

Explaining Referendum Voting Choices in Taiwan

CHI HUANG



On March 20, 2004 President Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) and his running mate Lu Hsiu-lien (呂秀蓮)—hereafter, Chen-Lu—won their second term with a razor-thin margin of less than 30,000 votes (or 0.22 percent of the 13.25 million ballots cast). The rate of voter turnout for the presidential election was high at 80.28 percent, given the fierce competition between the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP, 民主進步黨) and the opposition Kuomintang (KMT, 國民黨)-People First Party (PFP, 親民黨) alliance of Lien Chan (連戰) and James Soong (宋楚瑜) (hereafter, Lien-Soong). Yet for the referendum on two issues of national importance, held on that very same day, less than half of the eligible voters (45.17 percent and 45.12 percent, respectively) bothered to walk the few extra steps to pick up the referendum ballots and vote on them (see table 1).¹ As a result, the two issues that the DPP government campaigned so very hard for during the presidential election were declared void since both failed to meet the legal threshold of a minimum of 50 percent of the entire electorate, as required by Article 30 of the Referendum Act.

At first glance the pattern of voting (or non-voting) in the referendum seems understandable. Apparently, the pan-Green (泛綠; i.e., DPP and Taiwan Solidarity Union [TSU, 台灣團結聯盟]) camp simply followed

CHI HUANG (黃紀; Ph.D., Indiana University, 1986) is Professor of Political Science at, and a Chair Professor of, National Chung Cheng University, Taiwan (ROC). He has published numerous articles on political methodology, political economy of national defense, and voting behavior in various scholarly journals, including *American Political Science Review*, *American Politics Quarterly*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Issues & Studies*, and *Journal of Politics*. He can be reached at <polch@ccu.edu.tw>.

¹The Central Election Commission, <http://210.69.23.182/cecp/index.php> (accessed July 17, 2004).

Table 1
Referendum Voting on Two Issues

Item #	Issue*	Turnout Count (% of electors)	Invalid Count (% of electors)	Valid	
				YES Count (% of electors) [% of valid votes]	NO Count (% of electors) [% of valid votes]
1	Strengthening self-defense capabilities	7,452,340 (45.17%)	359,711 (2.18%)	6,511,216 (39.47%) [91.80%]	581,413 (3.52%) [8.20%]
2	Negotiation with China on an equal basis	7,444,148 (45.12%)	578,574 (3.51%)	6,319,663 (38.31%) [92.05%]	545,911 (3.31%) [7.95%]

Source: Central Election Commission, <http://210.69.23.182/cecp/index.php> (accessed July 17, 2004).

*The two referendum issues are: (1) whether the government should strengthen self-defense capabilities by acquiring more advanced weaponry should mainland China continue to threaten Taiwan; and (2) whether the government should engage in negotiations with China on an equal basis to establish a framework of "peace and stability."

the Chen-Lu's campaign slogan of "Taiwan 100," where "1" stood for a vote for Chen-Lu (who were candidate pair number #1 on the voting ballot) and "0" meant circling the YES on each of the two referendum ballots. Likewise, most of the pan-Blue (泛藍; i.e., KMT and PFP) followed their leaders' plea to boycott the referenda by refusing to pick up the referendum ballots after voting for Lien-Soong. This was most evident from the fact that the count of the YES votes cast for both referendum issues (6,511,216 and 6,319,663, respectively) was extremely close to the number of Chen-Lu's votes (6,471,970).²

Yet even if we assume that most YES voters were Chen-Lu supporters and that most abstainers in the referendum were Lien-Soong followers,³ we

²Ibid.

³No matter how reasonable this intuitive assumption may sound, it runs the risk of committing the ecological fallacy and needs to be verified by individual-level data. See W.S. Robinson, "Ecological Correlations and the Behavior of Individuals," *American Sociological Review* 15, no. 3 (1950): 351-57; see also Chi Huang, "Straight- and Split-Ticket Voting:

still need to account for more than half a million NO votes and an unusually high percentage of invalid votes. Taiwan's 2004 referendum also confronts us with other substantively important questions. Why, for instance, is there such a large gap between the turnout of the presidential election and the voting in the referenda, given that the two issues at hand were not all that controversial? Instead of being party- and candidate-oriented, should not referendum voting be issue-oriented? Finally, what are the determinants for the voting choices for the public regarding YES, NO, invalid vote, and abstention?

This article seeks to address these questions. It is organized into three sections. The first places Taiwan's 2004 referendum in a comparative perspective while reviewing the literature. The second constructs a continuation ratio model to explore the sequential voting choices in the referendum. The last section draws conclusions based on the empirical analyses.

Referendum Voting in Perspective

A referendum is often broadly defined as a decision-making process which involves citizens voting directly on some public issue.⁴ Voters in a referendum face a somewhat different set of choices as compared to when electing a candidate. Most important, as LeDuc points out, is the fact that in a referendum no candidate or party name appears on the ballot.⁵ However, similar to an election, voters must decide whether to turnout for

Methodological Reflections," *Renwen ji shehui kexue jikan* (人文及社會科學集刊, Journal of Social Sciences and Philosophy) 13, no. 5 (December 2001): 554-56.

⁴David Butler and Austin Ranney, "Practice," in *Referendums around the World: The Growing Use of Direct Democracy*, ed. David Butler and Austin Ranney (Washington, D.C.: The AEI Press, 1994), 1; and Simon Hug, "Occurrence and Policy Consequences of Referendums: A Theoretical Model and Empirical Evidence," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 16, no. 3 (July 2004): 321.

⁵Lawrence LeDuc, "Referendums and Elections: How Do Campaigns Differ," in *Do Political Campaigns Matter? Campaign Effects in Elections and Referendums*, eds. David M. Farrell and Rudiger Schmitt-Beck (London: Routledge, 2002), 145.

the vote, and if they do, how to vote. Thus voters in a referendum need to obtain voting cues from various sources. Some of these cues are similar to those found in elections, while others can be different. Students of voting behavior in referenda therefore can borrow wisdom from traditional research on electoral behavior, as long as they take into account the special features of referenda. Furthermore, to fully understand the voting of Taiwan's first national referendum, we must not only look at it from a global comparative perspective but also appreciate its local specificities.

In a 2002 special issue of the *European Journal of Political Research* devoted to referendum, LeDuc suggested that the key factors affecting referendum voting behavior include: (1) the way in which a referendum is initiated; (2) the relationship between the referendum issue and the main political divisions; and (3) the nature of the campaign.⁶ Following this framework, this section reviews the literature concerning these key factors, discusses the institutional provisions of the initiation of referenda in Taiwan, and then relates the Taiwanese case to its local specificities of both political cleavage and party system. The contextual information paves the way for our empirical analysis in the next section.

The Initiation of Referenda

Despite the growing use of direct democracy around the world, referenda are still relatively rare events in representative democracies. The increased use of referenda is not universal, but rather concentrated in a fairly small number of countries such as Switzerland, Italy, Uruguay, and Ireland.⁷ Furthermore, the issue of referenda is not equally distributed across different types. Hug developed a four-fold typology of referenda

⁶Lawrence LeDuc, "Opinion Change and Voting Behaviour in Referendums," *European Journal of Political Research* 41, no. 6 (October 2002): 711.

⁷Lawrence LeDuc, *The Politics of Direct Democracy: Referendums in Global Perspective* (Ontario, Canada: Broadview Press, 2003), 29; Laurence Morel, "The Rise of Government-Initiated Referendums in Consolidated Democracies," in *Referendum Democracy: Citizens, Elites, and Deliberation in Referendum Campaigns*, ed. Matthew Mendelsohn and Andrew Parkin (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 51; and Pier Vincenzo Uleri, "On Referendum Voting in Italy: YES, NO, or Non-Vote? How Italian Parties Learned to Control Referendums," *European Journal of Political Research* 41, no. 6 (October 2002): 863.

around the world according to two criteria: those that are required and those that are initiated by the government.⁸ His model indicates that the type of non-required passive referendum (which he calls "plebiscite") should be rare.⁹ However, this conclusion is based on a simplified assumption that the government is sincere in consulting with the general public about policies. As Lin, Mattlin, Morel, and Walker have all pointed out, government-initiated referenda, especially referenda initiated by the executive branch, tend to be less democratic and are more likely to be manipulated for strategic and partisan objectives.¹⁰

President Chen announced on November 29, 2003 that he would hold a referendum on the same day as the presidential election based on the authority granted by Article 17 of the Referendum Act, which was passed by the Legislative Yuan (立法院) only two days earlier.¹¹ Article 17 provides that the President may, via a resolution of an Executive Yuan (行政院) meeting, initiate a referendum when the nation is being confronted by an external force that could be regarded as a threat to national sovereignty, and has hence been called the "defensive referendum."¹² Obviously, a referendum initiated this way falls into the fourth category of Hug's classification noted above.

The pan-Blue camp vehemently opposed Chen's move by questioning the legality of holding both the referendum and the presidential election on the same day, and by doubting if the military threat from China had con-

⁸Hug, "Occurrence and Policy Consequences of Referendums," 323-25.

⁹Ibid., 332.

¹⁰Jih-wen Lin, "Taiwan's Referendum Act and the Stability of the Status Quo," *Issues & Studies* 40, no. 2 (June 2004): 119-53; Mikael Mattlin, "Referendum as a Form of *Zaoshi*: The Instrumental Domestic Political Functions of Taiwan's Referendum Ploy," *ibid.*, 155-85; Morel, "The Rise of Government-Initiated Referendums," 47-64; and Mark Clarence Walker, *The Strategic Use of Referendums: Power, Legitimacy, and Democracy* (New York: Palgrave/Macmillan, 2003).

¹¹Lin Chieh-yu, "Chen Touts March 'Defensive' Vote," *Taipei Times*, November 30, 2003, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2003/11/30/2003077789/print> (accessed July 6, 2004).

¹²Laws and Regulations Databases of the Republic of China (全國法規資料庫), <http://law.moj.gov.tw/Scripts/Query4B.asp?FullDoc=所有條文&Lcode=D0020066> (accessed May 12, 2004).

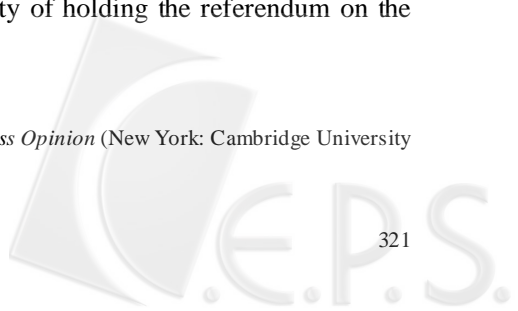
stituted an immediate threat to national security. Since both issues involve the relationship between Taiwan and China, they inevitably touch upon one of the most fundamental cleavages on the island: Taiwan independence versus reunification with China.

Referendum Issues and Political Cleavages

A referendum is often idealized as a direct democratic process through which difficult and complex issues can be settled by the general will of the people. It is therefore presumed that voting behavior in a referendum, unlike during a candidate election, tends to be issue-oriented. In reality, this is not always the case. Very much like candidate elections, voter opinion toward the issues is just one of many factors affecting the voter's choice. As Zaller's reception-acceptance model suggests, people form their opinions on the basis of the interaction between their predisposition and information: they receive new information and decide whether to accept it or not.¹³ Applying this model to referendum voting, we may reason that if a referendum issue touches upon fundamental beliefs, ideologies, or political identities, these predilections often dominate voting choices. If the positions of the political parties on an issue are clear-cut, then the voting choice may well follow partisan lines.

As mentioned earlier, the "defensive referendum" was initiated by the executive branch of the ruling DPP government and challenged by the opposition parties. The DPP and its close ally, the TSU, are pro-independence; the opposing KMT and PFP are inclined toward maintaining a friendly relationship, if not future reunification, with China. The two issues of the referenda—namely strengthening self-defense capabilities and negotiating with China on an equal basis—were meticulously chosen to mobilize pan-Green supporters, on the one hand, and to quiet the objections to the referendum, on the other. However, the pan-Blue camp questioned the motivation and legality of holding the referendum on the

¹³John R Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 51.



same day of the presidential election, countering with a demobilization strategy. Instead of taking a NO position, pan-Blue leaders urged their supporters to boycott the referendum by not picking up the referendum ballots.¹⁴ In order to assure that the government would not be able to bind together election and referendum voting, the pan-Blue successfully pressured the Central Election Commission (CEC, 中央選舉委員會) into adopting the policy that every polling station had to have a voting setup that separated presidential and referendum voting. That is, voters had to first pick up and cast the presidential ballot, and then proceed to pick up and cast the referendum ballot. This seemingly minor change of the DPP's original one-stage voting setup turned out to reinforce the partisan differences in voting by making it easier for the pan-Blue supporters to simply ignore the referendum ballot, while increasing the effort required for the pan-Green voters to follow the "Taiwan 100" slogan, since they had to go through a two-step voting process.

The Nature of Campaigns

Voters draw upon various sources of information and cues, including campaign messages, to form their opinions. If a referendum involves a deep-rooted cleavage, however, then campaigns tend to only reinforce rather than change people's existing attitudes.¹⁵ If the political parties then also take opposite positions already familiar to the voters, then the referendum issues tend to retreat into the background and partisan politics takes over. In the case at hand, the referendum campaigns did indeed take on the characteristics of the national election. When a referendum is held jointly with a general election, then the referendum tends to be engulfed in electoral politics, so much so in fact that the referendum may be ignored by the voters. If a referendum is initiated as part of a strategic ploy of elec-

¹⁴Fourteen pan-Blue city mayors and county magistrates held a news conference on January 26, 2004, questioning the legality and necessity of the defensive referendum. They strongly urged voters not to pick up referendum ballots (不領票) on voting day. See Huang Tai-lin, "Local Chiefs Rail against Referendum," *Taipei Times*, January 27, 2004, <http://www.taipei-times.com/News/front/archives/2004/01/27/2003092595/print> (accessed July 6, 2004).

¹⁵LeDuc, *The Politics of Direct Democracy*, 173.

tioneering in order to boost a candidate's popularity, then the referendum itself is an instrument, and by definition also a part, of the electoral campaign.

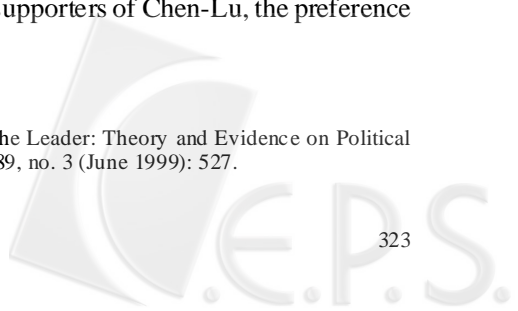
The March 20, 2004 referendum in Taiwan became a wrestling match between the two political camps from the very beginning. The DPP/TSU campaigned very hard to promote the image of the referendum as a means to strengthen Taiwan's democracy; the KMT/PFP sought to boycott, calling the referendum ploy an abuse of power. Since the referendum was no longer separable from the presidential election, it degenerated into an all-out partisan contest, with the subject matter of the two referendum issues then blurring in the middle of a "no-holds barred" election campaign. This can be best illustrated by the "Taiwan 100" slogan which clearly urged the DPP/TSU supporters to vote as a package. This type of campaign strategy certainly had implications for the voting behavior in the referendum. One can therefore reasonably hypothesize that the voters who decided early on which candidate to vote for were more likely to "follow the leader" in the referendum voting than those that decided later.¹⁶

An Exploratory Model of 2004 Referendum Voting in Taiwan

To fully understand the voting results shown in table 1, we must take into account not only the local contexts and the preferences of the voters, but also the institutional rules in this particular presidential-cum-referendum election. As mentioned earlier, voters who showed up at the polling stations would first receive and cast presidential ballots before they could proceed to the next stop where they could pick up the referendum ballots and vote.

Now consider how voters' preferences U interact with this sequential voting procedure. Among the ardent supporters of Chen-Lu, the preference

¹⁶Ron Shachar and Barry Nalebuff, "Follow the Leader: Theory and Evidence on Political Participation," *American Economic Review* 89, no. 3 (June 1999): 527.



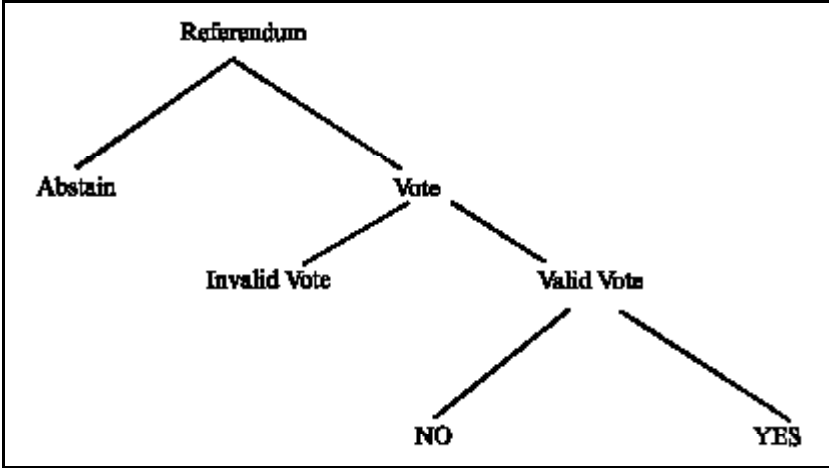
order between the pair of presidential candidates (1 = Chen-Lu, 2 = Lien-Soong) and the referendum vote "Y = yes, N = no" was $U_1 > U_2$ and $U_Y > U_N$. Given the sequential voting procedures, they had to go through both steps (i.e., first vote for Chen-Lu on the presidential ballot and then pick up the referendum ballot to vote YES) in order to maximize their utility, even if doing so cost them more in terms of time and effort. For other pan-Green supporters, however, the order was $U_1 > U_2$ and $U_Y \geq U_N$, meaning that they were more concerned about the presidential candidate than about the referendum. This group did not necessarily need to go through the second stage of voting in order to maximize their utility.

In contrast, the die-hard supporters of Lien-Soong had a preference order of $U_2 > U_1$ and $U_N > U_Y$. Given the sequential voting procedures, they also had to go through both stages (i.e., first vote for Lien-Soong on the presidential ballot and then pick up referendum ballot to vote NO) in order to maximize their utilities. For most other supporters of the KMT/PFP, however, their preference order was $U_2 > U_1$ and $U_A \geq U_I \geq U_N > U_Y$, where the subscript A = "abstention" and I = "casting an invalid vote in referenda." For this group of citizens, voting for Lien-Soong at the first stage and then simply skipping the next stage was the easiest way to maximize their utilities.

Those who supported neither the DPP nor KMT-PFP candidates were likely indifferent to the alternatives and thus would have had the preference order $U_1 = U_2$ and $U_N = U_Y$. They may have failed to show up to vote or, though turning out, still cast an invalid vote in either the first stage or in both stages in order to protest.

In short, given the sequential voting procedure those who did not care much about the referenda and those who intended to boycott them could easily turn away after having cast their presidential ballots. Only those who felt strong enough to express themselves in the referenda would carry on to the next stage of voting. Again, some might simply have picked up the referendum ballots and cast invalid votes, perhaps in order to protest. Finally, only those who went past all these barriers could cast a YES or NO vote on the referendum issues. Figure 1 illustrates this sequential process of the 2004 referendum voting in Taiwan.

Figure 1
Sequence of Choices in Referendum Voting



Let Y stand for choices available in the referendum voting, with $y_1 =$ "abstain," $y_2 =$ "cast an invalid vote," $y_3 =$ "vote NO," and $y_4 =$ "vote YES." The procedural rule dictates an increasing amount of time and effort for voters to move from the top to the bottom of the tree. We are interested in finding the factors that affected the conditional probabilities of reaching stage y_j ($j = 1, \dots, 4$) given being in stage y_j or higher:

$$\Pr(Y = j | Y \geq j) = \frac{\pi_j}{\pi_j + \dots + \pi_4}, \quad \text{with } \sum_{j=1}^4 \pi_j = 1.0$$

In the statistical literature, such conditional probabilities are called "continuation ratios,"¹⁷ which are closely related to the hazard rates for discrete survival time.¹⁸ Continuation ratio models are particularly useful for studying sequential processes in which research interest focuses on the

¹⁷Stephen E. Fienberg, *The Analysis of Cross-Classified Categorical Data*, second edition (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1980), 110-12.

¹⁸Jeffrey S. Simonoff, *Analyzing Categorical Data* (New York: Springer, 2003), 444.

odds of continuing beyond a stage given that the stage has been reached. We thus construct a continuation-ratio logit (or sequential logit) model¹⁹ to estimate the effects of a vector of independent variables \mathbf{x}_i of the i th individual voter on his or her sequential choice at the j th stage:

$$\ln \left[\frac{\Pr(Y > j | Y \geq j)}{\Pr(Y = j | Y \geq j)} \right] = \ln \left[\frac{\pi_{j+1} + \dots + \pi_J}{\pi_j} \right] = \alpha_j + \mathbf{x}_i \beta_j, \quad j = 1, K, J-1,$$

where the explanatory variables \mathbf{x}_i include voters' presidential voting choice, interaction between such choice and the timing of making the decision, party preferences, as well as four demographic variables (sex, age, education, and ethnicity). According to our earlier discussion of political cleavage and party divisions in Taiwan, we expect that supporters of Chen-Lu as well as pan-Green party identifiers were more likely to persist in the sequential voting process and vote YES as compared to the Lien-Soong and pan-Blue supporters. The latter, if they did vote in the referenda, most likely tended to vote NO. However, we further hypothesize that the degree of such partisan division tends to vary according to the strength of their preference toward presidential candidates. In other words, those who decided whom to vote for quite early on are much more likely to follow the appeals of their political leaders and follow partisan lines in referendum voting compared to those who made such decisions late in the campaign. As to ethnicity, Taiwanese (or Fulao, 福佬) were more likely to vote YES while mainlanders (外省人) were more likely to abstain or vote NO in the referenda.

Data

In order to test the hypotheses with the continuation-ratio logit model discussed above, we need to go beyond the official aggregate

¹⁹Alan Agresti, *Categorical Data Analysis*, second edition (Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2002), 289-91; David W. Hosmer and Stanley Lemeshow, *Applied Logistic Regression*, second edition (New York: Wiley, 2002), 290; and Peter McCullagh and John A. Nelder, *Generalized Linear Models*, second edition (London: Chapman and Hall, 1989), 160-64.

vote counts and rely on individual-level survey data.²⁰ The exit poll survey conducted on March 20 by TVBS/Mitofsky International serves our purpose. The exit poll consists of 13,244 completed questionnaires from 120 sampled polling stations island-wide. The sample was then reweighted based on the official vote counts announced by the CEC *after* the election. For our purposes here, the respondents who reported that they did not even pick up presidential ballots as well as those who had missing values in our dependent and independent variables were excluded. Thus, a total of 10,857 valid cases are included in this analysis. Descriptive statistics of the dependent and independent variables based on weighted valid cases are shown in table 2. They are close enough to the corresponding characteristics of the voting population, save for sampling errors.

Findings

Estimates of the continuation-ratio logit model for the referendum voting on issue one (issue of strengthening national defense) are listed in table 3. In general the empirical results confirm the hypotheses that referendum voting/non-voting (in the first column of table 3), casting valid/invalid votes (in the second column), and finally YES/NO choices (in the third column) are mainly divided along presidential candidates and partisan lines, even after controlling for demographic variables including age, gender, education, and ethnicity. Put differently, supporters of Chen-Lu were much more likely to turn out to cast valid votes, and then vote YES in referendum issue one. Supporters of Lien-Soong, on the other hand, were much less likely to vote in the referendum at all, and the few who did vote mainly cast valid votes to say NO. Similarly, those that identified with the pan-Green parties were also more persistent in showing their support of the referendum issue.

This general pattern notwithstanding, there is also evidence of varying degrees of partisan division in referendum voting, as hypothesized. Compared with those who had decided on whom to vote for more than half

²⁰The author thanks Mr. Wang Yeh-ding of TVBS for generously providing this data set.

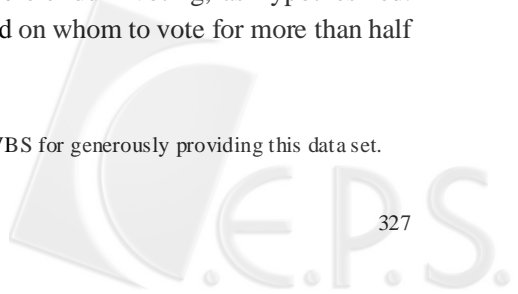


Table 2
Summary Statistics of the Weighted Sample (n = 10,857)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Presidential voting choice		
Chen-Lu	5,455	50.25
Lien-Soong	5,302	48.83
Cast invalid vote	100	0.92
Referendum voting on Item #1		
Yes	5,478	50.46
No	731	6.74
Cast invalid vote	212	1.95
Abstain	4,436	40.86
Referendum voting on Item #2		
Yes	5,686	52.37
No	611	5.62
Cast invalid vote	105	0.97
Abstain	4,455	41.04
Party preference		
Pan-Green	3,553	32.72
Pan-Blue	3,065	28.23
Independent	4,239	39.05
Time of deciding presidential voting choice		
A week prior	1,628	14.99
A month prior	1,116	10.28
Three months prior	863	7.95
Six months prior	1,002	9.22
More than six months prior	6,248	57.55
Gender		
Male	5,724	52.72
Female	5,133	47.28
Age		
20-29	3,372	31.06
30-39	2,878	26.51
40-49	2,423	22.32
50-59	1,361	12.53
60 or above	823	7.58
Education		
Junior high or below	1,792	16.50
High school	3,184	29.33
Junior college	2,292	21.11
University or above	3,589	33.06
Ethnicity		
Taiwanese	8,034	74.00
Hakka	1,524	14.04
Mainlander	1,206	11.10
Aborigine	93	0.85

Table 3
Continuation Ratio Model of Voting on Referendum Issue One

Independent variables	Vote vs. Non-vote		Valid vs. Invalid vote		Yes vs. No	
	$\hat{\beta}$ (S.E.)	exp($\hat{\beta}$) p-value	$\hat{\beta}$ (S.E.)	exp($\hat{\beta}$) p-value	$\hat{\beta}$ (S.E.)	exp($\hat{\beta}$) p-value
Intercept	0.136 (0.382)		-0.022 (0.976)		-0.259 (0.609)	
Presidential candidate choice						
Chen-Lu	2.701 (0.260)***	14.895 <0.001	-5.383 (0.462)***	217.674 <0.001	2.624 (0.383)***	13.791 <0.001
Lien-Soong	-2.162 (0.223)***	0.115 <0.001	1.679 (0.329)***	5.360 <0.001	-0.552 (0.380)	0.576 0.146
Party preference						
Pan-Green	1.440 (0.149)***	4.221 <0.001	0.315 (0.236)	1.370 0.182	0.911 (0.137)***	2.487 <0.001
Pan-Blue	0.135 (0.073)	1.145 0.067	0.183 (0.191)	1.201 0.338	-0.598 (0.129)***	0.550 <0.001
Timing of making presidential candidate choice						
Chen-Lu, within a week	-0.993 (0.189)***	0.370 <0.001	-2.304 (0.413)***	0.100 <0.001	-1.158 (0.175)***	0.314 <0.001
Chen-Lu, within a month	-0.556 (0.246)*	0.573 0.024	-2.400 (0.434)***	0.091 <0.001	-0.851 (0.217)***	0.427 <0.001
Chen-Lu, within 3 month	-0.319 (0.327)	0.727 0.329	-1.613 (0.575)**	0.199 0.005	-0.913 (0.247)	0.401 <0.001
Chen-Lu, within 6 months	-0.267 (0.308)	0.766 0.386	0.270 (1.091)	1.310 0.804	-0.500 (0.268)	0.607 0.062

Table 3 (Continued)

Independent variables	Vote vs. Non-vote		Valid vs. Invalid vote		Yes vs. No	
	$\hat{\beta}$ (S.E.)	exp($\hat{\beta}$) p-value	$\hat{\beta}$ (S.E.)	exp($\hat{\beta}$) p-value	$\hat{\beta}$ (S.E.)	exp($\hat{\beta}$) p-value
Lien-Soong, within a week	1.228 (0.105)***	3.414 <0.001	0.266 (0.288)	1.305 0.357	-0.654 (0.181)***	1.923 <0.001
Lien-Soong, within a month	0.968 (0.112)***	2.633 <0.001	-0.230 (0.284)	0.795 0.418	0.589 (0.204)**	1.802 0.004
Lien-Soong, within 3 months	0.621 (0.122)***	1.861 <0.001	-0.828 (0.278)**	0.437 0.003	0.393 (0.240)	1.481 0.101
Lien-Soong, within 6 months	0.335 (0.121)**	1.398 0.006	-0.037 (0.340)	0.964 0.914	0.246 (0.235)	1.279 0.293
Sex: Male	0.116 (0.064)	1.123 0.072	0.168 (0.150)	1.183 0.264	0.167 (0.096)	1.182 0.081
Age						
20-29	0.386 (0.155)*	1.471 0.013	0.739 (0.315)**	2.094 0.019	-0.399 (0.240)	0.671 0.096
30-39	0.335 (0.152)*	1.398 0.028	0.963 (0.320)**	2.620 0.003	-0.125 (0.239)	0.882 0.602
40-49	0.173 (0.151)	1.189 0.249	0.528 (0.308)	1.696 0.087	-0.076 (0.240)	0.927 0.751
50-59	-0.117 (0.162)	0.890 0.471	0.840 (0.373)*	2.316 0.024	-0.293 (0.257)	0.746 0.254
Education						
Junior high or below	0.732 (0.117)***	2.079 <0.001	0.436 (0.259)	1.547 0.092	0.203 (0.162)	1.225 0.210

Table 3 (Continued)

Independent variables	Vote vs. Non-vote		Valid vs. Invalid vote		Yes vs. No	
	$\hat{\beta}$ (S.E.)	exp($\hat{\beta}$)	$\hat{\beta}$ (S.E.)	exp($\hat{\beta}$)	$\hat{\beta}$ (S.E.)	exp($\hat{\beta}$)
High school	0.639 (0.083)***	1.895	0.226 (0.189)	1.254	0.280 (0.124)*	1.323
Junior college	0.210 (0.087)*	1.234	0.340 (0.210)	1.405	0.177 (0.134)	1.194
Ethnicity						
Taiwanese	-0.337 (0.269)	0.714	-0.648 (0.869)	0.523	0.846 (0.418)*	2.330
Hakka	-0.381 (0.278)	0.683	-0.694 (0.883)	0.500	0.578 (0.431)	1.782
Mainlander	-0.928 (0.283)***	0.395	-0.727 (0.898)	0.483	0.321 (0.450)	1.379
n=10,857						
Likelihood ratio G ² =8126.70, n=6,420						
p<.0001						
McFadden's pseudo R ² =0.553						
Likelihood ratio G ² =439.95, n=6,209						
p<.0001						
McFadden's pseudo R ² =0.237						
Likelihood ratio G ² =1460.47, p<.0001						
McFadden's pseudo R ² =0.325						

***p<0.001; **p<0.01; *p<0.05

Note: Kappa's agreement coefficient for referendum voting on issue one and issue two is as high as 0.852 (p < .001), indicating an almost identical pattern of voting for these two issues. Indeed, the continuation ratio model estimates of issue two (not shown here) are quite similar to that of issue one. I therefore present only the empirical analysis results of referendum voting on issue one.

a year prior to the March 20 election on (which is the reference category of the "timing of decision" variable), those voters who made up their mind relatively late were less inclined to "follow the leaders" in the referendum voting. Furthermore, the later they decided on their choice of candidate, the less eager they were to follow the party leaders' stand on referendum voting. For example, Chen-Lu supporters in general were $\exp(2.701) = 14.895$ times as likely to vote in the referendum. However, those citizens who did not decide to vote for Chen-Lu until a month prior to March 20 were only $\exp(2.701-0.556) = 8.542$ times as likely to vote in the referendum, and the likelihood further dropped to about only $\exp(2.701-0.993) = 5.518$ times as likely for those who decided one week before the election. Quite similar patterns of declining enthusiasm could be discerned in terms of casting valid votes and voting YES in the referendum.

Similarly, Lien-Soong supporters in general were $[1.0 - \exp(-2.162)] \times 100\% = 88.5\%$ less likely to vote in the referendum. However, the later a person decided to vote for Lien-Soong, the more hesitant they became to boycott the referendum by means of a non-vote. For instance, those who did not make up their mind until a week before the election became just $[1.0 - \exp(-2.162+1.228)] \times 100\% = 60.7\%$ less likely to vote in the referendum. Although most Lien-Soong voters simply skipped the referendum voting, some of them did proceed to the next step. Among those late deciders (i.e., those who made up their mind within a month before the presidential election) who did cast valid votes in the referendum, they were actually more likely to defy Lien-Soong's call for abstention and instead vote YES.

As to the demographic variables, younger voters under forty and people with middle and lower education levels were more likely to vote in the referendum, although only those with a high school diploma showed a significant tendency to vote YES on issue one. Among the four ethnic groups, mainlanders were least likely to vote in the referendum; for those who did vote, Taiwanese were most likely to vote YES. This finding is not too surprising because it reflects the ethnic division and partisanship in Taiwan: mainlanders are strong supporters of the PFP and the KMT, while the ruling DPP has a considerable stronghold among the Taiwanese.

Conclusions

The referendum voting that was held in Taiwan on March 20, 2004 was significant because it was Taiwan's first implementation of direct democracy at the national level. However, the fact that it was held on the same day as the presidential election raised opposition parties' doubts regarding the government's motivation. This caused the referendum issues to become engulfed in partisan politics and electoral maneuvering. The ruling DPP was skillful enough to tie the general election to the referendum so as to kill two birds with one stone—i.e., mobilizing their fundamentalist pro-independence supporters in order to win the re-election, while at the same time gaining legitimacy by appealing directly to the people. The opposition parties were also shrewd enough to tone down their charges of illegality regarding the "defensive referendum," and to push for a separate and sequential voting procedure. These two side-by-side maneuverings ended up with the net result of President Chen's "killing one bird [re-election] with two stones [general election and referendum]." The empirical analysis presented in this essay confirms the hypotheses that referendum voting/non-voting, casting valid/invalid votes, and finally YES/NO choices were mainly divided along presidential candidate and partisan lines, even after controlling for demographic variables. The voting/non-voting pattern revealed in this plebiscite is a vivid reminder of the potential risk that such "all-out" political maneuvering has for deepening the existing social cleavages in Taiwan.

It is unfortunate that Taiwan's first referendum turned out to be an expensive way of measuring the balance between the two opposing camps, which ironically pushed the purpose of the referendum to the background. Whether the referendum has "strengthened" Taiwan's burgeoning democracy remains to be seen. Still, the effects of this referendum voting on the deepening of political and social cleavages that have existed on the island will remain for some time. It can only be hoped that the political parties, both the ruling party and the opposition, realize the potential dangers of drifting toward such plebiscitary politics.