually espoused by the KMT, especially on trade relations with the mainland, without losing too much support from his younger voting base. Unlike the leaders of the NPP, it is doubtful that Ko cares much about the long-term success of the TPP as long as it is a successful vehicle to propel him into the presidency in 2024.

Ko has also turned his habit of making controversial statements into a strength. By presenting himself as rough around the edges and inherently different from the political establishment, Ko has ensured that he remains a household name despite his relatively moderate political platform and often ambiguous policy views. Fortunately for Ko, he does not have much of a political record for others to find issues with, besides his eight years as the mayor of Taipei. Ko does not come from a wealthy background or have family in politics. However, he has not neglected the issue of political or financial connections. Ko has previously recruited long-time KMT senior lawmaker Wang Jin-pyng to help his presidential campaign, along with Taiwanese billionaire and Foxconn founder Terry Gou. Despite having these relatively significant political

and financial connections of his own, Ko does not seem to have lost momentum in the polls so far. This may be because the KMT's candidate, Hou You-yi, and the DPP's candidate, Lai Ching-te, are currently dealing with separate scandals and may be more focused on damage control.

Ko has made a name for his party primarily through his charismatic personality, his ability to find political and financial allies, and his seemingly innate ability to capitalize on the weaknesses of his competitors. By presenting himself as a rough-around-the-edges politician that is not beholden to the DPP or the KMT, Ko has allowed his moderate platform to prove hugely popular. Specifically, Ko has made the centrist policies of the TPP interesting by painting both the DPP and the KMT as ineffective. Ko has also outsourced the political and financial support for his presidential campaign to others, which allows him to continue touting his humble personal origins. And Ko's ability to make the most of the current struggles facing the KMT and the DPP has boosted his success. These three strengths combined have allowed Ko to disrupt Taiwan's two-party political climate, and may propel him into the presidency.

I: Methodology

This paper draws from primary source, English-language news articles from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, China, and the United States. There is a specific focus given to online news, such as digitized print articles, online articles, television segments, and live interviews. This paper also utilizes secondary source material from scholarly journals and think tanks. The author believes that, although this paper does not draw source material from Mandarin language media, many of the English-language primary sources used are highly reflective of Mandarin-language media on this topic produced in Taiwan. For example, this paper utilizes several articles from the *Taipei Times*, an English-language subsidiary of the Liberty Times Group. The Liberty Times

Group also publishes the *Liberty Times*, a Mandarin-language daily newspaper that is widely read in Taiwan.

II: Background of the TPP

The Taiwan People's Party (TPP) is an exceptionally new political party in Taiwan. It was officially founded on August 06, 2019, and its first party meeting elected Ko Wen-je as the party's President. Less than six months later, the TPP won 11.22% of seats in the January 2020 Legislative Yuan (LY) elections. This translated to 5 LY seats and catapulted the TPP to be the third-largest political party in the LY.² In June 2020, the TPP poached a somewhat high-profile KMT politician, Hsieh Li-kung (the former Taiwanese National Immigration Agency director-general), to join the TPP as its party secretary.³ By October 2021, the TPP breezed past a major milestone in modern Taiwanese politics when it became Taiwan's second-most popular political party, after the DPP and ahead of the KMT. In May 30, 2023, Ko surpassed Hou You-yi, the KMT's presidential candidate for the 2024 race, for the first time in nation-wide popularity polls.⁴

III: Background of Other Taiwanese Third Parties

Third parties other than the TPP seem to face long-term failure in maintaining popular support, a problem that is best illustrated by the successes and failures of the NPP. Founded by leaders of the 2014 Sunflower Movement, the NPP became a registered political party in January 2015. It gained 5 parliamentary seats in the 2016 LY elections, making it the third-largest party

² Taiwan People's Party. "1.58 million party votes and 5 non-partition seats into the Yuan." *About Us – Milestones*. January 11, 2020.

³ Hsiao, Sherry. "Ex-NIA director leaves KMT for position at TPP." *Taipei Times*. June 01, 2020.

⁴ Boyle, Seamus. "For Taiwan's DPP, an Unprecedented '3-peat' Depends on a Third Party." *The Diplomat*. June 08, 2023.

in the LY.⁵ However, by 2019, internal divisions had riled the party and the NPP had lost much of its popularity among voters.⁶

One theory about why short-term movement parties (such as the NPP) have such a difficult time succeeding has to do with routinization, or the ability of a political party to create organizational and operational structures and procedures. Lev Nachman, a political scientist and assistant professor at National Chengchi University in Taipei, describes the problem as follows:

Why would we expect long-term parties to have an advantage when it comes to institutionalization, especially routinization? Long-term movement parties have already existed for several years and already have the basic structures of a functional organization established. Rules, regulations, procedures, bureaucracy, human, and financial capital are already established for social movement organizations that exist for years before turning into a political party. This allows for their transformation into a political party to be a less turbulent process than those who start from scratch.⁷

This theory may partially explain why other third parties, which are often movement parties (unlike the TPP), struggle to command popular support – short term movement parties must spend a large amount of time on creating internal structures, time that might have otherwise been spent campaigning. However, it is also important to note competition between third parties as a factor that has hurt the NPP and other similar third parties. In a 2019 article penned for *East Asia Forum*, Nachman notes that the TPP and the NPP share voter support from a similar voter base –

⁵ Gerber, Abraham. “ELECTIONS: New Power Party wins five legislative seats.” *Taipei Times*. January 17, 2016.

⁶ Aspinwall, Nick. “Taiwan’s New Power Party Faces Crisis After Departure of Heavyweights.” *The Diplomat*. August 17, 2019.

⁷ Nachman, Lev. “Routine Problems: Movement Party Institutionalization and the Case of Taiwan’s New Power Party.” *Studies in Comparative International Development* (2023): 5.

namely, young Taiwanese people. Around 2019, the TPP was effectively able to siphon NPP voters for itself, which exacerbated the internal tensions that the NPP already faced.⁸

Another reason the TPP has succeeded where other third parties have failed may be its lack of political alliances to the two major political parties, the KMT and the DPP. The DPP was able to gain seats in the 2014 LY election partially due to a strategic alliance it made with the DPP, in where the DPP would not contest NPP candidates in certain districts in return for NPP support for Tsai Ing-wen's 2014 presidential bid. Unfortunately for the NPP, this strategy's success was short-lived, both due to internal divisions in the NPP on the nature of the political alliance with the DPP, and due to DPP concerns that the NPP was beginning to poach its voter support.⁹

It is possible that third parties in Taiwan other than the TPP face issues maintaining political support due to their position well to the right or left of the KMT and the DPP. One example of a non-centrist political third party that lost support over time is the New Party (NP), which is generally seen as more right-wing than the KMT. Founded in 1993 after splitting from the KMT, the New Party won a total of 21 out of 164 LY seats in the 1995 LY elections. John F. Copper, a Professor of International Studies at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, described this as a "major victory" for the New Party in a 1996 article in *Contemporary Asian Studies*.¹⁰ With major wins outside of Taipei as a political party that was only two years old, the New Party seemed set for future success. However, despite not being a

⁸ Nachman, Lev. "Taiwan's 2020 election isn't just about the President." *East Asia Forum*. October 31, 2019.

⁹ Chao, Stephanie. "DPP fears growing support for NPP, other third parties." *China Post, The (Taiwan)*, January 7, 2016. *NewsBank: Access World News*.

¹⁰ Copper, John F. "Taiwan's 1995 Legislative Yuan Election." *Contemporary Asian Studies* no 01, issue 132. University of Maryland School of Law, 1996.

short-term movement party, the New Party ended up hemorrhaging support in the coming years, and by the 2020 LY elections it lost every legislative seat it contested. It is possible that third parties – such as the NPP and the NP – that lie further to the political right or left than either of the two establishment parties (the KMT and the DPP) have trouble maintaining long-term political support. That being said, it remains to be seen whether centrist third parties – namely, the TPP – can avoid the same phenomenon.

IV: The TPP's Success via its Internal Party Structure

The TPP has benefited greatly from its lack of connection to any one social movement. Despite Ko's support for (and support from) the Sunflower Movement in 2014, the TPP is actually much more centered around Ko's personality and personal ideals, rather than any broader movement. This has caused some confusion among younger voters, who see Ko as sympathetic to many of the same political positions as the NPP, which *is* a movement party. It is possible that Ko has been able to harness this confusion to poach NPP votes without being restricted too much by the ideals of the Sunflower Movement. Despite Ko's sympathy for domestic liberal policies popular with NPP supporters, his policies on cross-strait trade relations differs significantly from that of the NPP. Ko's comments on trade relations with the mainland have been either ambiguous or a milder flavor of preexisting KMT trade positions.

Additionally, the TPP's enduring popularity may be attributed in part to the party's focus on campaigning for the presidency rather than for legislative seats. Admittedly, the TPP has fielded serious candidates for local elections, and won five LY seats in the 2020 legislative elections. Despite this, its primary focus has never been at winning a large proportion of legislative seats; instead, the TPP has molded itself around supporting Ko's 2024 presidential candidacy. This may be seen in the founding days of the TPP in August 2019, when Ko banded

together with Foxconn founder Terry Gou and KMT legislator Wang Jin-pyng to discuss the formation of a new political party:

On Aug. 6, Ko formed the Taiwan People's Party and pledged to support Gou if he ran for president next year, but 10 days later the mayor said he would consider running himself if Gou did not enter the race. After the concert yesterday, Tsai Chin-yu (蔡沁瑜), one of Gou's aides, said that an alliance with Ko and Wang would combine the strengths and expertise of the three men and offer people an alternative to the Democratic Progressive Party and the KMT.¹¹

With Ko hinting at his candidacy for the January 2024 presidential elections only 10 days after the founding of the TPP, it is reasonable to say that Ko's motivations in founding the TPP are at least partially tied to his presidential aspirations. It also appears at this stage that the TPP's strategy of focusing large amounts of its efforts into the 2024 presidential race has given the TPP the kind of steadily increasing traction – at least in the past four years – that has been absent from other Taiwanese third parties. The NPP and the NP's strategy of focusing heavily on winning seats in the LY and winning local elections provided the two respective parties short-term successes, but in the long term, the NPP lost ground to the DPP, and the NP lost ground to the KMT. Perhaps, although Taiwanese third parties struggle to edge out the two major political parties in legislative elections over the long term, they may have an easier time doing so in Taiwanese presidential elections.

The TPP's structure of having only one major politician at the helm may also separate it from other third parties, such as the NPP, which initially had multiple high-profile politicians in leadership positions. Some of the many influential politicians in the NPP are Freddy Lim, a heavy metal musician and prominent independence activist; Huang Kuo-Chang, a researcher at

¹¹ “Ko, Guo, and Wang mark ‘beginning’.” *Taipei Times*. August 24, 2019.

Academica Sinica and a Sunflower Movement activist who led the NPP from 2016 to 2020; and Hung Tzu-Yung, the sister of Hung Chun-Hsiu, a Taiwanese army corporal whose murder by his superiors sparked mass protests in 2013.¹² Despite sharing political roots in the Sunflower movement, Lim and Huang often butted heads within the NPP, and Lim's sudden departure from the NPP in 2019 cost the NPP credibility.¹³

By restricting decision-making power in the TPP to himself, Ko may hope to avoid the types of scandals that have befallen other major third parties such as the NPP. For instance, in 2020, the former NPP chairman Hsu Yung-ming resigned from the NPP after being questioned by Taiwanese investigators in connection to a bribery scandal.¹⁴ Allegations of corruption may be seen as one of the reasons the NPP has struggled to return to its legislative successes of 2016. In addition to Hsu's bribery case, the NPP's image has been shaken by more recent scandals. Specifically, Lin Ying-meng, a Taipei city councillor for the New Power Party from 2018 to 2020 before becoming an independent politician, was charged with embezzling public funds in August 2022.¹⁵ Perhaps Ko is trying to prevent scandal by keeping potential political partners at an arms' length and refusing to include them in TPP leadership. Critically, Ko has yet to announce a running mate for the 2024 election, despite the election being less than six months away. Ko may be wary of partnering with established political figures for their political baggage, especially given Ko's anti-establishment platform in running as the TPP's presidential candidate.

¹² Hioe, Brian. "The New Power Party, The Rise of Political "Amateurs," and the Third Wave of Civil Society Candidates After the Sunflower Movement." *New Bloom*. March 05, 2015.

¹³ Hioe, Brian. "The NPP Faces Crisis After Major Controversies, Unexpected Departure of Freddy Lim." *New Bloom*. August 01, 2019.

¹⁴ "Hsu Yung-ming quits NPP over corruption scandal." *Focus Taiwan*. August 06, 2020.

¹⁵ "Taipei councilor, ex-aide charged with corruption." *Taipei Times*. August 13, 2022.

V: Ko's Success due to his Personality Traits

Ko has the unusual ability to court controversy in a way that keeps him in the spotlight, but not to a degree that it damages his political reputation. In the words of Wang Shih-chien, a critic of Ko's administration as mayor of Taipei, Ko "is a frightening force because he is capable of catching the attention of others."¹⁶ Sometimes Ko's controversial comments take the form of gaffes, especially in regard to a series of misogynistic comments he has made over the past few years. However, much of the time, Ko's thought-provoking comments appear carefully targeted to garner political support. One good example of this is Ko's July 2022 commentary on a proposed bridge between Xiamen and Kinmen. Ko stated that Kinmen might benefit from improved trade ties with the mainland, historically a position maintained more by the KMT. According to an article in *The Diplomat* by Brian Hioe, some analysts believe that Ko's comments were actually made to advocate for closer trade relations with China at a time when the KMT was apparently abandoning that position in favor of courting favor from the United States.¹⁷ By attempting to fill a political niche previously held by the KMT, Ko's comments on the bridge between Xiamen and Kinmen may have been very deliberately controversial and specifically targeting support from moderate KMT voters.

Ko has gained a reputation for being direct and straight-talking, which has gained him a great deal of popularity with Taiwanese voters fed up with the two establishment political parties. One Ko supporter named Wang Yu, a 29 year old software engineer, told the *Los Angeles Times* why he admired Ko:

¹⁶ Chung, Lawrence. "Could Taiwan's 'white' knight Ko Wen-je smash through the island's blue-green split?" *South China Morning Post: Web Edition Articles*. Hong Kong: May 06, 2023.

¹⁷ Hioe, Brian. "With Kinmen Comments, Ko Wen-Je Dives into Cross-Strait Debate."

His answers focus on responding to the questions. Other politicians like to keep it vague, talk in circles, say something besides the point, and in the end they don't even answer the question. We've been gambling on them [other politicians] for so long. Why not bet on someone else and see?¹⁸

Ironically, there are many occasions when Ko has himself avoided providing too much detail on his policy ideas, particularly when it comes to his thoughts on cross-strait relations. The critical difference between Ko and his political adversaries may come in Ko's delivery of his comments. Ko is known for being blunt, even rude, and rather gruff, which ends up supporting his argument that he is an anti-establishment candidate. Perhaps Ko's manner of speaking gives him the appearance of being straight to the point, even when he is eager to employ strategic ambiguity.

By leaning into his blunt-talking, awkward personality on social media, Ko has gained a massive amount of popularity, especially with voters under 40. Ko is the only presidential hopeful on TikTok, has more Instagram followers than outgoing President Tsai Ing-wen, and boasts over 2 million followers on Facebook.¹⁹ Ko has also exhibited a great degree of self-awareness in his online presence and refuses to take himself too seriously. During his (eventually successful) 2018 reelection campaign for the Taipei mayoralty, Ko "released a viral music video on YouTube, in which he chanted 'Do the right thing' in English and 'Strange' in Chinese from behind a paperwork-laden desk as a local rapper took on more complex verses."²⁰ Ko's popular online presence also features some of his political views, such as on increasing voluntary military service and curtailing mandatory military conscription, a position that is particularly

¹⁸ Yang, Stephanie, and David Shen. "With controversy and clicks, Taiwan presidential hopeful aims to be a third-party exception." *Los Angeles Times*. Sept. 07, 2023.

¹⁹ Yang, Stephanie, and David Shen. "With controversy and clicks, Taiwan presidential hopeful aims to be a third-party exception."

²⁰ Yang, Stephanie, and David Shen. "With controversy and clicks, Taiwan presidential hopeful aims to be a third-party exception."

popular among young voters. Perhaps Ko's mixture of unabashed awkwardness, unexpected content, and popular policy ideas on his social media presence will give him an edge against his less social media-savvy rivals.

Although Ko repeatedly emphasizes coming from relatively humble origins – his family has no major political or financial connections in Taiwan – his inherent charisma has allowed him to form important political alliances that have kickstarted his political career. One good example of this is Ko's temporary partnership with the DPP during his 2014 election race to be mayor of Taipei. Ko agreed to support Tsai Ing-wen's presidential candidacy, and in return the DPP didn't field a candidate against Ko in 2014. Unlike the NPP, however, Ko was eventually able to shake off his obligations to the DPP and win reelection as Taipei's mayor in 2018, even though the DPP ran a candidate against Ko in 2018. More recently, Ko enlisted the help of Foxconn founder and Taiwanese billionaire Terry Gou in formulating policy ideas for the TPP.²¹ This is particularly significant because Gou is traditionally more aligned with the KMT; Ko's willingness to work with Gou may be indicative of Ko's desire to poach support from voters fed up with the KMT. It is important to note, however, that Ko has still kept Gou at an arms' length and appears to be unlikely to enlist Gou as his running mate for the 2024 presidential election. This may be due to Ko's apparent reluctance to include prominent politicians in the TPP's leadership. Perhaps Ko is hoping to avoid the sort of internal power struggles seen recently in the NPP and the KMT.

²¹ Yi, Rick, and Staś Butler. "Rumors Failed KMT Candidate Terry Gou Will Work With 3rd Party." *TaiwanPlus*. May 23, 2023.

Ko has an uncanny ability to chip away at his opponents' success and adeptly target their weaknesses. One good example of this is during Ko's successful 2014 mayoral race against KMT candidate Sean Lien. At the time, Lien was (like Ko) relatively politically inexperienced and a former investment banker. Critically, Lien is also the son of Lien Chan, Taiwan's onetime premier and vice president. Ko successfully portrayed himself as coming from humble origins and attacked Lien's family political ties. By painting Lien as privileged and undeserving of the KMT nomination at a time when many Taiwanese voters were concerned about wealth disparity, Ko was able to edge out Lien and emerge victorious in the Taipei mayoral race.²² Jonathan Sullivan, a political analyst and China scholar at the University of Nottingham, noted at the time that "although he [Ko] is not a seasoned politician, Ko has deftly rolled with the punches and has shown an innate skill in turning Lien's attacks against himself."²³ More recently, Ko has refined his ability to turn attacks against his competitors to his advantage. In Ko's words, "I often say, 'Sometimes getting elected is not because people like you – it's because people hate your opponent.'²⁴ Ko will most likely take great advantage of his ability to target rivals when campaigning against his presidential rivals in the current election, especially considering the current scandals facing the DPP and the KMT, which will be covered later in more detail.

Despite being increasingly labelled as a populist, Ko is hesitant to adopt the label for fear of alienating left-wing DPP and NPP voters whose support he is angling for in the upcoming election. As early as 2019, the year the TPP was founded, Ko was described by *Financial Times*

²² Ramzy, Austin. "Mayor's Race Could Alter Balance of Political Power in Taiwan." *The New York Times*. November 27, 2014.

²³ Ramzy, Austin. "Mayor's Race Could Alter Balance of Political Power in Taiwan."

²⁴ Yang, Stephanie, and David Shen. "With controversy and clicks, Taiwan presidential hopeful aims to be a third-party exception."

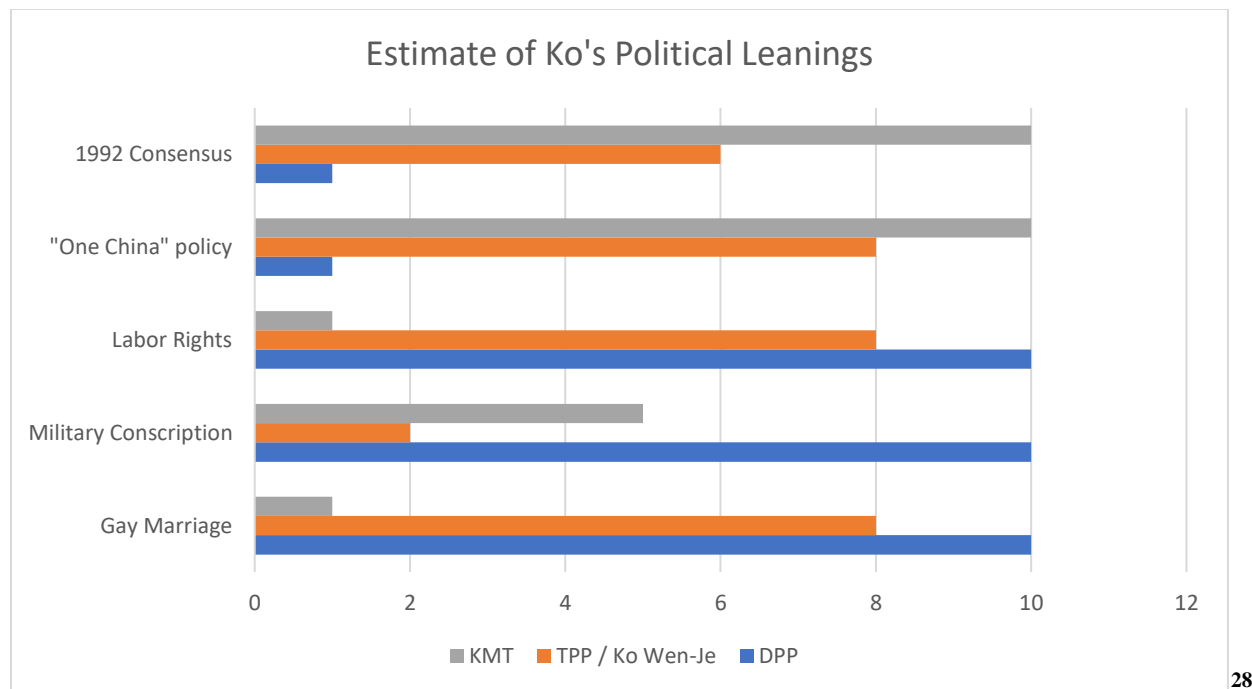
reporter Kathrin Hille as “a populist mayor of Taipei.”²⁵ Also in 2019, the Global Taiwan Institute, a nonprofit think tank based in Washington, D.C. emphasized Ko’s populist tendencies in a report on rising populism in Taiwan.²⁶ Ko has attempted to fight this populist label and is keen to maintain his image as a centrist politician, even when using anti-establishment rhetoric. In Ko’s words, “I’m not like Trump. I am a scientist.”²⁷ Ko may be trying to draw in older voters through some of his populist rhetoric and increasingly common alliances with KMT (and formerly KMT) politicians, while also hoping to draw in younger and highly educated voters through emphasizing his background in science and teaching.

²⁵ Hille, Kathrin. “Populist mayor seals victory in Taiwan presidential primaries.” *Financial Times*. July 14, 2019.

²⁶ Hsiao, Hsin-huang Michael. “Observations on Rising Populism in Taiwan Politics.” *Global Taiwan Institute*. July 31, 2019.

²⁷ Yang, Stephanie, and David Shen. “With controversy and clicks, Taiwan presidential hopeful aims to be a third-party exception.”

VI: The Appeal of Ko's Political Platform



Ko's good track record with liberal domestic issues such as gay marriage, military conscription, and labor rights have made him especially popular with voters under 40. This can be seen among support for Ko by NPP voters and politicians. Seventy percent of NPP supporters also supported Ko's reelection campaign in 2018. And in October 2018, NPP politicians Huang Yu-fen and Hsiao Hsin-Cheng voiced their support for Ko despite disagreeing with some of his policies on cross-strait relations:

Huang would state in her comments that her support for Ko Wen-je was because Ko was still a better candidate than Ting Shou-Chung of the KMT and Pasuya Yaou of the DPP, and despite past political missteps, Ko's record on open government was still a good one.

²⁸ NB for the graph: Ko appears to veer toward support for the DPP on some domestic issues such as support for gay marriage and labor rights. He also tends to espouse traditionally KMT views, particularly on foreign policy points such as support for the 1992 Consensus and the One China policy. Note that in some circumstances, Ko lashes out at both the KMT and the DPP. This can be seen through Ko's unusually harsh condemnations of Taiwan's military conscription policy, which is heavily supported by the DPP and supported in at least some degree by the KMT. *These are not data points, but rather observations based on textual analysis.*

Hsiao would state that he supported Ko on the basis of Ko's support for gay marriage and his labor rights record, in appointing a prominent labor organizer to head Taipei city's Department of Labor, even if he disagreed with statements Ko made regarding "One family on both sides of the Taiwan Straits."²⁹

Ko's popularity among young voters allowed him to siphon a significant amount of support from NPP voters around 2019, when the NPP was facing serious internal divisions in their political leadership. One example of this is Ko's comments on Taiwanese military conscription in 2019 during a visit to Israel, around the same time of the aforementioned internal NPP divisions in 2019. Ko lauded the Israeli strategy of national defense and harshly criticized the Taiwanese conscription system, saying the following:

A way in which Israel is very clever is that it has integrated education, national defense and industry. Think back to Taiwan. If you look at Taiwan, you'll see that education, national defense and industry are not integrated. So every person who goes to do his military service feels that it is a waste of time.³⁰

Ko's comments immediately drew backlash from Taiwanese Minister of National Defense Yen Teh-fa, who essentially accused Ko of not knowing what he was talking about. However, Ko's comments may have not been a genuine attempt to be entirely accurate, but rather may have been made specifically to target young male voters affected by the issue of conscription. Despite the high level of support for Taiwanese conscription from Taiwan's population in general, a Taiwanese Public Opinion Foundation (TPOF) poll from 2022 found that only one-third of Taiwanese men aged 20-24 supported conscription.³¹

²⁹ Hioe, Brian. "Internal Splits Develop in New Power Party Over Ko Wen-Je." *New Bloom*. Taipei: October 30, 2018.

³⁰ "Military conscription a 'waste of time' for Taiwanese men: Ko." *Formosa News*. February 25, 2019.

³¹ Feng, John. "Taiwan Extends Conscription to 1 Year To Counter China Threat." *Newsweek*. December 28, 2022.

Although Ko has maintained a great deal of support from younger liberal voters in Taiwan, his light-blue stance on cross-strait relations also makes him attractive to moderately conservative voters who might otherwise vote for the KMT. This can be seen in Ko's approach to reforming the 1992 Consensus, which is an informal agreement between mainland China and the KMT that accepts that there is only "one China," even though the KMT and the PRC cannot agree on what that should look like.^{32 33} According to Bonnie S. Glaser, the director of the Indo-Pacific Program at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, Ko's model for cross strait relations involves rejecting the 1992 Consensus, while still maintaining that "the people on the two sides [of the Taiwan Strait] are part of one family."³⁴ On the 1992 Consensus, Ko recently remarked that "There doesn't seem to be a market for this in Taiwan. Shall we change the name?"³⁵ Ko's willingness to replace the 1992 Consensus with something similar (rather than discarding it entirely) may well be especially popular among former KMT supporters who are fed up with internal KMT rivalries. By having both a domestic policy that emphasizes social and

³² "Taiwan, Republic of China: Foreign Relations Since 1949." In *Encyclopedia of Modern China*, edited by David Pong, 542-545. Vol. 3. Detroit, MI: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2009. *Gale eBooks* (accessed October 18, 2023).

³³ NB: The "1992 Consensus" was the result of informal meetings in Singapore in 1992 between KMT legislator Koo Chen-fu and Wang Daohan of the PRC. This meeting, called the "Wang-Koo meeting", established a working relationship between Taiwan's then-ruling KMT and the mainland. The KMT and the PRC agreed that there was only "one China" in principle, although they continued to disagree on how that China ought to be governed; the KMT believes all of the aforementioned "one China" should be under Republican rule, while the PRC believes that both the mainland and Taiwan should be under Communist rule. The DPP rejects the validity of the 1992 consensus.

³⁴ Glaser, Bonnie S. "Prospects for Cross-Strait Relations in 2017 and Beyond." *Managing Cross-Strait Ties in 2017: Recommendations for the Trump Administration*. Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), 2017.

³⁵ Hou, Betty, and Stephen Engle. "Socially awkward outsider is surprise contender to lead Taiwan." *Japan Times*. Sept. 14, 2023.

labor issues and a cross-straits policy that is mildly deferential to the mainland, Ko hopes to have the best of both worlds and siphon votes from left-wing and right-wing voters who are tired of the DPP and/or the KMT.

The strategic ambiguity employed by Ko and his spokespeople allows Ko to present himself as an anti-establishment candidate without being pinned down on sensitive policy issues, which has appeared to work to Ko's benefit. During an interview with Bonny Lin of the *Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)*, Ko said the following when asked why his recent three-week trip to the United States was important to him:

First and foremost, to get to know the United States better, because the United States has been our most important ally and the most important country in the world. And it is also probably the only country that has the courage to provide arms sales to Taiwan so far. And that's why, as a political leader in Taiwan, it is very important for us to get a better understanding of the United States.

Secondly, I would like to come here to seek American perspectives of Taiwan from this side because we ended up sometimes, by analyzing Taiwan's situation from the island's perspective, and I don't think that will be sufficient. It is very important to get to know how Taiwan is perceived from the world outside.

Thirdly, I'm coming here to introduce TPP – Taiwan People's Party – and myself. Currently, even though we have 20 percent support in Taiwan, I believe 99.9 percent of the American people do not have an understanding of who we are. So I hope to use this opportunity to introduce ourselves.³⁶

Ko's word choice during this interview is rather incoherent. His mention of "analyzing Taiwan's situation from the island's perspective" appears redundant. Clearly, Ko is going to think from a Taiwanese perspective first and foremost, because he is a Taiwanese politician. Additionally, his comment about it being important for Taiwan "to get a better understanding of the United States"

³⁶ Lin, Bonny. "Fireside Chat with Dr. Ko Wen-je, Chairman of the Taiwan People's Party and Former Mayor of Taipei." *CSIS*. April 20, 2023.

seems odd, as Taiwan has maintained international relations of some sort with the United States since at least 1949. Other than talking about arms sales, Ko essentially failed to provide a detailed, nuanced view of what he had hoped to achieve during his visit to the United States. This may be because Ko wished to avoid being seen as overly supportive of the US at a time when his comments on cross strait relations were increasingly moderately KMT (in other words, in favor of integration with the mainland) in flavor. It appears that the TPP's spokespeople have also been instructed to maintain strategic ambiguity about the TPP's political strategy. In an interview with John Su and Sam Hui from *TaiwanPlus*, TPP spokesperson Christina Yang said the following about the TPP's strategy for the 2024 presidential election:

We want to stress that we are different from both the KMT and DPP. The KMT and DPP both pay too much attention to ideology. We are more rational, pragmatic and scientific. We are going to promote our idea of Taiwan's future. What is our idea and vision? We think Taiwan should be able to decide its own future. At the same time, there should be cross-strait dialogue to maintain peace.³⁷

Like Ko's comments on his visit to the United States, Yang's comments on the TPP's political strategy lack real substance. Interestingly, this use of strategic ambiguity does not seem to have hurt Ko's election chances. Rather, Ko may be able to better employ strategic ambiguity due to his seemingly inherent ability to dismiss (and find fault with) his critics.

VII: DPP Weaknesses in the Lead-Up to the January 2024 Election

Despite the TPP being only four years old, Ko has been the TPP's clear presidential candidate since the party's inception in 2019, while the DPP did not have a clear favorite politician among voters as late as 2022. In 2022, the most popular DPP politician, Chen Shih-

³⁷ Su, John, and Sam Hui. "Analysis: How the Taiwan People's Party Plans an Upset in 2024." *TaiwanPlus*. May 23, 2023.

chung, was not in the running for the party's presidential nomination. Additionally, the DPP's eventual presidential candidate for the 2024 election, Taiwan's Vice President Lai Ching-te, ranked seventh in support for DPP politicians in Taiwan with a 38 percent approval rate.³⁸ According to a 2022 report for *Global Taiwan Institute (GTI)* by Russell Hsiao, the GTI's executive director, Lai's support in 2022 was relatively similar to the approval rate for other prominent DPP politicians at the time, with polling indicating that "all the party's other candidates [excluding Chen but including Lai] are concentrated around a narrow range of support." Because Lai lacked a clear popularity advantage among DPP candidates (despite being Taiwan's Vice President), he has faced more of an uphill battle than Ko to garner broader support in the lead-up to the January 2024 election.

The DPP is also facing wide-ranging accusations of fraud and sexual harassment, which has served as a major distraction for Lai Ching-te during his campaign. According to a June 2023 article in the *South China Morning Post*, the DPP lost the support of roughly 3 million voters (or 16 percent of its voter base) between Tsai Ing-wen's 2020 presidential election victory and June 2023. Michael You Ying-lung – the chairman of the relatively impartial polling body the Taiwanese Public Opinion Foundation – ascribes this massive fall of DPP popularity to voter backlash against Lai's alleged failure to address sexual harassment complaints within the DPP. Specifically, You believes that the sexual harassment allegations "have wiped out the efforts of DPP chairman William Lai Ching-te in the past six months to gain support from voters."³⁹ By

³⁸ Hsiao, Russell. "Signpost for 2024: Poll on Satisfaction Ratings for Taiwan's National Political Figures." *Global Taiwan Institute: Global Taiwan Brief* 7, Issue 3 (2022): 2.

³⁹ Chung, Lawrence. "4-year-old Taiwan People's Party poised to shake up 2024 presidential elections, poll suggests." *South China Morning Post: Web Edition Articles*. June 16, 2023.

contrast, although the TPP occasionally has to address to Ko's occasionally rude commentary, it does not any major scandals happening at the moment.

The accusations of fraud against the DPP stem from the association of DPP lawmakers to the founder of a corrupt online lending platform company "im.B". Lending platforms are also known as peer-to-peer (P2P) lending. In a 2020 online article in *Forbes*, personal finance journalist Dori Zinn and *Forbes*'s deputy editor for loans Jordan Tarver explained how lending platforms work:

The idea of P2P lending is to give borrowers access to funding through individual investors rather than traditional financial institutions or online lenders. In turn, the investors themselves are the ones who collect the interest fees a borrower would normally pay to a bank or other lender.⁴⁰

A Taiwanese company called "im.B", led by Tseng Kuo-wei, claimed to be operating as a P2P lending platform, promising high returns. In reality, im.B was essentially a Ponzi scheme designed to defraud customers. According to the *Taipei Times*, "the vast majority of investors im.B listed were fake profiles set up by the company itself, with the platform initially covering payments using money taken from new investors."⁴¹ After Tseng was arrested in May 2023, allegations emerged of DPP lawmaker Chen Ou-po having close ties to Tseng. Chen Ou-po subsequently announced he would not run for re-election in 2024.⁴²

VIII: KMT Weaknesses in the Lead-Up to the January 2024 Election

KMT infighting over their candidate nomination process for the presidential election has overshadowed the KMT's efforts to gain support in the lead-up to the January 2024 election. In past years, the KMT has held an open primary for its presidential candidate. This year, the KMT

⁴⁰ Zinn, Dori, and Jordan Tarver. "Peer-To-Peer Lending Basics." *Forbes*. October 20, 2020.

⁴¹ "Taipei charges 31 in connection to im.B case." *Taipei Times*. August 30, 2023.

⁴² "DPP legislator pulls out of race over im.B scandal." *Taipei Times*. May 23, 2023.

opted to have its party leadership make the sole decision on selecting a presidential candidate.⁴³ This decision by the KMT was unusual, but may have been made to avoid a more bitter political race between the two main candidates for the KMT nomination, Hou You-yi (who ended up being selected as the KMT's candidate) and Terry Gou. Nevertheless, the controversy over the KMT's nomination process has cost Hou some credibility and popularity, which may be beneficial to Ko at a time when Ko is seeking to poach moderate KMT voters for his own campaign.

To make matters worse for Hou, he is also facing accusations of failing to properly address a daycare scandal that took place in New Taipei, which Hou is the mayor of. The recent scandal in New Taipei involved a daycare facility accused of drugging children to get them to sleep, and Hou is accused by extension of failing to address the ensuing scandal in a timely manner. Michael You Ying-lung of the Taiwanese Public Opinion Foundation (TPOF) believes that this scandal, along with the KMT nomination process controversy, has cost the KMT roughly 3 million voters since the 2020 presidential election.⁴⁴ The KMT's slide in support has placed Hou firmly behind Ko in recent polls for the upcoming presidential election.

IX: TPP Weaknesses in the Lead-Up to the January 2024 Election

Although Ko possesses many unique advantages over his rivals and is not facing any major scandals, Ko's lack of experience on the international stage may hinder his electoral chances to some degree. Chen Fang-yu, a professor of political science at Soochow University in Taipei, believes that Ko has already belied his lack of foreign policy experience during a recent

⁴³ Levy, Jake. "How Terry Gou's Independent Run Impacts the 2024 Taiwanese Election." *The Diplomat*. August 30, 2023.

⁴⁴ Chung, Lawrence. "4-year-old Taiwan People's Party poised to shake up 2024 presidential elections, poll suggests."

visit to Japan. In a live interview with *TaiwanPlus*, Chen noted that during Ko's Japan visit, Ko "made some mistakes of, for example, he reveals that [Japanese] Prime Minister Aso is going to visit Taiwan, which is still not openly talked about."⁴⁵ This is an indication that while Ko may have an unusually easy time shirking criticism in Taiwan, his tendency to be blunt and his occasional verbal blunders may not serve him well in dealing with other countries should Ko gain the presidency. If Ko has a significant blunder related to international relations in the lead-up to the election, that may also harm Ko's election chances.

Although Ko's tendency to maintain himself as the only major politician within the TPP has helped him avoid intra-party conflict, it may also create serious problems for Ko down the line. Pan Wei-yiu, a reporter for the *Taipei Times*, penned an article in June 2023 in which she outlines her concerns with Ko's leadership style dating to his tenure as mayor of Taipei. Specifically, Pan believes that smart voters will remember problems from when Ko was mayor (before the founding of the TPP), such as "administrative flaws by political appointees and corruption scandals, his autocratic leadership style and even sexual harassment allegations coming to light amid Taiwan's #MeToo movement."⁴⁶ While rebranding himself as the leader as the TPP in 2019 may have helped Ko avoid repeated scrutiny of problems that arose when he was the independent mayor of Taipei, it is important to note that – if true – such problems in Ko's leadership style from that period may continue (or be continuing) in his new position as the head of the TPP.

⁴⁵ Tsai, Devin, and John van Trieste. "Analysis: Ko Wen-je's Japan Trip." *TaiwanPlus*. Taipei: June 06, 2023.

⁴⁶ Pan Wei-yiu. "TPP seeks presidency by splitting electorate." *Taipei Times*, June 25, 2023.

X: Conclusion

An August 15 editorial penned for the *Taipei Times* by Niu Tse-hsun, a professor at Chinese Culture University in Taipei, outlined how Ko's electoral prospects appeared to be improving. Niu believes that the KMT's current presidential candidate, Hou You-yi, may end up running as Ko's running mate for the January 2024 election.⁴⁷ Hou is sagging in third place behind Ko in public opinion polling for the 2024 presidential race, and Ko hopes to consolidate his campaign by convincing Hou that there is no possibility that he (Hou) can win the election outright. Additionally, Ko may have signaled his willingness to take on Hou as a vice presidential candidate when he rejected Terry Gou's overtures to become Ko's running mate. Ko may hope to use his popular online presence to put public pressure on Hou to join the TPP presidential ticket.⁴⁸

An establishment party candidate (Hou) becoming the running mate of a relatively new third-party candidate (Ko) would be an unprecedented event in modern Taiwanese history. However, it is possible that Ko's meteoric rise in popularity in the current election may shatter the status quo of KMT and DPP dominance over Taiwanese politics.

Ko's ability to take advantage of his rivals' issues, as seen in his successful 2014 mayoral race against KMT candidate Sean Lien, could not have come at a better time. The KMT and the DPP are embroiled in seemingly endless scandals and their presidential candidates are generally perceived as weak. Despite Ko's public reluctance to adopt the "populist" moniker, his populist

⁴⁷ Niu, Tse-hsun. "Ko Wen-je's strategy is panning out well for him." *Taipei Times*. August 15, 2023.

⁴⁸ Niu, Tse-hsun. "Ko Wen-je's strategy is panning out well for him."

rhetoric may be increasingly appealing to Taiwanese voters who are tired of Taiwan's two-party system.

It seems increasingly likely that Ko will manage to gain a plurality of votes in the January 2024 election and win the contest outright. Despite Ko's relative successes as mayor of Taipei from 2014 to 2022, an essentially populist and anti-establishment politician leading Taiwan would certainly put Taiwan into uncharted waters. Thankfully, it appears that Ko is aiming to reduce cross-strait tensions in a way that is more in line with the KMT. However, as seen during Ko's political blunders while visiting Tokyo recently, in which he prematurely revealed a state visit to Taiwan by the Japanese Prime Minister, a Ko Wen-je presidency in Taiwan might put Taiwan in an uncomfortable situation internationally at a time when Taiwan's list of foreign diplomatic partners is dwindling. If Ko becomes president, could a brash, off-the-cuff comment by Ko about one of Taiwan's diplomatic partners strain Taiwan's international ties?

Even if Ko does not win the Taiwanese presidency, he has already shaken the longstanding assumption that third parties are mostly irrelevant in the Taiwanese political sphere. Despite being in second place for the 2024 election, the presidential frontrunner – the DPP's William Lai – has not surpassed 40 percent in most polls.⁴⁹ In any case, the unanticipated level of Ko's popularity in this election should sound alarm bells for politicians leading the KMT and the DPP. If establishment politicians like William Lai and Hou You-yi cannot effectively respond to moments of crisis – both scandals within their own party and major political threats from third parties such as the TPP – they may very well have opened the door for future third-party presidential runs, by Ko or others, that may prove extremely successful.

⁴⁹ Niu, Tse-hsun. "Ko Wen-je's strategy is panning out well for him." *Taipei Times*. August 15, 2023.

Bibliography

- Aspinwall, Nick. "Taiwan's New Power Party Faces Crisis After Departure of Heavyweights." *The Diplomat*. August 17, 2019. <https://thediplomat.com/2019/08/taiwans-new-power-party-faces-crisis-after-departure-of-heavyweights/>
- Boyle, Seamus. "For Taiwan's DPP, an Unprecedented '3-peat' Depends on a Third Party." *The Diplomat*. June 08, 2023. <https://thediplomat.com/2023/06/for-taiwans-dpp-an-unprecedented-3-peat-depends-on-a-third-party/>
- Chao, Stephanie. "DPP fears growing support for NPP, other third parties." *China Post, The (Taiwan)*, January 7, 2016. NewsBank: Access World News. <https://infoweb-newsbankcom.ezproxy.ups.edu:2443/apps/news/documentview?p=AWNB&docref=news/15A39FFA6D30D130>
- Chung, Lawrence. "4-year-old Taiwan People's Party poised to shake up 2024 presidential elections, poll suggests." *South China Morning Post: Web Edition Articles*. June 16, 2023. NewsBank: Access World News. <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AWNB&docref=news/1923208ADF3011E0>.
- Chung, Lawrence. "Could Taiwan's 'white' knight Ko Wen-je smash through the island's blue-green split?" *South China Morning Post: Web Edition Articles*. May 06, 2023. NewsBank: Access World News. <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AWNB&docref=news/19159EA58E0DB3B8>.
- Copper, John F. "Taiwan's 1995 Legislative Yuan Election." *Contemporary Asian Studies* no 01, issue 132. University of Maryland School of Law, 1996. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/56353915.pdf>
- "DPP legislator pulls out of race over im.B scandal." *Taipei Times*. May 23, 2023. <https://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2023/05/23/2003800272#:~:text=In%20a%20statement%20on%20Sunday%20night%2C%20the%20legislator,which%20is%20being%20investigated%20for%20allegedly%20defrauding%20customers.>

- Feng, John. "Taiwan Extends Conscription to 1 Year To Counter China Threat." *Newsweek*. December 28, 2022. <https://www.newsweek.com/taiwan-conscription-military-service-extension-one-year-china-1769868>
- Gerber, Abraham. "ELECTIONS: New Power Party wins five legislative seats." *Taipei Times*. January 17, 2016. <https://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2016/01/17/200363741>.
- Glaser, Bonnie S. "Prospects for Cross-Strait Relations in 2017 and Beyond." *Managing Cross-Strait Ties in 2017: Recommendations for the Trump Administration*. Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), 2017. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep23143.8>.
- Hille, Kathrin. "Populist mayor seals victory in Taiwan presidential primaries." *Financial Times*. July 14, 2019. <https://www.ft.com/content/4951bfd4-a6ad-11e9-984c-fac8325aaa04>.
- Hioe, Brian. "Internal Splits Develop in New Power Party Over Ko Wen-Je." *New Bloom*. October 30, 2018. <https://newbloommag.net/2018/10/30/npp-ko-splits/>
- Hioe, Brian. "The New Power Party, The Rise of Political "Amateurs," and the Third Wave of Civil Society Candidates After the Sunflower Movement." *New Bloom*. March 05, 2015. <https://newbloommag.net/2015/03/05/against-both-kmt-and-dpp/>
- Hioe, Brian. "The NPP Faces Crisis After Major Controversies, Unexpected Departure of Freddy Lim." *New Bloom*. August 01, 2019. <https://newbloommag.net/2019/08/01/npp-controversies-crisis/>
- Hioe, Brian. "With Kinmen Comments, Ko Wen-Je Dives into Cross-Strait Debate." *The Diplomat*. July 01, 2022. <https://login.ezproxy.ups.edu:2443/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/magazines/with-kinmen-comments-ko-wen-je-dives-into-cross/docview/2682768861/se-2>.
- Hou, Betty, and Stephen Engle. "Socially awkward outsider is surprise contender to lead Taiwan." *Japan Times*. Sept. 14, 2023. <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2023/09/14/asia-pacific/politics/awkward-outsider-contender-taiwan/>

- Hsiao, Hsin-huang Michael. "Observations on Rising Populism in Taiwan Politics." *Global Taiwan Institute*. July 31, 2019. <https://globaltaiwan.org/2019/07/observations-on-rising-populism-in-taiwan-politics/>
- Hsiao, Russell. "Signpost for 2024: Poll on Satisfaction Ratings for Taiwan's National Political Figures." *Global Taiwan Institute: Global Taiwan Brief 7, Issue 3* (2022): 2. <https://globaltaiwan.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/GTB-7.3-PDF.pdf>
- Hsiao, Sherry. "Ex-NIA director leaves KMT for position at TPP." *Taipei Times*. June 01, 2020. <https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2020/06/01/2003737409>
- "Hsu Yung-ming quits NPP over corruption scandal." *Focus Taiwan*. August 06, 2020. <https://focustaiwan.tw/politics/202008060006>.
- Levy, Jake. "How Terry Gou's Independent Run Impacts the 2024 Taiwanese Election." *The Diplomat*. August 30, 2023. <https://thediplomat.com/2023/08/how-terry-gous-independent-run-impacts-the-2024-taiwanese-election/>
- Lin, Bonny. "Fireside Chat with Dr. Ko Wen-je, Chairman of the Taiwan People's Party and Former Mayor of Taipei." *CSIS*. April 20, 2023. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/fireside-chat-dr-ko-wen-je-chairman-taiwan-peoples-party-and-former-mayor-taipei>.
- "Military conscription a 'waste of time' for Taiwanese men: Ko." *Formosa News*. February 25, 2019. <https://english.ftvnews.com.tw/news/D06164095B13B0855DAB688A3309A05D>
- Nachman, Lev. "Routine Problems: Movement Party Institutionalization and the Case of Taiwan's New Power Party." *Studies in Comparative International Development* (2023): 5. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12116-023-09388-x>
- Niu, Tse-hsun. "Ko Wen-je's strategy is panning out well for him." *Taipei Times*. August 15, 2023. <https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2023/08/15/2003804744>.
- Pan Wei-yiu. "TPP seeks presidency by splitting electorate." *Taipei Times*. June 25, 2023. NewsBank: Access World News. <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AWNB&docref=news/1926103B579E6300>.

- Ramzy, Austin. "Mayor's Race Could Alter Balance of Political Power in Taiwan." *The New York Times*. November 27, 2014. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/28/world/asia/taipei-mayors-race-could-alter-balance-of-taiwans-political-power.html>
- Su, John, and Sam Hui. "Analysis: How the Taiwan People's Party Plans an Upset in 2024." *TaiwanPlus*. May 23, 2023. <https://www.taiwanplus.com/news/taiwan-news/politics/230523015/analysis-how-the-taiwan-peoples-party-plans-an-upset-in-2024>
- "Taipei charges 31 in connection to im.B case." *Taipei Times*. August 30, 2023. <https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2023/08/30/2003805492>
- "Taipei councilor, ex-aide charged with corruption." *Taipei Times*. August 13, 2022. <https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2022/08/13/2003783448>
- Taiwan People's Party. "1.58 million party votes and 5 non-partition seats into the Yuan." About Us – Milestones. January 11, 2020. <https://www.tpp.org.tw/en/milestones.php>.
- "Taiwan, Republic of China: Foreign Relations Since 1949." In *Encyclopedia of Modern China*, edited by David Pong, 542-545. Vol. 3. Detroit, MI: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2009. *Gale eBooks* (accessed October 18, 2023). <https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.ups.edu:2443/apps/doc/CX1837900811/GVRL?u=taco25438&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=9017a7d2>.
- Tsai, Devin, and John van Trieste. "Analysis: Ko Wen-je's Japan Trip." *TaiwanPlus*. June 06, 2023. <https://www.taiwanplus.com/news/taiwan-news/politics/230608001/analysis-ko-wen-jes-japan-trip>.
- Yang, Stephanie, and David Shen. "With controversy and clicks, Taiwan presidential hopeful aims to be a third-party exception." *Los Angeles Times*. Sept. 07, 2023. <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2023-09-07/taiwan-presidential-election-ko-wen-je>
- Yi, Rick, and Staś Butler. "Rumors Failed KMT Candidate Terry Gou Will Work With 3rd Party." *TaiwanPlus*. May 23, 2023. <https://www.taiwanplus.com/news/taiwan-news/politics/230523019/rumors-failed-kmt-candidate-terry-gou-will-work-with-3rd-party>.

Zinn, Dori, and Jordan Tarver. "Peer-To-Peer Lending Basics." *Forbes*. October 20, 2020.

<https://www.forbes.com/advisor/personal-loans/peer-to-peer-lending/>