

# International Journal of China Studies

Volume 5

Number 1

April 2014

ISSN 2180-3250

## Taiwan

### *Democracy, Cross-Strait Relations and Regional Security*

#### EDITOR'S FOREWORD

*Democracy in Taiwan and Mainland China-Taiwan Relations: Updates and Prognoses*

Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh

#### DEMOCRACY IN TAIWAN

*Exploring the Ambivalent Voter in Taiwan's 2012 Presidential and Legislative Yuan Elections*

Huo-yan Shyu

*Party Competence and Vote Choice in the 2012 Election in Taiwan*  
Chiung-chu Lin

*Constitutional Implication of the 2012 Elections in Taiwan*  
Yujen Chou

*The Government Performance System Reform in Taiwan: Localized Focus and Citizen Participation*  
Eric Rong-yang Huang, Chun-yuan Wang and Yan-yi Chang

#### CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS

*Taiwan in the Cross-Strait Arms Dynamics: Past and Present*  
Shang-su Wu

*Cross-Strait Relations since 2008: Assessing Intra-position Politics*  
Hoo Tiang Boon

*Scarborough Shoal Dispute, China's Assertiveness, and Taiwan's South China Sea Policy*  
Shawn Shaw-fawn Kao

#### REVIEW ARTICLE

*Chinese/Taiwanese Nationalism, Cross-Strait Relations and an Inevitable War? – A Review of Dong-ching Day's Inevitable War?! (2012)*  
Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh

*The International Journal of China Studies is a triannual academic journal focusing on contemporary China in issues pertaining to the fields of political, social and economic development, trade and commerce, foreign relations, regional security and other domains of the social sciences in the context of, more specifically, today's Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong or Macau. The journal is abstracted/indexed in Scopus, International Political Science Abstracts, International Bibliography of the Social Sciences, Bibliography of Asian Studies, EconLit, e-JEL, JEL on CD, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, Ulrichsweb Global Serials Directory, Reference Corporation's Asia-Pacific Database, ProQuest Political Science and Research Library, ABI/INFORM Complete, ABI/INFORM Global, PAIS (Public Affairs Information Service) International, CSA (formerly Cambridge Scientific Abstracts) Worldwide Political Science Abstracts and NLB's ISI (Index to Singapore Information).*



Institute of China Studies



International Journal of China Studies

Taiwan: Democracy, Cross-Strait Relations and Regional Security

# International Journal of China Studies

## Notes for Contributors

### Submission Notes

1. Manuscripts submitted for publication in the International Journal of China Studies should focus on contemporary China in issues pertaining to the fields of political, social and economic development, trade and commerce, foreign relations, regional security and other domains of the social sciences in the context of, more specifically, today's Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong or Macau.
2. A manuscript submitted should be an original, unpublished work not under consideration for publication elsewhere.
3. All manuscripts under consideration for publication will be refereed via a double blind reviewing process.
4. The contents of a published article in the International Journal of China Studies reflect the view of the author or authors and not that of the editors of the journal or the publisher.
5. The editors of the journal do not accept responsibility for damage or loss of manuscripts submitted.
6. Manuscripts submitted should be written in English with Microsoft Word in Times New Roman font, size 12 and with 1.5 line spacing, and should not exceed forty pages (or in the case of a book review, not exceeding three pages) inclusive of tables, charts and diagrams, notes, list of references, and appendices. A short note on the author, including name, academic title and highest qualification (e.g., professor, senior lecturer, PhD, MSc, etc.), institutional affiliation, full postal address and institutional e-mail address, and telephone and facsimile numbers should be included. In the multi-author case, the corresponding author should be identified. An abstract of 100 to 250 words and a list of three to five keywords should also be given.
7. Copyrights of accepted manuscripts will be transferred to the International Journal of China Studies.
8. Authors must obtain permission to reproduce all materials of which the copyright is owned by others, including tables, charts, diagrams and maps, and extensive quoting should be avoided.
9. Book review submitted should focus on new or recent publications, and the book title, author, city/publisher, year of publication and total number of pages should be shown above the review.
10. Manuscripts and book reviews should be sent by e-mail to IJCSjournal@gmail.com and yeohkk@um.edu.my, addressed to the Editor of the International Journal of China Studies.

### Stylesheet

1. Check carefully grammar and spelling before submitting the article.
2. Use British English, but alternate -ize spelling is permissible. Also note that a billion = 1,000,000,000 and a trillion = 1,000,000,000,000.
3. Make headings and subheadings identifiable, and try to avoid sub-subheadings.

*(continued inside back cover ...)*

*(... continued from inside front cover)*

4. A list of references should be compiled, and notes should be placed under a "Notes" heading. Notes and the list of references should be placed at the end of the article.
5. Use full point for decimal and commas for numbers 1,000 and above. A zero must always precede decimals less than 1.
6. Use "per cent", not "%", except in tables and charts.
7. For dates, use day-month-year format (e.g., 1st January 2010), and spell out the months to avoid ambiguity.
8. Do not use apostrophes for decades (e.g., 1990s, not 1990's or '90).
9. For short phrasal quotations, full points and commas fall outside a closing quotation mark. However, where the quote is a complete sentence, the full point falls inside the closing quotation mark.
10. Long quotations, if unavoidable, should be indented, using no quotation marks. The author should take note of the copyright implications of long quotations.
11. Use unspaced hyphens, not dashes, in pages and year spans, and write all page numbers and years in full (e.g., 245-246; 1997-1998).
12. Use British "open" style for abbreviations, with no full points in the following: Dr, PhD, Ltd, Mr, Mrs, US, EU, m, km, kg, ft, eds, vols, nos, but retain full points in ed., vol., no., p., pp., i.e., viz., e.g., etc., ff., et al., ibid., op. cit..
13. Use full capitals only for abbreviated names: UN, EU, USA. Only capitalize the first word and important words (verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives and adverbs, but not definite and indefinite articles, prepositions and conjunctions) in headings and book titles. Use "State" (except in quotations if the original is not so capitalized) to refer to the central body politic of a civil government and "state" to refer to other senses of the term, including a country or a political territory forming part of a country (except when the term begins a sentence).
14. A non-English term or word should be italicized but the s-ending (if added) in its anglicized plural form should not be italicized, but note that names of institutions, organizations and movements, local or foreign, and names of currencies, local or foreign, should not be italicized. Quotations from books or direct speech in a non-English language and set in quotation marks (followed by an English translation in square brackets) should not be italicized. Quotations translated by the author of the manuscript into English should be so indicated.
15. Use the APA/ACS style for in-text citation with list of references at end of text, with commas, e.g., (Lin, 1998: 24), for in-text citation, and in list of references: Shleifer, A and R. Vishny (1994), "Politicians and Firms", Quarterly Journal of Economics, Vol. 109, pp. 995-1025; Steiner, Jürg (1974), Amicable Agreement versus Majority Rule: Conflict Resolution in Switzerland, rev. ed., Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; Moscovici, Serge (1985), "Innovation and Minority Influence", in Serge Moscovici, Gabriel Mugny and Eddy van Avermaet (eds), Perspectives on Minority Influence, Paris: Maison des Sciences de l'Homme and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 9-51. The title of a book or article etc. in a non-English language should be shown in the original language or its Roman transliteration and followed by a translation into English in square brackets. Note that the title of a book or journal which is in italics in the original language or its Roman transliteration should not be italicized in the English translation unless an English translation of the book or journal has been published.



International Journal of China Studies

Vol. 5, No. 1, April 2014

**Taiwan**

*Democracy, Cross-Strait Relations and Regional Security*





## **International Journal of China Studies**

**Chairman** Danny Wong Tze Ken, *Director, Institute of China Studies*

**Editor-in-Chief** Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh, *Institute of China Studies*

### **Editorial Board**

Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh, *ICS University of Malaya*

Er-Win Tan, *FASS University of Malaya*

Evelyn Devadason, *FEA University of Malaya*

Hooi-Hooi Lean, *SOSS Universiti Sains Malaysia*

Loo-See Beh, *FEA University of Malaya*

Mohd Aminul Karim, *AEI University of Malaya*

Ngeow Chow Bing, *ICS University of Malaya*

Siew-Nooi Phang, *COLGIS Universiti Utara Malaysia*

Syeda Naushin Panini, *FASS University of Malaya*

### **Associate Editorial Board**

Andreas Susanto, *Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University*

Can Seng Ooi, *Copenhagen Business School*

Fan Pik Shy, *University of Malaya*

Gerald Chan, *University of Auckland*

John Donaldson, *Singapore Management University*

Jonathan Benney, *Macquarie University*

Kamaruding Abdulsomad, *University of Gothenburg*

Kwok-Tong Soo, *University of Lancaster*

Ling Tek Soon, *University of Malaya*

Michael Jakobsen, *Copenhagen Business School*

Mutahir Ahmed, *University of Karachi*

Wendy Beekes, *University of Lancaster*

---

Administration and Website Maintenance: Susie Yieng-Ping Ling

Administrative Assistance: Geeta Gengatharan and Nazirah Hamzah

Copy-editing and Typesetting: Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh

Please visit the *IJCS* homepage at <http://ics.um.edu.my/?modul=IJCS>





## International Journal of China Studies

### Advisory Board

Arif Dirlik, *Independent Scholar, Eugene, OR, USA*

Brantly Womack, *University of Virginia*

Brian Bridges, *Lingnan University (RTD)*

Carlyle Thayer, *University of New South Wales*

David McMullen, *University of Cambridge*

Donald Horowitz, *Duke University*

Fujio Hara, *Nanzan University*

Gregor Benton, *Cardiff University*

Im-Soo Yoo, *Ewha Womans University*

Juan José Ramírez Bonilla, *El Colegio de México*

Mark Hayllar, *City University of Hong Kong*

Pío García, *Universidad Externado de Colombia*

Poh-Ping Lee, *University of Malaya*

Samuel C.Y. Ku, *National Sun Yat-sen University*

Shiping Hua, *University of Louisville*

Suzanne Ogden, *Northeastern University*

Uziel Nogueira, *IDB-INTAL (RTD)*



---

Manuscripts for consideration and editorial communication should be sent to:

The Editor, *International Journal of China Studies*

E-mail: [IJCSjournal@gmail.com](mailto:IJCSjournal@gmail.com), [yeohkk@um.edu.my](mailto:yeohkk@um.edu.my)

Further editorial communication and acquisition, subscription and other enquiries could also be sent to:

Miss Susie Yieng-Ping Ling, *IJCS Administrative Officer*

(E-mail: [susielyp@um.edu.my](mailto:susielyp@um.edu.my)), or

Miss Si-Ning Yeoh, *IJCS Editorial Assistant*

(E-mail: [sy399@cornell.edu](mailto:sy399@cornell.edu))

Printing: University of Malaya Press, University of Malaya,  
50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia





*International Journal of China Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1, April 2014  
*Focus – Taiwan: Democracy, Cross-Strait Relations and Regional Security*

© Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya  
First published in 2014

ISSN 2180-3250

#### COPYRIGHT

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without written permission from the publisher. Under the Copyright Act 1987, any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication shall be liable to prosecution and claims for damages.

---

The *International Journal of China Studies* is a triannual academic journal focusing on contemporary China in issues pertaining to the fields of political, social and economic development, trade and commerce, foreign relations, regional security and other domains of the social sciences in the context of, more specifically, today's Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong or Macau. The journal is abstracted/indexed in *Scopus*, *International Political Science Abstracts*, *International Bibliography of the Social Sciences*, *Bibliography of Asian Studies*, *EconLit*, *e-JEL*, *JEL on CD*, *Ulrich's Periodicals Directory*, *Ulrichsweb Global Serials Directory*, *Reference Corporation's Asia-Pacific Database*, *ProQuest Political Science and Research Library*, *ABI/INFORM Complete*, *ABI/INFORM Global*, *PAIS (Public Affairs Information Service) International*, *CSA (formerly Cambridge Scientific Abstracts) Worldwide Political Science Abstracts* and *NLB's ISI (Index to Singapore Information)*.








---

## Contents

### **Editor's Foreword**

- Democracy in Taiwan and Mainland China-Taiwan Relations: Updates and Prognoses 1  
*Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh*

### **Articles**

#### ***Democracy in Taiwan***

- Exploring the Ambivalent Voter in Taiwan's 2012 Presidential and Legislative Yuan Elections 11  
*Huo-yan Shyu*
- Party Competence and Vote Choice in the 2012 Election in Taiwan 49  
*Chiung-chu Lin*
- Constitutional Implication of the 2012 Elections in Taiwan 71  
*Yujen Chou*
- The Government Performance System Reform in Taiwan: Localized Focus and Citizen Participation 89  
*Eric Rong-yang Huang, Chun-yuan Wang and Yan-yi Chang*

#### ***Cross-Strait Relations***

- Taiwan in the Cross-Strait Arms Dynamics: Past and Present 107  
*Shang-su Wu*
- Cross-Strait Relations since 2008: Assessing Intra-position Politics 137  
*Hoo Tiang Boon*
- Scarborough Shoal Dispute, China's Assertiveness, and Taiwan's South China Sea Policy 153  
*Shawn Shaw-fawn Kao*

### **Review Article**

- Chinese/Taiwanese Nationalism, Cross-Strait Relations and an Inevitable War? – A Review of Dong-ching Day's *Inevitable War?! (2012)* 179  
*Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh*





## Contributors

Dr Yan-yi **Chang** 張筵儀 is Assistant Professor at the Department of Public Administration, Chung Hua University, Taiwan. He received Ph.D. degree in Political Science at National Chung Cheng University in Taiwan in 2011. His main research interests are China's climate change governance, local government and public policy, mixed methods research, public management, and qualitative research software. <Email: [cyy@chu.edu.tw](mailto:cyy@chu.edu.tw)>

Dr Yujen **Chou** 周育仁 is a full Professor (1994) in the Department of Public Administration and Policy at National Taipei University (NTPU) since 1990. He was chair of this Department (2006-2008), Convener of the Program of Human Resources Development in Public Sector and Civil Society (2007-2008) and Dean of the College of Public Affairs (2009-2012) of the NTPU. He is also Fellow (since 2000) and Deputy Convener (since 2008) of the Constitutional and Legal Section in the National Policy Foundation as well as Secretary-General of World League for Freedom and Democracy (WLFD) (since 2012). He was elected president of the Chinese Association of Political Science (2008-2009). His research interests include political economy, executive-legislative relationship, and Taiwan's politics. His publications include contributions to *Issues & Studies*, *Chinese Political Science Review* and the *Journal of National Development*. <Email: [elites@ms17.hinet.net](mailto:elites@ms17.hinet.net)>

Dr **Hoo** Tiang Boon 符祥文 is Research Fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He holds a Ph.D. in International Relations from the University of Oxford. His research interests include China's foreign





and security policy, cross-Strait relations, Chinese identity politics, and US-China relations. He is the lecturer of the Masters course *Chinese security and foreign policy*, as well as the deputy coordinator of the M.Sc. (Asian Studies) programme at RSIS. He is the author of several publications on China, cross-Strait relations and US-China relations, and is currently completing a book manuscript on China's proclaimed identity as a responsible great power. He has reviewed for the publications *Global Governance*, the *Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) Journal* and the *Journal of Asian Politics and History*. He has been involved in Track Two diplomatic initiatives, such as the Korea-Singapore Forum as well as the Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions. Dr Hoo was formerly a visiting scholar at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences and a visiting researcher at the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies. In 2014, he will be a visiting fellow at the China Foreign Affairs University in Beijing. <Email: istbhoo@ntu.edu.sg>

Dr Eric Rong-yang **Huang** 黃榮源 is Associate Professor at the Department of Public Administration and Management, Chinese Culture University, Taiwan. He was awarded Ph.D. degree in Government at the University of Essex in 2004. His areas of research focus on public management, performance management in public sector, European Union and UK government. Huang's recent publications and researches include Taiwanese local government governance, EU regions and cross-regional cooperation. <Email: hry2@ulive.pccu.edu.tw>

Dr Shawn Shaw-fawn **Kao** 高少凡 (Ph.D. in International Relations, University of Virginia) is Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science, and Dean of OIEP (Office of International Education & Programs), Tunghai University (THU), Taiwan, Republic of China. He has been working in various capacities, such as Dean of International College, Director of Graduate School of International Affairs, Director of Research and Development, Dean of Student Affairs, Director of International Education and Exchanges at Ming Chuan University; Deputy Secretary General, People-to-People International (PTPI/ROC,



中華民國國民外交協會); Senior Staff Officer, Taipei Office on Education Forum, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC); editing board for the *Academic Journal of Politics and Policies*, Vice-president of International Trade and Marketing, Soletek Inc. (U.S.A.). His research and study interests include China's Southeast Asia policy, Southeast Asia regional studies, international relations and East Asia regional security, and theories of international politics. His current research papers and publications include: "China Rise and The Myth of ASEAN/East Asian Regional Integration" (2010); Shawn S.F. Kao (co-author), "Governing a Globalizing World: Using Military Adversary Regime and Non-military Adversary Regimes as a Tool" (2010); "Taiwan: A Key to China's Peaceful Rise"(2010); "China Rise and Its Impact on the Changing of East Asian International System"(2011); Shawn S.F. Kao (co-author), "Marketing X as a University of Governance: A One-dot Theory and Modified SWOT Model Application" (2011); "China Rise and Its Impact on ASEAN's Community Building" (2012); Shawn S.F. Kao (co-author), "Taipei's Strategy: Seeking More Diplomatic Ties or Involving in More International Regimes?" (2012). <Email: shawn.k1311@msa.hinet.net>

Dr Chiung-chu **Lin** 林瓊珠 is Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at Soochow University, Taiwan. She received her Ph.D. in Government from University of Essex. Her research interests include party politics, voting behaviour, and public opinion. <Email: clinf@scu.edu.tw>

Dr Huo-yan **Shyu** 徐火炎 is Research Fellow of the Institute of Political Science at Academia Sinica (IPSAS) in Taiwan, a joint-appointed Professor of National Taipei University and an Adjunct Professor of Soochow University. He is a co-founder of the Taiwanese Political Association (TPSA) and served as its president in 2007-2008. Professor Shyu's areas of specialization include comparative politics, elections and voting behaviour, and political culture and psychology. Professor Shyu has been actively involved in most of Taiwan's major nation-wide social and/or post-electoral surveys since 1983, served as either PI, co-PI or



member of advisory board. He is the author of over fifty articles, book chapters, and other publications in both English and Chinese. Professor Shyu's current research interest is on exploring effects of emotions and other psycho-cultural factors in mass politics in Taiwan as well as in East Asian states. <Email: [hyshyu@gate.sinica.edu.tw](mailto:hyshyu@gate.sinica.edu.tw)>

Dr Chun-yuan **Wang** 王俊元 is Assistant Professor at the Department of Administration Police, Central Police University, Taiwan. He received Ph.D. degree in Public Administration at National Chengchi University in Taiwan in 2008. His main research interests are crisis management, strategic management, policy analysis, and public human resource management. <Email: [g885422@seed.net.tw](mailto:g885422@seed.net.tw)>

Dr Shang-su **Wu** 吳尚書 is Research Fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He completed both undergraduate and M.A. programme at the Department of Political Science, National Taiwan University. He obtained his Ph.D. degree at the University of New South Wales. Dr Wu's research interests are Sino-Taiwan relations, defence policies of Taiwan, the Philippines, Singapore and other Southeast Asian countries. <Email: [isswwu@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:isswwu@ntu.edu.sg)>

Dr Emile Kok-Kheng **Yeoh** 楊國慶 is Associate Professor at the Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia. He has a Ph.D. on ethnopolitics in socioeconomic development from the University of Bradford, West Yorkshire, England (1998), was the director of the Institute of China Studies from 13th March 2008 to 1st January 2014 and is currently on sabbatical leave. His works have been published in journals and occasional paper series such as the Scopus-indexed *GeoJournal: An International Journal on Human Geography and Environmental Sciences* (Springer), *Journal of Asian Public Policy* (Routledge), *The Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies* (Copenhagen Business School) and *Malaysian Journal of Economic Studies*, and the *International Journal of Business Anthropology* (North American Business Press for Vrije Universiteit (VU) Amsterdam and Sun Yat-Sen



University) and *Copenhagen Discussion Paper* series (Copenhagen Business School). He is the founder and editor of the *International Journal of China Studies* (Scopus-indexed since 2010) and the *China-ASEAN Perspective Forum*, and a member of the international editorial committee of the *México y la Cuenca del Pacífico*. His recent publications as both editor and contributor include the CJAS special issue of *Transforming China* (2008), the books *Regional Political Economy of China Ascendant* (2009) and *Towards Pax Sinica?* (2009), the IJCS special issues of *China in Transition: Social Change in the Age of Reform* (2010), *Reform, Governance and Equity: Exploring the Sociopolitical Implications of Contemporary China's Transformation* (2011) and *State, Governance and Civil Societal Response in Contemporary China: Critical Issues in the 21st Century* (2012), and the book *China: Developmental Model, State-Civil Societal Interplay and Foreign Relations* (2013). His recent book chapters also include "Ethnicity and Development: State Action and Ethnic Coexistence in Multicultural Societies" in *Cultural Diversity and World Development* (Xiyuan, Beijing, 2013), "Evolving Agencies amid Rapid Social Change: Political Leadership and State-Civil Society Relations in China" in *Culture and Gender in Leadership: Perspectives from the Middle East and Asia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) and "Poverty Reduction, Welfare Provision and Social Security Challenges in China in the Context of Fiscal Reform and the 12th Five-Year Plan" in *Managing Social Change and Social Policy in Greater China: Welfare Regimes in Transition* (Routledge, 2014, printed October 2013). <Email: yeohkk@um.edu.my, emileyeo@gmail.com>





## FOREWORD

### **Democracy in Taiwan and Mainland China-Taiwan Relations: Updates and Prognoses**

Emile Kok-Kheng **Yeoh**<sup>\*</sup>  
*University of Malaya*

In 1949, Kuomintang 國民黨 (KMT)<sup>1</sup> leader Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek 蔣介石 retreated with a significant amount of gold and approximately 2 million Nationalist refugees to the small island of Taiwan where he established a hard-line authoritarian regime, shortly following the 228 Massacre of 1947 (二二八大屠殺). The White Terror (白色恐怖) to which Taiwan was consigned after the massacre was one of the longest martial law periods in world history, as tens of thousands of Taiwanese were imprisoned and executed under the grim eye of the Taiwan Garrison Command secret police body. Who in that era could have predicted the day would come when four decades later President Chiang Ching-kuo 蔣經國 (son of Chiang Kai-shek) and Taiwan's ensuing leaders would successfully facilitate a bloodless and relatively peaceful democratic transition by imposition for their nation and turn the *de facto* independent island state into one of the most vibrant democracies in the world and a best-case paragon of civil liberties and political rights-respecting free society?

With the democracy of Taiwan 臺灣, officially the Republic of China (ROC, 中華民國), continues to stand in intriguing, defiant contrast to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP<sup>2</sup>)'s ruthlessly maintained political monopoly in the People's Republic of China (PRC, 中华人民共和国) on the mainland, Taiwan tends to present itself as a perfect



textbook validation of the modernization theory, for she has proven to be one of the most successful later industrializers in the history of the twentieth century as well as a “best-case” democracy<sup>3</sup>. When Chiang Ching-kuo came into power in the 1970s, he was taking command of a rapidly industrializing and urbanizing Taiwan, whose increasingly educated and politically conscious people had begun to chafe under the repressive yoke of the hard-line authoritarian policies since Chiang Kai-shek’s era. It is at this point that the predictions of the modernization theory begin to appear validated, as can be seen from the events which followed. Local elections were held in an effort to increase the political participation of the native Taiwanese. Four new members, all of whom were highly educated and had no significant connections to the military or the Chiang family, were elected to the KMT’s top decision-making body, i.e. the Central Standing Committee in 1986.<sup>4</sup> Most importantly, the KMT convened with intellectuals and opposition leaders in discussions which eventually led to the end of martial law and the formation of a major national opposition party, i.e. the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) whose establishment on 28th September 1986 in defiance of restrictions imposed by the authoritarian KMT regime truly represented a watershed in Taiwan’s gradually moving from an authoritarian political structure towards today’s full-fledged multiparty electoral democracy. In short, over those critical early years, many governmental reforms were launched which enabled the system to transition gradually away from hard-line authoritarianism to partial democratization<sup>5</sup>, and these liberalizing measures not only involved the political realm, but fed back into the economic one as well. Taiwan’s economic freedom has steadily increased since 1975, i.e. the year Chiang Ching-kuo fully came to power. This has paid off well, and thus in 1986 Taiwan was credited as a top nation by global standards in terms of economic performance<sup>6</sup>, and when Chiang Ching-kuo’s successor, the native Taiwanese Lee Teng-hui 李登輝 came onto the scene in 1988, modernized Taiwan was ready for his efforts to facilitate her evolution into a full-fledged constitutional democracy. More than twenty years on, today Taiwan has matured into the most democratic free society in East Asia and indeed also one of the most vibrant democracies in the whole

of Asia and even the world. It is to look deep into the detailed working of this democracy that the first four papers in this issue of the *International Journal of China Studies* are devoted.

Huo-yan Shyu, Chiung-chu Lin and Yujen Chou, taking Taiwan's most recent presidential and Legislative Yuan (立法院) elections in 2012 as a case in point, in their respective papers "Exploring the Ambivalent Voter in Taiwan's 2012 Presidential and Legislative Yuan Elections", "Party Competence and Vote Choice in the 2012 Election in Taiwan" and "Constitutional Implication of the 2012 Elections in Taiwan" analyze the impact of ambivalence and perception of party competence on vote choice, and the constitutional implication of these first jointly-held presidential and legislative elections since Taiwan's direct presidential election began in 1996. These are followed by a paper by Eric Rong-yang Huang, Chun-yuan Wang and Yan-yi Chang, "The Government Performance System Reform in Taiwan: Localized Focus and Citizen Participation", which focuses on the performance management in Taiwan's local governments and the improvement of citizens' participation in local governmental performance management efforts.

No country exists in a vacuum; the consequences of the smallest decisions or actions generated through global interactions can affect a country's trajectory dramatically. It is hence impossible to analyze the political trajectory of Taiwan without touching upon the critical role that the international environment has played not only today but also in impacting her history, especially in the wake of the Chinese Civil War. The defeat of the Nationalist army by the Communists in 1950 had been keenly felt as a blow to the anti-Communist portion of the international community. Critics howled that then-US President Harry Truman had failed to provide sufficient support to their Free China allies and as a result, the United States was presumed responsible for "losing" China to "the Reds". Such a proportioning of blame had the indirect effect of heightening international sympathy for the KMT regime. Thus, when the KMT fled to Taiwan in 1949-50, it did so with the consoling knowledge that it still possessed powerful allies which recognized the ROC as the true government of all China and opposed the dominance of the CCP



over the mainland.

Many pessimistic predictions were made forecasting Taiwan's eventual fall to the control of mainland China (hereinafter "China"). Recognizing the high costs of directly engaging the CCP army in combat, the international community was reluctant to furnish Taiwan with offensive support or directly assist the KMT's quest to recover the mainland. Even so, "there were few spokesmen, even in neutralist countries, who [...] advocated turning Taiwan over to the Communists" and thus the international community willingly provided defensive support instead.<sup>7</sup> The United States proved to be a particularly valuable ally in that it provided both military aid in the form of stationing the US Navy's Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Strait and economic aid in the form of "Development Loans" to finance new economic projects which must be approved by the US government, "Development Grants" to provide technical assistance against obstacles to economic development, and farm surplus commodities under "Public Law 480".<sup>8</sup> Simultaneously, the US built up a bitter enmity with China, whose switch to Communism and involvement in the 1950 Korean War were regarded as personal affronts, while Washington "took a hard line by toughening the U.S. economic embargo against the PRC, [...] firming up support for the Nationalist government in Taiwan [and] blocking the PRC's membership in the UN, and further isolating the PRC politically"<sup>9</sup>. All this, alongside the problems of the deteriorating Sino-Soviet alliance as well as internal instability in China, served to weaken China's strategic position against that of Taiwan's within the global arena for a time. In short, it would not be amiss to conclude that the KMT's survival in Taiwan subsequent to the Civil War was more an indicator of the tremendous sway Western and US opinion and actions had over international politics than a testament to the KMT's own strength.

As the years passed, however, the international community inevitably realized the unlikelihood of the ROC ever returning to the mainland and re-assuming the status of a world power. Slowly but surely, pragmatism won over idealism, and the balance of power gradually tipped in favour of the PRC. A key character expediting the erosion of Taiwan's international standing was, in an ironic twist of fate,

none other than then-President of the US, Richard Nixon. Prior to 1970, Nixon had been appreciated as one of Taipei's favourite American allies, given his past reputation as a formidable "red-baiter". This, however, changed when the Nixon administration enacted a grand plan to restructure the international order via initiating a strategy of triangular diplomacy to create a state of détente between China, the Soviet Union and the US. This strategy achieved its intended sub-goal of normalizing US relations with the PRC, but simultaneously, it effectively sidelined the ROC government and served as a harbinger of the derecognition to come. On 25th October 1971, the United Nations made the momentous decision to "expel forthwith the representatives of Chiang K'ai-shek from the place which they unlawfully occupy at the United Nation" and accepted the PRC as the legitimate government of China.<sup>10</sup>

The significance of this decision cannot be understated. Not only did China gain all the international legitimacy which Taiwan lost, she also secured much more leverage and a better bargaining position than Taiwan could ever have hoped to hold. Owing to the disparities of size and geography between China and Taiwan, the former has always played a more critical role in the annals of world history as compared to Taiwan and, regardless of the international environment, shown that she is a player not to be trifled with. International support for Taiwan involved less potential risk but also less potential reward than international support for China, as may be derived from current conditions – even if the global community had continued to support the former rather than the latter, it is difficult to imagine Taiwan becoming the economic powerhouse and regional leader that China is today.

Thus, with the fateful 1971 verdict, Taiwan was demoted to becoming a political entity in possession of virtually all the trappings of a country, save for the vital last ingredient – formal recognition from other countries. She could only be seen as an object of trade and tourism in the global mind, as "the People's Republic of China (PRC) [...] made it clear that it [did] not object to European business activity in Taiwan if political overtones are excluded".<sup>11</sup> This was a precariously vulnerable position for any country to have, and it was to Taiwan's credit that her reaction "was not only controlled, but somewhat more receptive than

usual to suggestions for internal reform”, as Sheldon L. Appleton noted, “Observers on Taiwan when the Nixon trip to Peking and the U.N. China vote were announced reported concern, but no depression, panic or major demonstrations”.<sup>12</sup> Something, however, clearly needed to be done if Taiwan intended to retain her governmental autonomy. Thus set the stage for the next four decades of diplomatic tussle, often turbulent, between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait – technically still at war to date – with the third player, the US, as a deeply involved interest party. It is to this critical domain of the political economy of Taiwan that the next three papers and a review article are devoted.

Shang-su Wu in his paper “Taiwan in the Cross-Strait Arms Dynamics: Past and Present” looks at the changing scene of cross-Strait military confrontation and the multiple implications of Taiwan’s present perceived denial-oriented strategy against China’s attainment of aerial and naval superiorities. Also on cross-Strait relations, Hoo Tiang Boon’s paper “Cross-Strait Relations since 2008: Assessing Intra-position Politics” in turn examines the role of the US, as highlighted above, in the context of emerging rapprochement between Beijing and Taipei since the return of the Kuomintang to power in Taiwan in 2008. Shawn Shaw-fawn Kao, on the other hand, takes China-Taiwan relations beyond the Taiwan Strait into the South China Sea, presently the scene of continuous intense regional conflict between various claimants in the area, in his paper “Scarborough Shoal Dispute, China’s Assertiveness, and Taiwan’s South China Sea Policy”, with particular focus on the heated sovereignty contest between China and the Philippines over the Scarborough Shoal and China’s increasing assertiveness in the twin contexts of China’s and Taiwan’s South China Sea Policy. Finally, this part on cross-Strait relations and regional security is followed by a review article by Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh, “Chinese/Taiwanese Nationalism, Cross-Strait Relations and an Inevitable War? – A Review of Dong-ching Day’s *Inevitable War?! (2012)*”, which by linking Chinese and Taiwanese nationalism to cross-Strait relations inevitably points to the possibility of constructively conflating domestic political economy with foreign strategic relations, thus bringing together the two parts of this journal issue’s subject.

In this context, as observed earlier, Taiwan's particular international circumstances (*vis-à-vis* China's) were significant to her democratic development. The successful democratization of Taiwan has been significantly attributed to the Republic of China's loss of her seat in the United Nations in 1971 – being replaced by the People's Republic of China – followed by her marginalization in the Senkaku/Tiaoyutai ( 尖閣諸島 / 釣魚台列嶼 )<sup>13</sup> dispute, and adding insult to injury, the 1979 US derecognition. This sequence of humiliating events had served to trigger an unprecedented, major national crisis<sup>14</sup>, though Chu (1992)<sup>15</sup> also brought in the decline in military tension with China in the late 1970s as a factor given that the said decline has greatly reduced the “siege mentality” of the Taiwanese people and in turn the legitimacy of a continuing authoritarian polity. All these had irreparably weakened the KMT's moral stance in maintaining an authoritarian grip upon the island state. Similar circumstance has occurred in Argentina as result of losing the war with Great Britain over the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas). As a point in contrast, China has never been under such pressures to democratize. Although China has frequently come under severe Western criticism for her consistently violent stance against any form of political dissent within the country, the international repercussions which followed have not been as punishing to the Chinese government as they could have been<sup>16</sup>, and certainly resulted in nothing as damaging as the precariously isolated position observed above that Taiwan had found herself in.

Thus including both parts, this issue represents an excellent collection of selected papers, reviewed and duly revised, which were originally presented at the international conference “Democracy in Taiwan: Looking at the 2012 Elections – On Taiwan's Electoral Democracy and Its Sociopolitical Implications for Taiwan and Beyond” jointly organized by the Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia, and the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy on 24th-25th October 2013. Being the last in an uninterrupted series of biannual international conferences convened at the Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya, during my tenure as the director of the institute (13th March 2008 – 1st January 2014), this particular conference is



distinctive in the fact that it is the first to have a complete focus on Taiwan especially on its democracy and electoral system. We are grateful to the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy for its generous financial sponsorship and other forms of assistance and its vice-president, Professor Tsai Woei 蔡瑋, who traveled to Kuala Lumpur to be present at the conference. We are also grateful to the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Malaysia and His Excellency Ambassador Lo Yu-chung 羅由中, representative of TECO, for the generous assistance and crucial help in arrangement and to His Excellency Minister Chuan-chin Jeffrey Kau 高泉金, deputy representative of TECO, for officiating the opening of the conference. We also thank Knowledge Venture for similar generosity. Dr Ngeow Chow Bing's crucial assistance in coordinating and liaising with the above partners and benefactors is deeply appreciated.

Finally, before ending this foreword, I would like to thank all the contributing authors, conference participants who had given critical feedback, and paper reviewers for their invaluable efforts in making the publication of this issue possible. I am also grateful to the journal's administrative officer Miss Susie Yieng-Ping Ling and administrative assistants Miss Geeta Gengatharan and Miss Nazirah Hamzah for the crucial administrative arrangements, and to Miss Si-Ning Yeoh for her technical help in cover design and contribution as the journal's editorial assistant to this foreword which includes part of our earlier joint paper<sup>17</sup>. The responsibility for any errors and inadequacies that remain is of course fully mine.

## Notes

- \* Dr Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh 楊國慶 is Associate Professor at the Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia. He has a Ph.D. on ethnopolitics in socioeconomic development from the University of Bradford, West Yorkshire, England (1998). He is the editor of the *International Journal of China Studies* since founding it in 2010, was the director of the Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya, from 13th March 2008 to 1st January 2014 and is currently on sabbatical leave. His most recent papers include "Evolving Agencies amid Rapid Social Change:



Political Leadership and State-Civil Society Relations in China” in *Culture and Gender in Leadership: Perspectives from the Middle East and Asia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) and “Poverty Reduction, Welfare Provision and Social Security Challenges in China in the Context of Fiscal Reform and the 12th Five-Year Plan” in *Managing Social Change and Social Policy in Greater China: Welfare Regimes in Transition* (Routledge, 2014, printed October 2013). <Email: yeohkk@um.edu.my, emileyeo@gmail.com>

1. Or officially the “Kuomintang of China” (中國國民黨).
2. Or officially the “Communist Party of China” (CPC, 中国共产党).
3. Shelley Rigger, “Taiwan’s Best-Case Democratization”, *Orbis*, Vol. 48, No. 2, 2004, pp. 285-292.
4. John Franklin Copper, “Taiwan in 1986: Back on Top Again”, *Asian Survey*, Vol. 27, No. 1, 1987, pp. 81-91.
5. It must be noted that only partial, not full democratization had been attained and so overcoming the lingering limits to KMT tolerance of opposition was still a work-in-progress. The DPP, for example, was founded in 1986 and allowed to compete in elections, but remained technically illegal until the enactment of the Law on Civic Organizations in January 1989 (*ibid.*).
6. *Ibid.*
7. Richard L. Walker, “Taiwan’s Development as Free China”, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 321, 1959, pp. 122-135.
8. David W. Chang, “U.S. Aid and Economic Progress in Taiwan”, *Asian Survey*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1965, pp. 152-160.
9. Yafeng Xia, “The Cold War and Chinese Foreign Policy”, *e-International Relations*, 16th July 2008. <<http://www.e-ir.info/2008/07/16/the-cold-war-and-china/>>
10. Sheldon L. Appleton, “Taiwan: The Year It Finally Happened”, *Asian Survey*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 1972, pp. 32-37.
11. Reinhard Drifte, “European and Soviet Perspectives on Future Responses in Taiwan to International and Regional Developments”, *Asian Survey*, Vol. 25, No. 11, 1985, pp. 1115-1122.
12. Appleton (*op. cit.*).
13. The Pinnacle Islands – a group of uninhabited islands currently controlled by Japan who calls them the Senkaku Islands 尖閣諸島, a part of Okinawa prefecture 沖縄県, but claimed by both the governments of the Republic of China and the People’s Republic of China as the Tiaoyutai/Diaoyutai Islands 釣魚台列嶼 / 钓鱼台群島, part of the Taiwan

- province. The largest island of the group is the Uotsuri Jima 魚釣島 / Diaoyu Dao 釣魚島 .
14. J. Bruce Jacobs, "Taiwan 1972: Political Season", *Asian Survey*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 1973, pp. 102-112; Hung-Mao Tien, *The Great Transition: Political and Social Change in the Republic of China*, Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1989; Yun-han Chu, *Crafting Democracy in Taiwan*, Taipei: Institute for National Policy Research., 1992; Linda Chao and Ramon H. Myers, *The First Chinese Democracy: Political Life in the Republic of China on Taiwan*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998; and Denny Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003 (summarized in Su-Mei Ooi, "The Transnational Protection Regime and Taiwan's Democratization", *Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol. 9, Issue 1, 2009, pp. 57-85).
  15. Chu (*op. cit.*).
  16. After the Beijing massacre of 1989, for example, many OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) nations expressed their disapproval of the CCP government's violent actions via imposing economic sanctions which banned the transfer of high technology and governmental loans. These sanctions, however, lasted just a paltry two years, and by the mid-1990s, most of these Western countries had warmed up to China once more.
  17. Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh and Si-Ning Yeoh, "Taiwan and Mainland China: Impacts of Economic Progress and International Environment on Political Trajectory in Comparative Perspective", *International Journal of China Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 2013, pp. 363-392.





## **Exploring the Ambivalent Voter in Taiwan's 2012 Presidential and Legislative Yuan Elections**

Huo-yan Shyu\*

*Academia Sinica / National Taipei University*

### **Abstract**

This paper utilizes the post-electoral survey data produced by “Taiwan’s Election and Democratization Study” Project (TEDS2012) to explore ambivalent voters in the 2012 presidential and legislative elections. Ambivalence is conceptualized and measured rather indirectly following the example of previous studies. In our analysis, the various kinds of ambivalence – including emotional, candidate, and party ambivalence – are found to be highly correlated with each other and form a complex syndrome consisting of positive and negative feelings. Sex, age, strength of partisan attachment, degree of political involvement, and evaluation of the incumbent’s performance and of the nation’s economy, along with cross pressure, are the most important predictors of the level of ambivalence. In Taiwan, more ambivalent electors are less likely to vote. Ambivalence is also found to have an effect on partisan vote-choice, and those who vote against their evaluation and beliefs are more likely to have a high degree of ambivalence.

**Keywords:** *ambivalence, emotional ambivalence, candidate (traits) ambivalence, party ambivalence*

**JEL classification:** *D72, D78, H11, Z18*



## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to carry out a preliminary examination of ambivalent voters in the 2012 elections in Taiwan. In so doing, we start by deciding how to measure ambivalence. In psychology, ambivalence is understood to be a state of holding simultaneous, conflicting feelings toward an object. Conventionally, attitudes have been conceptualized as either uni-dimensional or bipolar, but theorists have increasingly challenged this universal view and recognized that many people experience conflicted feelings about objects they encounter in their lives (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin, 1995). People's ambivalence does not disappear, but is silenced; it is not trivialized, but it is hidden.

Ambivalence can occur when making political choices in which an individual experiences internalized conflicts between immensurate values (Alvarez and Brehm, 2002). Cognitive consistency theories predict that ambivalence should be minimal because individuals are motivated to reduce potential conflicts between their orientations. Festinger (1957) holds that ambivalence creates an important incentive to resolve itself effectively. Other theorists claim that most people have ambivalent attitudes toward most issues, and thus they build models depicting how mass opinion forms and changes on ambivalence deduction assumption (Zaller, 1992; Zaller and Feldman, 1992). Yet it is easier to acknowledge the mixed feelings that people have toward objects than it is to measure them properly. In political science, ambivalence has recently been studied quite extensively because it is recognized that conflict is the central feature of citizens' attitudes toward political issues (Craig and Martinez, 2005a, 2005b; Saris and Sniderman, 2004). I will make use of the insights contained in these studies to explore the issue of ambivalent voters in Taiwan's 2012 elections.

## 2. Taiwan's 2012 Elections

Competition was fierce in Taiwan's 2012 presidential and legislative elections. This was due to the decline in the approval rate of the incumbent president, Ma Ying-jeou 馬英九, and the recovery of the

opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) under its popular chairperson, Tsai Ing-wen 蔡英文. Briefly, many Taiwanese voters were torn between the two parties in the 2012 elections, and this is what makes these elections ideal for exploring the nature of ambivalent voters.

Thanks to the poor performance of the DPP administration of President Chen Shui-bian, coupled with allegations of corruption and abuse of authority, the Kuomintang (KMT) candidate, Ma Ying-jeou, easily won the presidential election of 2008. In his campaign Ma simply stressed that he would reverse Chen's misguided policies, allowing the Taiwanese electorate to hope that he would usher in an era of "clean politics". In 2008, Taiwan's economy was suffering from the global financial crisis, and this was exacerbated by the Beijing authorities' boycott of the increasingly pro-independence DPP government and the looming military threat from China. This international political situation paved the way for Ma's victory and the return to power of the KMT. Ma wooed the electorate by promising that he would seek more friendly relations with mainland China and proposing a "633 plan" for the economy.<sup>1</sup> Ma won the 2008 presidential election with 58.5 per cent of the popular vote, and Taiwan experienced its second peaceful transfer of power.

However, Ma's comfortable majority in the election did not give him a very long political honeymoon. President Ma's popularity quickly fell as his "633 plan" was revealed to be a bounced check. A year later, Taiwan was hit by its biggest typhoon ever, Typhoon Morakot. This disaster further undermined popular confidence in Ma and KMT's ability to manage a crisis. His leadership was seen as "indecisive" and he was accused of being unwilling to step on anyone's toes. He even managed to alienate former allies among the "pan-blue" coalition, while his pro-China stance further damaged his approval rating among native Taiwanese. Ma's effort to secure Taiwan's economic prosperity by means of the "Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement" (ECFA) with the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 2010 only deepened public mistrust in his leadership, both among his many Taiwanese supporters and members of the opposition "pan-green" parties, and led

some to question whether he was betraying Taiwan. However, during his first term, Ma was able to deliver more friendly relations with China, and this served Taiwan's economic interests, allowed it greater participation in international affairs, and reduced tension across the Taiwan Strait, as both Ma and the KMT-led government could claim to be acting in accordance with the so-called "1992 Consensus".

Under the leadership of Tsai Ing-wen, the opposition DPP was able to gain support as Ma's approval rating dropped. The DPP was undergoing a series of reforms and moving toward the centre of Taiwan's political landscape. The party toned down its calls for independence, adopting instead the view that "the Republic of China is Taiwan". In addition, Tsai Ing-wen turned her attention to the widening gap between rich and poor and class cleavages. Tsai has transformed the image of the DPP from that of a party of Taiwan independence to a more moderate one of that speaks about Taiwan's future. Having led the DPP to victory in several by-elections, Tsai was well-placed to be nominated as the DPP's presidential candidate to challenge President Ma. In the last few months before the 2012 election, some opinion polls put Ma only 3 per cent or less ahead of Tsai. The race between the two candidates was tight, but the campaign was peaceful and ended with incumbent Ma Ying-jeou was re-elected as President with 51.6 per cent of the popular vote. Following her election defeat (secured 45.63 per cent of the vote), Tsai Ing-wen resigned her post as chairperson of DPP.

### **3. Data and Measurement of Variables**

The present study utilizes data from a post-election survey of the 2012 presidential and legislative elections, TEDS 2012, part of Taiwan's Election and Democratization Study (TEDS), an on-going large-scale survey funded by the National Science Council, Taiwan. A total of 1,827 respondents were randomly chosen from among eligible voters through a multi-level sampling frame. This data set has been made public for research and can be accessed at: <http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/modules/tinyd2/index.php?id=5>

Ambivalence occurs when respondents have “significant” positive and negative responses toward an attitudinal object. In the political sphere, attitudinal objects can be candidates, political parties, or policy issues. Various methods have been proposed to compute ambivalence based on a positive and negative scale, and these are reviewed and assessed by Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin (1995). They argue that a valid measure should incorporate two necessary and sufficient conditions of ambivalence. First, ambivalence necessitates two attitude components that are similar in magnitude. Second, ambivalence involves attitude components which are of at least moderate intensity. I follow Griffin’s numerical index proposed in Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin not only because it is adopted widely by others (Basinger and Lavine, 2005; Craig, Martinez, Kane and Gainous, 2005; Green, 2004; Keele, 2008; Lavine, 2001; Meffert, Guge and Lodge, 2004; Rudolph and Popp, 2007; Steenbergen and Brewer, 2004), but most importantly because it has been confirmed to have separately and independently considered both the similarity and intensity dimensions of ambivalent attitudes. The computational formula of Griffin’s index of ambivalence (p. 369) is:

$$\text{Ambivalence} = [P+N]/2 - |P-N|$$

where P represents the number of positive reactions to the attitudinal objects and N represents the negative reactions. Intensity is captured on the left by the average number of positive and negative components; similarity is expressed on the right by the absolute difference between the number of positive and negative components. As Thompson and associates point out, Griffin’s computational formula for ambivalence suggests that ambivalence can be seen as being equated to the intensity of the components corrected by the dissimilarity in their magnitude or polarization. Later, Lavine (2001: 919) further elaborated Griffin’s index and applied it to the construction of a comparative index of ambivalence about candidates and parties. For instance, the numerical formula for a comparative partisan ambivalence index is:

$$\text{Partisan Ambivalence} = [D+R]/2 - |D-R|$$

where  $D$  is the average of the positive reactions to the Democrats and the negative reactions to the Republicans (i.e.,  $D = [Pd + Nr]/2$ ), and  $R$  denotes the average of the positive reactions to the Republican and the negative reactions to the Democrats (i.e.,  $R = [Pr + Nd]/2$ ). I follow the same logic and adopt Lavine's index formula to construct indicators of emotional ambivalence, candidate (traits) ambivalence, and party ambivalence in my analysis of the ambivalent voter in Taiwan. The emotional ambivalence scale is calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{Emotional Ambivalence} = [(|Ts_e| + |Ma_e|)/2] - |Ts_e - Ma_e|$$

where  $Ts_e$  represents the average of positive emotional reactions to Tsai Ing-wen and negative emotional reactions to Ma Ying-jeou;  $Ma_e$  is the average of positive emotional reactions to Ma Ying-jeou and negative emotional reactions to Tsai Ing-wen. Because the information about emotion or affect regarding both candidates is based on closed-ended questionnaire items (see appendix for measurement and coding), only extreme responses, "often" or "never" (at the two opposite ends), are counted as "positive" or "negative", depending on the positive or negative wording. For example, when a respondent states that he/she "often" felt angry at what Tsai Ing-wen had done or said (negative wording) that is counted as a "negative" response for Tsai, while stating that he/she "never" felt that way counts as a "positive", and the other way round for a question with positive wording.

The construction of the scales of candidate ambivalence and party ambivalence also follows the same logic; however, the reactions are measured by different attitudinal objects. The objects selected for tapping evaluation of a candidate in the original questionnaire design are directed to collecting information about respondents' assessments on a scale of 0 to 10 of both Ma Ying-jeou's and Tsai Ing-wen's ability (or traits) to handle important national issues, understand people's needs, protect the nation's interests, and maintain peaceful cross-Strait relations. As shown in the factor analysis (Tables 1 and 2 in the appendix), both emotional reactions to and evaluation of two of the presidential candidates, Tsai Ing-wen and Ma Ying-jeou, are highly

polarized and can be nicely presented as a two-factor dimension. Because a 0-to-10 rating scale is applied in a closed-ended interview, only those rated 8-10 are counted as positive and those scoring 0-3 are considered negative reactions in order to highlight the “intensity” dimension of the positive and negative responses so as to meet the requirement of Griffin’s index. The candidate ambivalence scale is calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{Candidate Ambivalence} = [(|Ts_c| + |Ma_c|)/2] - |Ts_c - Ma_c|$$

where  $Ts_c$  and  $Ma_c$  represent the sum of positive or negative responses concerning the candidates’ ability to deal with the issues in question.

The items used to measure party ambivalence are designed to tap the relative capacity of the KMT and the DPP in handling ten critical issues which were raised or debated during the campaign period. These are: cross-Straits relations, economic development, the gap between rich and poor, high property prices, environmental protection, social welfare, corruption, democratic reform, ethnic harmony, and Taiwan’s international status. The party ambivalence index is constructed on a comparison of people’s perception of the ability of the DPP and the KMT to resolve these issues. As shown in the factor analysis (Appendix Table 3), people’s comparative evaluation of the DPP and the KMT is loaded on a single factor – a uni-dimensional phenomenon with high inter-item correlation. Accordingly, for each measure item, one positive response to a party, say the DPP, is also counted as a negative response to the other party, the KMT in this case. Those who said “both parties are pretty good” or “neither party is bad” or “don’t know” or “refuse to answer” are not included in the formula:<sup>2</sup>

$$\text{Party Ambivalence} = [(|DPP_c| + |KMT_c|)/2] - |DPP_c - KMT_c|$$

where  $DPP_c$  is the average count of positive evaluations of the DPP and negative evaluations of the KMT; and  $KMT_c$  represents the average count of positive evaluations of the KMT and negative evaluations of the DPP.





It is important to note that in many studies (e.g., Craig and Martinez, 2005a; 2005b), positive and negative responses for the index construction of “ambivalence” are built on responses of an open-ended question. My three ambivalence measures are based on a rating scale of closed-ended question items. Respondents’ answers to open-ended questions express considerations happens to be at the “top-of-the-head” at the time they are interviewed, so, as indicated earlier, only extreme responses at either end of the rating scale are taken into consideration in order to compensate for the possible defects of closed-ended questions. Even though the original data were not designed for this research purpose, I will show that these measures of ambivalence are quite valid in terms of their internal constraints (inter-index correlations) and external relationship with other variables.

Other measurements and indicators are listed in the tables in the appendix. Some composite indexes, such as Taiwanese nationalism vs. Chinese nationalism (Appendix Table 4) and economic evaluation (Appendix Table 5), are built on factor analysis, not only for the sake of parsimony but because they are by nature complex. Others are summated indicators.

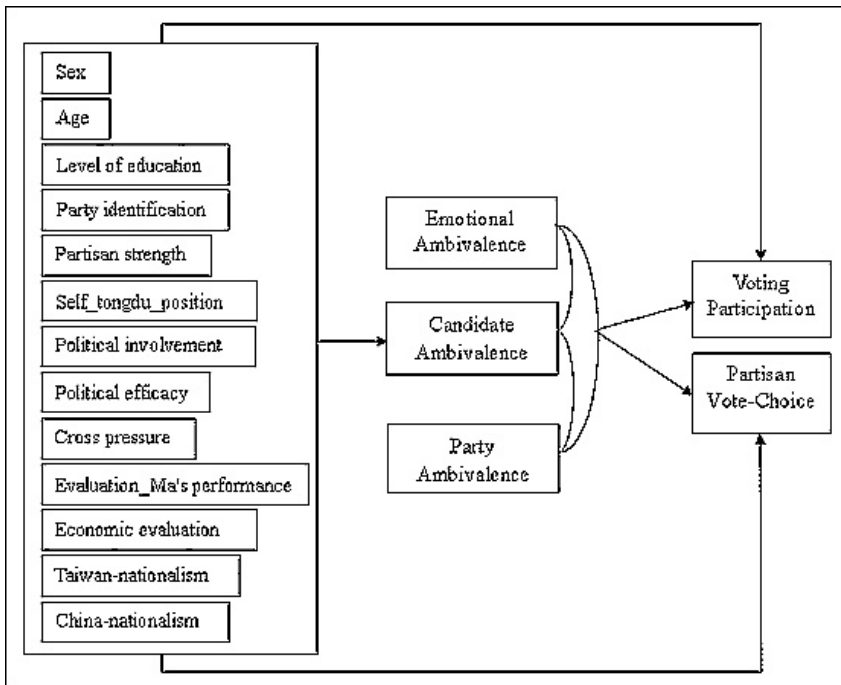
#### **4. Hypotheses**

The core variable in this study is ambivalence. In common usage, ambivalence means a state of holding positive and negative feelings or conflicting beliefs simultaneously. According to consistency theory, these conflicting feelings would find a way out either through a change in one’s behaviour or an adjustment of one’s attitude components. However, topic on change in behaviour or attitude is not pursued here as we are using cross-sectional data. The purpose of this paper is to explore how ambivalence is affected by its possible antecedent factors and what is its consequent effect on voting behaviour (see Figure 1). Ambivalent voters in this study are those who hold mixed feelings, positive or negative, toward Ma Ying-jeou and Tsai Ing-wen and their respective parties. As mentioned earlier, ambivalence regarding a candidate or a party is measured indirectly and to some extent inferred from



psychological characteristics. From previous studies on ambivalence, some hypotheses concerning the antecedence and consequences of ambivalence can be formulated to test the Taiwan data.

**Figure 1** The Analytical Framework for Exploring the Relationship of Antecedents and Consequences of Ambivalence



First of all, we will look at the possible antecedent factors that have contributed to the ambivalence. Party identification has long been confirmed as the key factor guiding a citizen's vote-choice and other political attitudes toward policy. One would expect that voters with stronger partisan attachment would be less ambivalent, because the socialized partisan affect would function as a filter or a clue in orienting

their political preferences and choices. One important source of ambivalence that has been much studied is the contextual factor, namely cross-pressure embedded in one's social networks (Huckfeldt, Mendez and Osborn, 2004; Keele and Wolak, 2008; Mutz, 2003; Nir, 2005). It is expected that voters who experience more cross-pressure are more likely to be ambivalent. The effects of socio-demographic background variables on ambivalence are found not to be unitary in one previous study (Craig and Martinez, 2005a; 2005b), and in this study we include some of the most frequently used socio-demographic factors in the list of possible predictors. Even the most important demographic variable, i.e., education, is also found to have contradictory effects on ambivalence.<sup>3</sup>

*H1: The more strongly partisan voters are the less ambivalent they are.*

*H2: The more cross-pressure there is embedded in the voters' social networks, the more ambivalent they are.*

Second, ambivalence is a syndrome and can be a function of a variety of other related positive-negative orientations toward similar objects. Presumably, emotional ambivalence is also highly correlated with other aspects of ambivalence toward related attitudinal targets, such as candidate traits and party ambivalence. In Taiwan's case, given President Ma's low popularity rating, a voter's evaluation of the economic situation and of the president's performance would be expected to have an effect on emotional, candidate, and party ambivalence, which are measured by juxtaposing two competing candidates and parties. Political involvement is also an important predictor of ambivalence, as it is indexed by political discussion and concerns about the election result.

*H3: Ambivalence toward a candidate is positively correlated with ambivalence toward a party and structured into a single dimension.*

*H4: One's level of ambivalence can be predicted from one's level of political involvement, one's evaluation of the national economy, and – especially in the case of Taiwan – President Ma's performance.*

Finally, the consequence of ambivalence is tested to check whether ambivalence serves as a direct or indirect determinant of people's participation in voting and partisan vote-choice. There are various reasons why people fail to vote, one of which may be ambivalence. In Taiwan's presidential and legislative elections of 2012, the turnout rate was around 74.4 per cent, which is pretty high compared to other democracies. Competition was fierce and, as we mentioned earlier, the incumbent had a low approval rating and most voters considered that his administration was "unimpressive". In comparison, Tsai Ing-wen of the DPP was Taiwan's first female presidential candidate and her party was just beginning to recover its vitality having won several by-elections. Now that Ma's predecessor, Chen Shui-bian, was in jail, memories of the corruption case against him and his family were gradually fading away. It will be interesting to see whether loyal supporters of the DPP or the KMT, or those who voted for either Tsai Ing-wen or Ma Ying-jeou, exhibit different levels of ambivalence, whether emotional ambivalence or ambivalence toward candidate traits or party perspectives.

*H5: Ambivalence is a significant predictor of people's likelihood of voting.*

*H6: The degree of ambivalence toward candidate and party of those who voted for Tsai Ing-wen is different from that of those who voted for Ma Ying-jeou.*

Of course, many non-trivial hypotheses can be put forward, and these will be discussed in the text rather than underlined here.

## **5. Data Analysis, Findings and Discussion**

Our measure of ambivalence is very indirect and manipulated in quite a technical way by counting both the positive and the negative responses toward the same attitudinal object. First, emotional, candidate, and party ambivalence are mainly used to highlight individuals' mixed overall feelings, evaluations, and beliefs about the competing candidates, Ma Ying-jeou and Tsai Ing-wen, and their respective parties, the KMT and the DPP. They each have their own discernible personal style and



political stance. These measures of ambivalence range from  $-.05$  to  $+.05$ , and we classify those with a negative score as “unambivalent”, those with a zero score as “indifferent”, and those with a positive score as “ambivalent”. As indicated in Table 1, most respondents are not ambivalent and less than 14 per cent of the voter sample is classified as exhibiting emotional ambivalence, the smallest group of all. Of the three categories of ambivalence, those exhibiting party ambivalence constitute the largest group, although they only represent 22.46 per cent of the whole sample and 21.70 of the voter sample. Very few people (1.6 per cent) exhibit all the categories of ambivalence; they are indeed the most ambivalent. And the even distribution of the “unambivalent” in the first column shows that most people exhibit at least one category of ambivalence or indifference, while only 39.2 per cent of respondents are “purely” unambivalent. In a word, ambivalence is a matter of degree, and conflicting feelings about candidates and parties are quite prevalent among Taiwanese.

Ambivalence toward candidates is assumed to be highly correlated with ambivalence toward parties, and this may be a result of a convergence process caused by electoral campaigning. In our study, there is a significant correlation between emotional, candidate, and party ambivalence, even after two scales of validity checks. One index is constructed on the number of “all parties are good” responses, which is an expression of positive but mixed feelings about the two competing parties. The other index is built on the number of “neither party is good” responses, which express negative mixed feelings. These two indicators are intended to measure the magnitude of that group of voters with embedded conflicting feelings and beliefs. The significance of inter-correlations among the indicators of ambivalence, as reported in table 3, not only serves as a validity check for measures of ambivalence but speaks for the complexity of ambivalence. To further show the distinct nature of these measured properties and the similarity between them, a factor analysis is applied to this reduction purpose, and, as indicated in Table 4, emotional, candidate, and party ambivalence indicators do converge into the same factor structure, and the other two indicators are loaded on the other factor dimension. This finding confirms H4 above.



**Table 1** Distribution of Emotional, Candidate and Party Ambivalence

	Emotional ambivalence		Candidate ambivalence		Party ambivalence	
%	Whole	Voter	Whole	Voter	Whole	Voter
Unambivalent	64.41	66.30	58.10	60.70	65.38	67.20
Indifferent	21.09	19.80	24.62	22.70	12.17	11.10
Ambivalent	14.50	13.90	17.28	16.50	22.46	21.70
Total <i>N</i>	1759	1571	1759	1571	1759	1571

Source: TEDS2012.

**Table 2** Distribution of Ambivalence and Lack of Ambivalence by Count

	Unambivalent		Ambivalent	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
None	258	14.7	1053	59.9
1.00	386	21.9	486	27.6
2.00	426	24.2	192	10.9
3.00	689	39.2	28	1.6
Total	1759	100.0	1759	100.0

Source: TEDS2012.

**Table 3** Bivariate Correlation between Ambivalence and Party Evaluation

	Emotional ambivalence	Candidate ambivalence	Party ambivalence	All parties good
Emotional ambivalence	1			
Candidate ambivalence	0.522***	1		
Party ambivalence	0.342***	0.455***	1	
All parties good	0.245***	0.203***	0.205***	1
All parties bad	0.121***	0.218***	0.202***	-0.078**

\*\*\*  $p < 0.01$  (2-tailed, listwise  $N = 1759$ )

Source: TEDS2012.

**Table 4** Factor Analysis of Ambivalence Indicators (Varimax rotated)

Ambivalence indicators	Factor loading	
	<i>F1</i>	<i>F2</i>
1) <i>Emotional ambivalence</i>	<b>.759</b>	-.115
2) <i>Candidate ambivalence</i>	<b>.819</b>	.069
3) <i>Party ambivalence</i>	<b>.727</b>	.081
4) <i>All parties good</i>	.438	<b>-.676</b>
5) <i>All parties bad</i>	.349	<b>.778</b>
Eigenvalues	2.089	1.067
% of Variance explained	41.78	21.74
Valid <i>N</i>	1759	

Source: TEDS2012.



## 6. The Antecedents of Ambivalence

In order to explore the causes of ambivalence, I select those variables that serve as significant predictors of at least one of the three aspects of ambivalence after a preliminary analysis (see Figure 1). Other variables that are often used as independent variables are omitted, not because of their lack of theoretical importance but because of their irrelevance where our empirical data are concerned. As reported in Table 5, regression analysis of emotional, candidate, and party ambivalence produces some interesting findings concerning the possible determinants of ambivalence. First, gender affects candidate ambivalence and party ambivalence but does not affect emotional ambivalence. Males exhibit more candidate and party ambivalence than do females. Second, age is a significant predictor of ambivalence of all kinds; the older one is the less likely one is to exhibit emotional, candidate, or party ambivalence. Education is a significant predictor of candidate ambivalence and party ambivalence, as those with more education are more likely to hold mixed feelings about candidates and parties. This seems to confirm Rudolph and Popp's (2007) finding about the positive effect of education on partisan and candidate ambivalence. More education signals a greater capacity to process different kinds of information simultaneously, and thus an ability to hold conflicting views on candidates and parties. Party identification is also a significant predictor of candidate and party ambivalence; Taiwanese who identify more with the DPP (pan-green) have greater candidate and party ambivalence. This finding hints that KMT identifiers hold more congruent views and are therefore less hesitant about supporting their own candidate and party. The significant causal relationship between partisan strength and ambivalence supports hypothesis H1, that the stronger a voter's partisan attachment the less ambivalent he/she will be. In Taiwan, the issue of Taiwan independence vs. unification with China (or *tongdu* 統獨 in Chinese) has been a rallying point of electoral mobilization and policy debates between the parties since the early 1990s. A voter's position on the independence-unification continuum is a reflection partly of his/her partisan orientation, and partly of his/her national identity, and it is a significant

**Table 5** OLS Regression Analysis of Ambivalence

Predictor Variable	Dependent Variable		
	Emotional Ambivalence (Beta Coef.)	Candidate Ambivalence (Beta Coef.)	Party Ambivalence (Beta Coef.)
Sex (male)	0.083	0.163**	0.201***
Age	-0.006**	-0.010***	-0.010***
Level of education	0.019	0.058**	0.059**
Party identification	-0.015	0.071***	0.134***
Partisan strength	-0.240***	-0.255***	-0.190***
Self-assigned <i>tongdu</i> position	-0.059*	-0.032	-0.117***
Political involvement	-0.271***	-0.159**	-0.155**
Political efficacy	0.009	-0.057	-0.095*
Cross pressure	0.108***	0.124***	0.138***
Ma's performance	0.172***	0.125***	0.011
Economic evaluation	-0.066*	-0.083**	-0.095**
Taiwan nationalism	0.030	-0.045	-0.044
China nationalism	0.058*	0.032	-0.030
Constant	1.012***	0.383	0.440
Valid <i>N</i>	985	985	985
Adjusted <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.276	0.260	0.261

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ 

Source: TEDS2012.

predictor of party ambivalence, as Taiwanese voters who lean more toward the Taiwan independence position exhibit less emotional and party ambivalence. Chinese nationalism, however, is only a significant predictor of emotional ambivalence, in that voters who favour unification have more ambivalent emotional reactions toward candidates. Political involvement, measured by frequency of discussing politics with others and being concerned about the election outcome, is also a very significant predictor of emotional, candidate, and party ambivalence. Voters who are more involved in politics have less emotional, candidate, and party ambivalence. Political efficacy is only a significant predictor of party ambivalence, and voters with more political efficacy exhibit less party ambivalence. The main contextual factor influencing individual political behaviour is cross pressure; in our analysis of Taiwanese data as reported in Table 5, Taiwanese who experience greater cross pressure in their social networks have more emotional, candidate, and party ambivalence, which confirms H2.

The overall evaluation of President Ma's administration was the major reason for the decline in his approval rating, together with the country's lackluster economic performance and the failure of his "633" proposal. According to our analysis of the data, Taiwanese who felt more satisfied with Ma's overall performance had significantly more emotional ambivalence and candidate ambivalence, but not party ambivalence (see Table 5). Taiwanese whose evaluation of the economy was more positive exhibited less emotional, candidate, and party ambivalence. To sum up, the most salient antecedent factors of emotional, candidate, and party ambivalence are age, strength of partisan attachment, political involvement, evaluation of President Ma's overall performance, and evaluation of the economy. Gender, education, and party identification are significant predictors of candidate and party ambivalence. Orientation regarding independence vs. unification is also a significant factor in predicting one's emotional and party ambivalence, and a constructed variable which implies the same property, China nationalism, only matters as a predictor of emotional ambivalence.

## 7. The Consequences of Ambivalence

Much of the previous literature on the consequences of ambivalence is concerned with information seeking, instability of attitudes, and resistance to persuasion, and it is mostly in the field of public opinion studies. In this paper, we choose participation in voting and partisan vote-choice as the final dependent variables to examine whether or not ambivalence has a direct effect after controlling for other major explanatory factors. First, we include possible independent variables, including ambivalence variables, in the equations to predict participation in voting among Taiwanese, as shown in model 1 in Table 6 and carry out re-analysis by dropping those statistically insignificant variables and results listed in model 2. It is found that the only robust and significant predictor of people's participation in voting is emotional ambivalence. Other things being equal, electors who did not vote in the 2012 elections are more likely to be younger, less politically involved, have experienced greater cross pressure, and to exhibit more emotional ambivalence, and this finding supports hypothesis H5. The explanatory power of the sum of all these factors is around 20 per cent, as indicated by the pseudo  $R^2$  coefficients in Table 6.

We turn next to the explanatory models we propose in the analysis of Taiwanese partisan vote-choice. Model 1 is a fully saturated model containing most of the predictors used in previous studies of Taiwanese electoral choice plus ambivalence variables. Models 2 and 3 are reduced models of re-analysis which leave out some insignificant variables. The difference between model 2 and model 3 is that in model 3 the education variable is kept out of the equation. If the education variable is left out, the direct effects of candidate ambivalence and party ambivalence become significant and the explanatory power of the model is no different, as indicated by pseudo  $R^2$  in Table 7. As shown in model 3, mainlanders are less likely to have voted for Tsai Ing-wen than Taiwanese. Pro-independence Taiwanese are more likely to have voted for Tsai Ing-wen than for Ma Ying-jeou; and those who identify more with the DPP are more likely to have voted for Tsai Ing-wen than for Ma Ying-jeou, as one might predict. In addition, the negative effect of evaluation of Ma's performance on the odds of voting for Tsai Ing-wen

**Table 6** Logistic Regression Analysis of Voting Participation

Predictor Variable	Voting Participation as Dependent Variable	
	Model 1 Nonvoter	Model 2 Nonvoter
Sex (male)	0.35	—
Age	−0.07***	−0.06***
Family income	−0.04	—
Level of education	−0.12	—
Ethnic origins (Taiwanese as base)		
Hakka	−0.10	—
Mainlanders	0.03	—
Self-assigned position on <i>tongdu</i>	−0.06	—
Party identification (pan-DPP)	−0.11	—
Partisan strength	−0.14	—
Political involvement	−0.85**	−1.09***
Political efficacy	0.09	—
Cross pressure	0.29**	0.25**
Evaluation of Ma's performance	0.12	—
Emotional ambivalence	0.31	<b>0.31*</b>
Candidate ambivalence	0.08	0.09
Party ambivalence	0.21	0.22
Constant Term	3.47*	2.09**
Valid <i>N</i>	983	1207
pseudo <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.196	0.194

Voter as base category ; \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Source: TEDS2012.

**Table 7** Logistic Regression Analysis of Partisan Vote-choice

Predictor Variable	Partisan Vote-choice as Dependent Variable		
	Model 1 voted Tsai	Model 2 voted Tsai	Model 3 voted Tsai
Ethnic origins (Taiwanese as base)			
Hakka	0.08	0.05	0.03
Mainlanders	-2.34**	-2.44**	-2.44**
Level of education	0.11	0.07	—
Self-assigned position on <i>tongdu</i>	0.41**	0.45**	0.43**
Party identification (pan-DPP)	1.43***	1.43***	1.43***
PID strength	-0.03	—	—
Political involvement	0.16	—	—
Political efficacy	-0.26	—	—
Cross pressure	0.12	0.13	0.13
Evaluation of Ma's performance	-0.81***	-0.83***	-0.83***
Emotional ambivalence	-0.31	-0.34	-0.34
Candidate ambivalence	0.33	0.36	<b>0.37<sup>#</sup></b>
Party ambivalence	0.32	0.34	<b>0.36*</b>
Constant Term	-8.20***	-8.36***	-7.82***
Valid <i>N</i>	938	949	951
pseudo <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.749	0.748	0.748

Voted-Ma as base category; \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ , #  $p = .052$   
 Source: TEDS2012.

shows that those who were more dissatisfied with Ma's administration were significantly more likely to cast their vote for Tsai than for Ma. Finally, Taiwanese voters who exhibit greater candidate ambivalence and party ambivalence are more likely to have voted for Tsai than for Ma, and this partially confirms our hypothesis (H6).

In order to identify more ambivalent voters, we further cross tabulate the voter's partisan vote-choice with his/her position on independence/unification and whether he/she was satisfied or dissatisfied with Ma's overall performance (see Appendix Tables 6 and 7). This will identify two types of split voters: one is split on partisan vote-choice and independence/unification position (a voter who favours unification would be expected to vote for Ma, while a pro-independence voter would be expected to vote for Tsai, since the KMT and the DPP, and the two candidates, have clear stances on independence/unification), while the other type of split voter exhibits inconsistency between partisan choice and evaluation of Ma's performance. Voters who are satisfied with Ma's performance would be predicted to vote for Ma and those who are dissatisfied would cast their vote for Tsai.

Tables 8, 9 and 10 present the magnitude of these two types of split-voting and these voters' level of emotional, candidate, and party ambivalence. We can see that all split voters exhibit more of all three kinds of ambivalence in our analysis. They are indeed entitled to be called "ambivalent voters". Others may exhibit a certain degree of ambivalence but this is not expressed in their final vote-choices.

## **8. Conclusion**

Most people exhibit at least some degree of ambivalence, given that they are exposed to both positive and negative information and they hold conflicting feelings toward attitudinal objects. Ambivalence might be more salient during elections since competing parties or candidates tend to release large quantities of information that highlights their own good points and their opponent's bad ones, and this can make it difficult for voters to make up their minds. In our initial analysis of both ambivalence and vote-choice, those variables representing the volume of



**Table 8** Mean Test for Ambivalence and Split-Voting in Party and Taiwan-China Position

Vote-choice and self-assigned position on <i>tongdu</i>		Emotional Ambivalence	Candidate Ambivalence	Party Ambivalence
Split-voter	Mean	-.0700	-.0740	-.0956
	<i>N</i>	114	114	114
Consistent voter	Mean	-.1240	-.1096	-.1556
	<i>N</i>	1457	1457	1457
Total	Mean	-.1201	-.1071	-.1512
	<i>N</i>	1571	1571	1571
<i>F</i>		9.80	3.48	7.28
Eta Coef.		.079**	.048 <sup>#</sup>	.068**

#  $p=.06$ , \*\*  $p<.01$ 

Source: TEDS2012.

**Table 9** Mean Test for Ambivalence and Split-Voting among Those Satisfied and Dissatisfied with Ma

Vote-choice and Ma's performance		Emotional Ambivalence	Candidate Ambivalence	Party Ambivalence
Split-voter	Mean	-.0540	-.0215	-.0322
	<i>N</i>	241	241	241
Consistent voter	Mean	-.1320	-.1226	-.1728
	<i>N</i>	1330	1330	1330
Total	Mean	-.1201	-.1071	-.1512
	<i>N</i>	1571	1571	1571
<i>F</i>		40.23	55.73	80.86
Eta Coef.		.158***	.185***	.221***

\*\*\*  $p<.001$ 

Source: TEDS2012.

**Table 10** Logistic Regression Analysis of Ambivalent Voters  
(Split-voting)

Predictor variable	Dependent Variable			
	Model 1a	Model 1b	Model 2a	Model 2b
	Split- <i>Tongdu</i> ( <i>Tongdu</i> -PV-consistent)	Split- <i>Tongdu</i> ( <i>Tongdu</i> -PV-consistent)	Split-Perform (Perform-PV-consistent)	Split-Perform (Perform-PV-consistent)
<b>Sex (male)</b>	0.15		<b>-0.44*</b>	-0.29
Age	-0.01		0.01	
Level of education	0.03		0.18	0.10
Ethnic origins (Taiwanese)				
Hakka	-0.20		0.72*	0.66**
Mainlanders	-0.59		0.54	<b>0.55*</b>
Party identification (pan-DPP)	-0.07		0.16*	<b>0.19***</b>
Partisan strength	0.13		-0.03	
Political involvement	0.08		0.09	
<b>Ma's performance</b>	0.13	<b>0.32**</b>	—	—
Self- <i>tongdu</i> -position	—	—	0.04	-0.01
Political knowledge	-0.01		0.02	
Political efficacy	-0.05		-0.52***	<b>-0.40***</b>
<b>Political trust</b>	-0.33		0.70	<b>0.74**</b>
Cross pressure	-0.06		0.02	
Media exposure	-0.28		-0.24	0.06
Economic evaluation	0.07		0.04	
<b>Taiwan-nationalism</b>	0.06	-0.06	<b>0.28*</b>	0.17
China-nationalism	<b>0.40**</b>	<b>0.50***</b>	-0.03	-0.01
Emotional ambivalence	<b>2.67*</b>	<b>1.70*</b>	3.13***	2.75***
Candidate ambivalence	0.40	-0.63	<b>1.38*</b>	0.93
Party ambivalence	0.72	<b>1.05*</b>	2.04***	1.87***
Constant Term	-0.26	-2.40***	-3.71*	-3.42***
Valid <i>N</i>	770	1401	771	1115
pseudo <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.075	0.057	0.167	0.133

*Consistent Voter* as base category ; \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Source: TEDS2012.

information available to the respondent, such as political knowledge and media exposure, are found to have no significant impact on ambivalence and partisan vote-choice.

The 2012 presidential and legislative elections in Taiwan provide a good setting to explore ambivalence, although the measure of ambivalence is indirect and may not capture the full complexity of the concept. Yet our analysis of the data did confirm some of the findings of previous studies. To sum up, Taiwanese voters may well exhibit ambivalence in terms of conflicting emotions toward competing candidates and parties, and we found that these areas of ambivalence are determined firstly by such socio-demographic variables as gender, age, and education, and secondly by some political orientations, such as party identification, views on independence/unification, political involvement, evaluation of incumbent's performance, and evaluation of the economy. Finally, partisan strength and cross pressure are the most common and important factors in assessing ambivalence.

In Taiwan, ambivalence may serve as a significant predictor of failure to vote and also contribute to an understanding of partisan vote-choice and of inconsistent voting.

## Notes

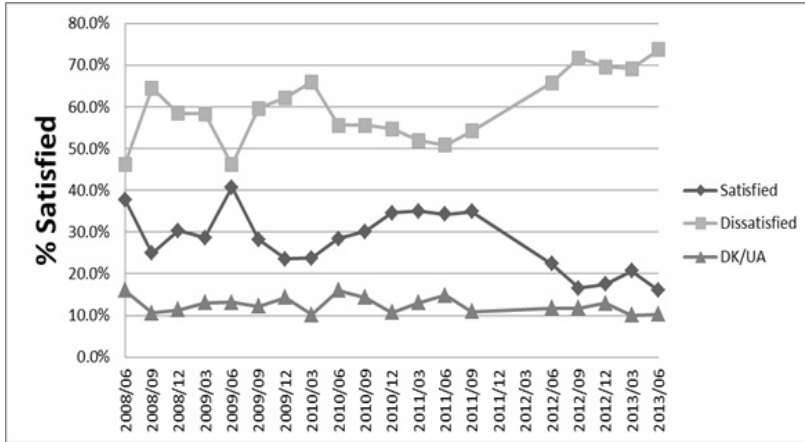
- \* Dr Huo-yan Shyu 徐火炎 is Research Fellow of the Institute of Political Science at Academia Sinica (IPSAS) in Taiwan, a joint-appointed Professor of National Taipei University and an Adjunct Professor of Soochow University. He is a co-founder of the Taiwanese Political Association (TPSA) and served as its president in 2007-2008. Professor Shyu's areas of specialization include comparative politics, elections and voting behaviour, and political culture and psychology. Professor Shyu has been actively involved in most of Taiwan's major nation-wide social and/or post-electoral surveys since 1983, served as either PI, co-PI or member of advisory board. He is the author of over fifty articles, book chapters, and other publications in both English and Chinese. Professor Shyu's current research interest is on exploring effects of emotions and other psycho-cultural factors in mass politics in Taiwan as well as in East Asian states. <Email: [hyshyu@gate.sinica.edu.tw](mailto:hyshyu@gate.sinica.edu.tw)>

1. The promise was for a 6 per cent economic growth rate, an unemployment rate of less than 3 per cent, and per capita income of more than US\$30,000.
2. Those who responded with “both parties are good” or “both parties are bad” are more likely to display greater ambivalence. I used this information to build indexes as a validity check for our ambivalence measure.
3. Craig, Kane and Martinez (2002) point out that ambivalence on abortion tends to be greater among those with fewer years of formal education; however, Rudolph and Popp (2007) found that education increases “open-minded thinking” about candidates, so they link more information with greater ambivalence toward candidates.

## References

- Alvarez, R. Michael and John Brehm (2002), *Hard Choice, Easy Answer: Values, Information, and American Public Opinion*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Basinger, Scott J. and Howard Lavine (2005), “Ambivalence, Information, and Electoral Choice”, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 99, No. 2, pp. 169-184.
- Craig, Stephen C., James G. Kane and Michael D. Martinez (2002), “Sometimes You Feel like a Nut, Sometimes You Don't: Citizens' Ambivalence about Abortion”, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 285-301.
- Craig, Stephen C. and Michael D. Martinez (eds) (2005a), *Ambivalence and the Structure of Political Opinion*, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Craig, Stephen C. and Michael D. Martinez (eds) (2005b), *Ambivalence, Politics, and Public Policy*, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Craig, Stephen C., Michael D. Martinez, James G. Kane and Jason Gainous (2005), “Core Values, Value Conflict, and Citizens' Ambivalence about Gay Rights”, *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 58, Vol. 1, pp. 5-17.
- Eagly, Alice H. and Shelly Chaiken (1993), *The Psychology of Attitudes*, Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- Festinger, Leon (1957), *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Green, Steven (2004), “The Structure of Partisan Attitudes: Reexamining Partisan Dimensionality and Ambivalence”, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 28, No. 5, pp. 809-822.
- Huckfeldt, Robert, Jeannette Morehouse Mendz and Tracy Osborn (2004), “Disagreement, Ambivalence, and Engagement: The Political

- Consequences of Heterogeneous Networks”, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 65-95.
- Keel, Luke and Jennifer Wolak (2008), “Contextual Sources of Ambivalence”, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 29, No. 5, pp. 653-673.
- Lavine, Howard (2001), “The Electoral Consequence of Ambivalence toward Presidential Candidates”, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 45 (October), pp. 915-29.
- Meffert, Michael F., Michael Guge and Milton Lodge (2004), “Good, Bad, and Ambivalent: The Consequences of Multidimensional Political Attitudes”, in Willem Saris and Paul Sniderman (eds), *Studies in Public Opinion: Attitudes, Nonattitudes, Measurement Error, and Change*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 63-92.
- McGraw, Kathleen M., Edward Hasecke and Kimberly Conger (2003), “Ambivalence, Uncertainty, and Process of Candidate Evaluation”, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 24, No. 3, pp. 421-448.
- Mutz, Diana C. (2003), “The Consequences of Cross-Cutting Networks for Political Participation”, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 46, No. 4, pp. 838-855.
- Nir, Lilach (2005), “Ambivalent Social Networks and Their Consequences for Participation”, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, Vol. 17, No. 4, pp. 422-442.
- Rudolph, Thomas J. and Elizabeth Popp (2007), “An Information Processing Theory of Ambivalence”, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 28, No. 3, pp. 563-585.
- Steenbergen, Marco and Paul R. Brewer (2004), “The Not-So-Ambivalent Public Policy Attitudes in the Political Culture of Ambivalence”, in Willem Saris and Paul Sniderman (eds), *Studies in Public Opinion: Attitudes, Nonattitudes, Measurement Error, and Change*, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 93-129.
- Thompson, Megan M., Mark P. Zanna and Dale W. Griffin (1995), “Let’s Not Be Indifferent about Attitudinal Ambivalence”, in Richard E. Petty and Jon A. Krosnick (eds), *Attitude Strength: Antecedents and Consequences*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Publishers, pp. 361-386.
- Zaller, John R. (1992), *The Nature and Origin of Mass Opinion*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zaller, John R. and Stanley Feldman (1992), “A Simple Theory of the Survey Response: Answer Questions Versus Revealing Preference”, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 32 (May), pp. 416-550.

**Appendix Figure 1** President Ma's Approval Rating, 2008-2013

Note: Pollsters are not permitted to publish the results of surveys concerning candidates during the election period, so there are no data for 2011/10 and 2012/04.

Source: Global Views Survey Research Center. <<http://www.gvsr.net.tw>>

**Appendix Table 1** Factor Analysis of Emotional Responses to Candidates (Varimax Rotated)

Measure Item	Factor loading	
	F1	F2
1a) <i>Tsai Ing-wen made you feel angry</i>	<b>.886</b>	-.022
1b) <i>Ma Ying-jeou made you feel angry</i>	-.068	<b>.891</b>
2a) <i>Tsai Ing-wen made you feel afraid</i>	<b>.881</b>	-.102
2b) <i>Ma Ying-jeou made you feel afraid</i>	-.068	<b>.890</b>
3a) <i>Tsai Ing-wen made you feel hopeful</i>	<b>-.680</b>	.397
3b) <i>Ma Ying-jeou made you feel hopeful</i>	.447	<b>-.619</b>
4a) <i>Feeling toward Tsai Ing-wen (on scale of 0 to 10)</i>	<b>.748</b>	-.326
4b) <i>Feeling toward Ma Ying-jeou (on scale of 0 to 10)</i>	-.441	<b>.695</b>
Eigenvalues	2.987	2.726
% of Variance explained	37.33	34.08
Valid N	1505	

Source: TEDS2012.

**Appendix Table 2** Factor Analysis of Candidate Traits Measures  
(Varimax Rotated)

Measure item for tapping evaluation of candidate's trait	Factor Loading	
	<i>F1</i>	<i>F2</i>
1) <i>Tsai Ing-wen's ability to do president's job</i>	<b>.900</b>	-.154
2) <i>Ma Ying-jeou's ability to do president's job</i>	-.160	<b>.912</b>
3) <i>Tsai Ing-wen's understanding of the needs of ordinary people</i>	<b>.896</b>	-.133
4) <i>Ma Ying-jeou's understanding of the needs of ordinary people</i>	-.155	<b>.902</b>
5) <i>Tsai Ing-wen's ability to protect Taiwan's interests</i>	<b>.911</b>	-.193
6) <i>Ma Ying-jeou's ability to protect Taiwan's interests</i>	-.183	<b>.920</b>
7) <i>Tsai Ing-wen's ability to maintain cross-Straits peace</i>	<b>.850</b>	-.187
8) <i>Ma Ying-jeou's ability to maintain cross-Straits peace</i>	-.163	<b>.810</b>
Eigenvalues	3.275	3.261
% of Variance explained	40.94	40.76
Valid <i>N</i>	1528	

Source: TEDS2012.

**Appendix Table 3** Factor Analysis of Evaluations of KMT and DPP

Measure item for evaluation of two parties	Factor loading
	<i>F1</i>
1) <i>On cross-Straits relations, how do you think the KMT and DPP compare?</i>	<b>.743</b>
2) <i>On economic development, how do the two parties compare?</i>	<b>.792</b>
3) <i>On reducing the gap between rich and poor; how do the two parties compare?</i>	<b>.803</b>
4) <i>On resolving the problem of high property prices, how do the two parties compare?</i>	<b>.749</b>
5) <i>On environmental protection, how do the two parties compare?</i>	<b>.698</b>
6) <i>On social welfare, how do the two parties compare?</i>	<b>.765</b>
7) <i>On fighting corruption, how do the two parties compare?</i>	<b>.786</b>
8) <i>On democratic reform, how do the two parties compare?</i>	<b>.768</b>
9) <i>On ethnic harmony, how do the two parties compare?</i>	<b>.800</b>
10) <i>On raising our international status, how do the two parties compare?</i>	<b>.790</b>
Eigenvalues	5.93
% of Variance explained	59.30
Valid <i>N</i>	1269

Source: TEDS2012.



**Appendix Table 4** Factor Analysis of Taiwanese/Chinese Nationalism Items  
(Varimax Rotated)

Item for measuring Taiwan/Chinese nationalism	Factor loading	
	<i>F1</i>	<i>F2</i>
1) <i>If Taiwan could still maintain peaceful relations with the PRC after declaring independence, then Taiwan should establish a new, independent country</i>		<b>.822</b>
2) <i>Even if the PRC decides to attack Taiwan after Taiwan declares independence, Taiwan should still become a new country</i>		<b>.830</b>
3) <i>If the economic, social, and political conditions were about the same in both mainland China and Taiwan, then the two sides should unify</i>	<b>.830</b>	
4) <i>Even if the gap between the economic, social, and political conditions in mainland China and Taiwan is quite large, the two sides should still unify</i>	<b>.837</b>	
Eigenvalues	1.39	1.37
% of Variance explained	34.82	34.26
Valid <i>N</i>	1594	

Source: TEDS2012.

**Appendix Table 5** Factor Analysis of Sociotropic and Pocketbook  
Economic Evaluations

Measure Item	Factor loading	
	<i>F1</i>	
1) <i>Sociotropic retrospective economic evaluation</i>	<b>.728</b>	
2) <i>Sociotropic prospective economic evaluation</i>	<b>.749</b>	
3) <i>Pocketbook retrospective economic evaluation</i>	<b>.718</b>	
4) <i>Pocketbook prospective economic evaluation</i>	<b>.746</b>	
Eigenvalues	2.163	
% of Variance explained	54.080	
Valid <i>N</i>	1443	

Source: TEDS2012.

**Appendix Table 6** Cross-tabulation for Self-*Tongdu*-Position and Partisan Vote-choice

<i>Tong-du</i> Position	Vote choice		Total
	voted-Tsai	voted-Ma	
Pro-independence	248 73.8%	88 26.2%	336 100.0%
Status quo	255 31.9%	545 68.1%	800 100.0%
Pro-unification	32 17.6%	150 82.4%	182 100.0%
Total	535 40.6%	783 59.4%	1318 100.0%

$\chi^2=218.91$  ( $df=2$ ); Eta=.408\*\*\*

\*  $p<.05$ , \*\*  $p<.01$ , \*\*\*  $p<.001$

Source: TEDS2012.

**Appendix Table 7** Cross-tabulation for Ma's Performance and Partisan Vote-choice

Ma's Performance	Vote choice		Total
	voted-Tsai	voted-Ma	
Dissatisfied	384 80.7%	92 19.3%	476 100.0%
(DK UA)	19 46.3%	22 53.7%	41 100.0%
Satisfied	142 17.1%	690 82.9%	832 100.0%
Total	545 40.4%	804 59.6%	1349 100.0%

$\chi^2=509.34$  ( $df=2$ ); Eta=.614\*\*\*

\*  $p<.05$ , \*\*  $p<.01$ , \*\*\*  $p<.001$

Source: TEDS2012.

**Appendix Table 8** Measures and Coding of Variables and Indicators in Use

Variable/ Indicator	Measures/Coding
<b>Age</b>	Age in years in survey year (2012)
<b>Sex</b>	Respondent's gender (1=male; 0=female)
<b>Level of Education</b>	A recoded 10-point scale : (1=No formal education; 2=incomplete elementary school; 3=complete elementary school; 4=incomplete middle school; 5=complete middle school; 6=incomplete high school; 7=complete high school; 8=some university education; 9=university education completed; 10=post-graduate degree.)
<b>Family Income</b>	10-point scale of monthly household income: (1=lowest percentile; 10=highest percentile.)
<b>Ethnic Identity</b>	3-point numerical scale: <i>Do you consider yourself as Taiwanese, Chinese or both?</i> (1=Taiwanese; 2=both; 3=Chinese)
<b>Ethnic Origins</b>	Based on respondent's ethnic background on father's side. (1=Taiwanese; 2=Hakka; 3=Mainland Chinese)
<b>Party Identification (pan-KMT to pan-DPP)</b>	Constructed 7-point index based on one measure item and follow-up based on two measure items: 1) <i>Among the main political parties in our country, do you think of yourself as leaning toward any particular party?</i> 2) <i>Which party if any do you feel closest to?</i> 3) <i>How close do you feel to that party?</i> (1=very close to pan-KMT; ... 4=non-partisan; ... 7=very close to pan-DPP)
<b>Partisan Strength</b>	Based on a measure item: <i>Do you lean very strongly, somewhat, or just a little toward this party?</i> (0=not affiliated with any party; 1=just a little; ... 4=very strongly)

**Appendix Table 8** (Continued)

Variable/ Indicator	Measures/Coding
<b>Political Involvement</b>	<p>A summated index based on two 4-point scale measure items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Do you usually talk about politics or elections with other people?</i> (1=never; ... 4=often)</li> <li>2) <i>Were you concerned with the outcome of this presidential election?</i> (1=not concerned at all; ... 4=very concerned)</li> </ol>
<b>Political Efficacy</b>	<p>A summated index based on three 5-point scale measure items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>People like me don't have any say in what the government does.</i> (1=strongly agree; ... 5=strongly disagree)</li> <li>2) <i>Public officials do not care much about what people like me think.</i> (1=strongly agree; ... 5=strongly disagree)</li> <li>3) <i>Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what is going on.</i> (1=strongly agree; ... 5=strongly disagree)</li> </ol>
<b>Political Trust</b>	<p>A summated index based on three 4- and 5-point scale measure items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Most decisions made by the government are correct.</i> (5=strongly agree; ... 1=strongly disagree)</li> <li>2) <i>Government officials often waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes.</i> (1=strongly agree; ... 5=strongly disagree)</li> <li>3) <i>When the government decides important policies, how often do you think public welfare is its first priority?</i> (4=often; ... 1=never)</li> <li>4) <i>Do you believe what government officials say on TV or in newspapers?</i> (4=strongly believe; ... 1=not believe at all)</li> </ol>
<b>Political Knowledge</b>	<p>A summated index based on the correct answer for 7 measure items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Who is the current president of the United States?</i></li> <li>2) <i>Who is the current the premier of our country?</i></li> <li>3) <i>What institution has the power to interpret the constitution?</i></li> </ol>

Appendix Table 8 (Continued)

Variable/ Indicator	Measures/Coding
<b>Political Knowledge</b> (Continued)	<p>4) <i>Which of these persons was the finance minister before the recent election?</i></p> <p>5) <i>What was the unemployment rate in Taiwan as of the end of last year (2011)?</i></p> <p>6) <i>Which party came in second in terms of seats in the Legislative Yuan?</i></p> <p>7) <i>Who is the current secretary-general of the United Nations?</i></p> <p>(7=7correct items; ... 0=none correct answer)</p>
<b>Media Exposure</b>	<p>A summated index built on 6-point measure items:</p> <p>1) <i>During the campaign, on average how many days a week did you watch election news on TV?</i></p> <p>2) <i>What about election news on the radio?</i></p> <p>3) <i>What about election news on the internet?</i></p> <p>4) <i>What about election news in the newspapers?</i></p> <p>(6=more than 2 hours; ... 0=paid no attention at all )</p>
<b>Cross Pressure</b>	<p>An index built on an item designed to tap the magnitude of homogeneity of social network in terms of partisan support:</p> <p><i>Do these people who you commonly discuss politics or elections with support the same party?</i></p> <p>(1=all support the same party or with only person; ... 3=about half and half; ... 5=none supports the same party)</p>
<b>Evaluation of President Ma's Performance</b>	<p>A Likert 4-point measure item:</p> <p><i>Concerning Ma Ying-jeou's overall performance during his presidency, are you satisfied or dissatisfied?</i></p> <p>(5=very satisfied; ... 1=very dissatisfied)</p>

**Appendix Table 8** (Continued)

Variable/ Indicator	Measures/Coding
<b>Chinese and Taiwanese Nationalism index</b>	<p>Two factorial indexes built on factor analysis of the following 5-point measure items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Some people say, if Taiwan could still maintain peaceful relations with the PRC after declaring independence, then Taiwan should establish a new, independent country. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?</i> (5=strongly agree; ... 1=strongly disagree)</li> <li>2) <i>Some people say, even if the PRC decides to attack Taiwan after Taiwan declares independence, Taiwan should still become a new country. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?</i> (5=strongly agree; ... 1=strongly disagree)</li> <li>3) <i>Some people say, if the economic, social, and political conditions were about the same in both mainland China and Taiwan, then the two sides should unify. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?</i> (1=strongly agree; ... 5=strongly disagree)</li> <li>4) <i>Some people say, even if the gap between the economic, social, and political conditions in mainland China and Taiwan is quite large, the two sides should still unify. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?</i> (1=strongly agree; ... 5=strongly disagree)</li> </ol>
<b>Self-assigned- Tongdu Orientation</b>	<p>A reconstructed scale based on a measure tapping 6 positions concerning the relationship between Taiwan and mainland China: (1=immediate unification; ... 6=immediate independence)</p>
<b>Economic Evaluation</b>	<p>A factorial composite index based on the following 3-point scale measures tapping sociotropic and pocketbook economic evaluation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Would you say that over the past year, the state of the economy of Taiwan has gotten better, stayed about the same, or gotten worse?</i></li> </ol>

Appendix Table 8 (Continued)

Variable/ Indicator	Measures/Coding
<b>Economic Evaluation</b> (Continued)	<p>2) <i>Would you say that in the forthcoming year, the state of the economy of Taiwan will get better, stay about the same, or get worse?</i></p> <p>3) <i>Would you say that over the past year, your own household's economic condition has gotten better, stayed about the same, or gotten worse?</i></p> <p>4) <i>Would you say that in the forthcoming year, your own household's economic condition will get better, stay about the same, or get worse?</i></p> <p>(3=better; 2=about the same; 1=worse)</p>
<b>Candidate (traits) Ambivalence</b>	<p>A formulated index built on the measure items designed to tap candidate's traits concerning handling the president's job:</p> <p>1) <i>I'd like to ask you to evaluate the ability of two presidential candidates, how would you rate Tsai Ing-wen on a scale of 0 to 10?</i></p> <p>2) <i>How would you rate Ma Ying-jeou?</i></p> <p>3) <i>How would you rate Tsai Ing-wen on a scale of 0 to 10, if 0 means that you think the candidate does not understand the needs of ordinary people at all and 10 means that a candidate completely understands the needs of ordinary people?</i></p> <p>4) <i>How would you rate Ma Ying-jeou?</i></p> <p>5) <i>How would you rate Tsai Ing-wen on a scale of 0 to 10, if 0 means the candidate is completely incapable of protecting Taiwan's interests, and 10 means that the candidate is completely able to protect Taiwan's interests?</i></p> <p>6) <i>How would you rate Ma Ying-jeou?</i></p> <p>7) <i>How would you rate Tsai Ing-wen on a scale of 0 to 10, if 0 means the candidate is completely incapable of maintaining cross-Strait peace, and 10 means that the candidate is completely able to maintain cross-Strait peace?</i></p>



Appendix Table 8 (Continued)

Variable/ Indicator	Measures/Coding
<b>Candidate (traits) Ambivalence</b> (Continued)	8) <i>How would you rate Ma Ying-jeou?</i> (8 to 10=positive response; 0 to 2=negative response, only more extreme responses are considered to be valid counts)
<b>Emotional Ambivalence</b>	<p>A formulated index built on the measure items designed to tap emotion and affect responses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Has Tsai Ing-wen, because of the kind of person she is or because of something she has done, ever made you feel angry?</i></li> <li>2) <i>How about Ma Ying-jeou?</i></li> <li>3) <i>Has Tsai Ing-wen, because of the kind of person she is or because of something she has done, ever made you feel afraid?</i></li> <li>4) <i>How about Ma Ying-jeou?</i></li> <li>5) <i>Has Tsai Ing-wen, because of the kind of person she is or because of something she has done, ever made you feel hopeful?</i></li> <li>6) <i>How about Ma Ying-jeou?</i></li> </ol> <p>(For these closed-ended question items, only extreme positive and/or negative responses such as “often” and/or “never” are used to construct the index)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7) <i>We'd like to get your feelings toward presidential candidates. How would you rate Tsai Ing-wen on a scale of 0 to 10?</i></li> <li>8) <i>How about Ma Ying-jeou?</i> (8 thru 10=positive response; 0 thru 2 =negative response)</li> </ol>
<b>Party Ambivalence</b>	<p>A formulated index built on the measure items designed to tap the ability of the two major competing parties to deal with major sociopolitical problems:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>On cross-Straits relations, how do you think the KMT and DPP compare?</i></li> </ol>

Appendix Table 8 (Continued)

Variables/ Indicator	Measures/Coding
<b>Party Ambivalence</b> (Continued)	<p>2) <i>On economic development, how do the two parties compare?</i></p> <p>3) <i>On reducing the gap between rich and poor, how do the two parties compare?</i></p> <p>4) <i>On resolving the problem of high property prices, how do the two parties compare?</i></p> <p>5) <i>On environmental protection, how do the two parties compare?</i></p> <p>6) <i>On social welfare, how do the two parties compare?</i></p> <p>7) <i>On fighting corruption, how do the two parties compare?</i></p> <p>8) <i>On democratic reform, how do the two parties compare?</i></p> <p>9) <i>On ethnic harmony, how do the two parties compare?</i></p> <p>10) <i>On raising our international status, how do the two parties compare?</i></p> <p>(Only specific positive or negative responses toward the DPP and KMT are counted. The response that one party is “a little better” or “much better” than the other is counted as positive for that party and negative for the other)</p>
<b>Parties all good</b>	A summated index built on counting those 10 measure items with answering “both-parties-are-pretty-good” response.
<b>Parties all bad</b>	A summated index built on counting those 10 measure items with the response “neither party is good.”
<b>Partisan Vote-choice</b>	Voted for incumbent President Ma Ying-jeou (coded=0), and voted for DPP candidate Tsai Ing-wen (coded=1); candidate of third party, James Soong 宋楚瑜, only secured 2.8 per cent of the total popular vote, so he has been dropped from the analysis.





## **Party Competence and Vote Choice in the 2012 Election in Taiwan**

Chiung-chu Lin\*  
*Soochow University*

### **Abstract**

This paper argues that party competence is important in understanding the 2012 presidential vote. By using TEDS2012 survey data, the analysis reveals that the KMT enjoyed advantage on issues of cross-Straits relations, economic development, social welfare, fighting corruption, increasing country's international status, while the DPP owned reputations on issues of reducing the gap between rich and poor, environmental protection and democratic reform. The KMT secured its reputation on issues of cross-Straits relations, economy, ethnic harmony, and the country's international status during the period between 2008 and 2012. By contrast, the DPP dominated the issue of environmental protection. While the KMT gained better assessment on issues of fighting corruption and social welfare, it failed to keep its advantage in reducing the gap between rich and poor. Finally, the binary logit model demonstrates that evaluations of party competence affect voters' voting consideration. It is significantly and positively related to one's vote choice in the 2012 presidential election.

**Keywords:** *party competence, issues, vote choice, the 2012 presidential election*

**JEL classification:** *D72, D78, H11, Z18*



## 1. Introduction

When voters cast their ballots, what will in their minds to reach the decisions? Traditionally, the existing research have been pointed out that several factors play important roles in shaping voting decisions, such as party identification, candidate factors, and issues in Taiwan. Among those factors, party images or party competence was less studied. How a party was perceived is important because it associates with a party's political performance and how well a party can handle politics. Those evaluations bring to affect how voters see the candidate who stands for the election for the party. Thus, voters' assessments on the party performance will relate to their vote choice. By doing so, this paper contributes to the growing various literature on voting behaviour and help us understand the basis of a party system in Taiwan.

Thanks to the electoral system reform in 2008 legislative election, Taiwan's party system has been an obvious change afterword. Only two parties won seats in the Legislative Yuan, this brings the party system evolves into a two-party system.<sup>1</sup> While the reform introduces party-list proportional presentation with 34 legislators are elected through this system, it is without doubting that the importance role a party function in Taiwanese politics.

Therefore in this paper, my interest is in observing how the electorate assesses the two major parties in Taiwan. What kinds of evaluative criteria do voters have on the political parties? Do the political parties enjoy advantages in certain issues? Did the evaluations of political parties affect the electorate's vote choice in the 2012 presidential election? This paper is divided into three sections. The first section briefly introduces literature on party competence and how researchers operationalize it both in western countries and in Taiwan. The second section summarizes the data and method uses in this paper. The third section involves a detailed empirical analysis of the importance of party competence on vote choice in the 2012 presidential election.

## 2. Concept and Theoretical Importance of Party Competence

E.E. Schattschneider states in his book *Party Government* that “the rise of political parties is indubitably one of the principal distinguishing marks of modern government” indicating the importance of political parties in a democracy. As politicians come and go, the only thing which truly lasts, however, it is the political party. As Graham Wallas describes the agents which aggregate and represent voters’ needs, “something is required, simpler and more permanent, something which can be loved and trusted, and which can be recognised at successive elections.” He added: “A party is such a thing.” (1948: 82). It is obvious that political parties are the key institution that performs important functions in a democracy. Moreover, how the party performs is also relate to its electoral performance. The better perception a party has, the more votes it may attracts. This further leads to a strong and positive correlation between voters’ evaluations of the parties and their supports towards democracy (Miller and Listhang, 1990; Dalton, 2004: ch.3). How do we observe the importance of political party in a society? Holmberg (2003) found that the more an individual is attached to a party, the more he/she views the need for political parties in a country. In other words, party identification is a good proxy to explore the importance of political parties among the electorate. A large amount of voters identify with political parties in a society, therefore indicating a strong linkage between voters and political parties. A great percentage of party identifiers in a country also indicates a positive attitude toward the role of political parties in a democracy. Long-term statistics taken from the Election Study Center at the National Chengchi University allow us to observe the pattern. As for party identification in Taiwan, there are around 50 to 60 per cent of Taiwanese voters identifying with political parties for the past decade.<sup>2</sup> The statistics reveal that more than half of Taiwanese voters are attached to a political party.

The ratio of party membership among the eligible electorate (Member/Electorate ratio) can be treated as an index to display such linkage as well. Compared with the ratio within western democracies, the average ratio in Taiwan is roughly 8 per cent, which is higher than most western democracies (Lin, 2012). Taking those figures together, it

is hard to deny that political parties in Taiwan have a significant role in the political process.

When asking voters to think about a party, the sorts of things which naturally come into one's mind is the development of perceptions of political parties. These images are often related to a party's ability in handling problems and issues are known as party competence (Mangum, 2012; Cover, 1986). Thus, the perception of party competence is how voters evaluate a party's ability in handling problems and issues such as inflation, unemployment, public service, and cross-Strait relations. A party perceived as having a good ability in handling issues, stands a better chance of being voted for. The parties' reputations will matter on voters' vote choice (Rose and McAllister, 1990: 134; Trilling, 1976; Sanders, 1988; McCann, 1990; Geer, 1991; Baumer and Gold, 1995; Lin, 2006; Cover, 1986).

Voters assess the political parties through its performance or its party leaders and elites. This reputation can be gained and lost. It is not deeply rooted or as stable as one's party identification (Mathews and Prothro, 1966: 377). However, the assessments can be critically important to its electoral prospect (Webb, 2000: 141). Party competence can be seen as part of an ensemble of images held in the electorate's minds (Flanigan and Zingale, 2006: 202). For example, the Republican party in the USA has been viewed as the party for cutting taxes, supporting national defence, and traditional values, while the Democrats is the party of education, race, and social welfare (Pope and Woon, 2009; Mangum, 2012).

To gauge the performance image, scholars have been using one question or a set of issues to measure (Cover, 1986; Pope and Woon, 2009; Mangum, 2012). By asking respondents "which party is better able to handle the nations' most important problems", Cover (1986) constructed a "party competence gap" index and demonstrated that party competence forms a large part of vote choice from the period between 1972 and 1982. By contrast, Pope and Woon (2009) and Mangum (2012) explored party reputations by asking respondents' opinion on "which party would do better" in a set issues such as peace, prosperity, unemployment, health care, the environment, and the deficit.

A great deal of research on party images were developed to measure separate reactions to each political party based on the respondent's open-ended comments.<sup>3</sup> Respondents are asked to list what they like and dislike about both American political parties. By classifying the responses from the respondents, researchers aggregated the responses into issue and performance related issues such as economic issues, social issues, foreign policy, government management, party philosophy, and people in the party etc. (Campbell, Gurin and Miller, 1954; Sanders, 1988; Geer, 1991; Klingemann and Wattenberg, 1992; Balumer and Gold, 1995; Brewer, 2009).

Why study party images in general and party competence in particular? Party competence not only enables us to examine the party's reputational change but also gives us an insight into why a party lose elections. Party competence, to some extent, provides a useful clue in detecting the electorate's attitudes toward the issues and their voting behaviour. By analyzing answers from the respondents, we can know what are long-term issues, short-term issues or salient issues from the electorate's point of view. Moreover, as Trilling (1976: 5) pointed out "the study of party images has directed relevance for the theory of electoral realignment." In Sellers' study, he argues that critical issues could lead to an electoral realignment and this is because they first altered the party images of large numbers of voters (Trilling, 1976: 6). Therefore, studying the electorate's image of parties could give us a better understanding of the changes and continuity within the party system.

### **3. Data and Methods**

Data analyzed in this paper comes from Taiwan's Election and Democratization Study (TEDS), which yielded a great deal of good quality national-wide surveys. The data are drawn from survey in the 2012 presidential election. The survey was conducted through a face to face interview with a national-wide probability sampling. It successfully interviewed 1,826 respondents.<sup>4</sup> The TEDS survey data used a set of issues to measure how the respondents assess party competence. The questions were designed to inquire into a series of issues which includes



cross-Strait relations, economic development, reducing the gap between rich and poor, resolving the problem of high property prices, environmental protection, social welfare, fighting corruption, democratic reform, ethnic harmony, and raising country's international status. Respondents were invited to compare how well the KMT and DPP can handle those important problems.

### **3.1. Dependent Variable**

To examine the effects of party competence on vote choice, I estimated the vote choice for the 2012 presidential election. Although there are three candidates standing for the election, the competition mainly falls between the incumbent president, Ma Ying-jeou 馬英九, and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) candidate, Tsai Ing-wen 蔡英文.

### **3.2. Key Independent Variable**

The independent variables of interests in this paper are a set of issues which highlights the assessment of party competence mentioned above. For each question, if the Kuomintang (KMT) is seen to be better it is coded 1, for the DPP if it is seen to be better, it is coded -1, and those who can't tell the difference between the two parties is coded 0.<sup>5</sup> By aggregating 10 questions together, the scale allows for the construction of an index of overall party competence.

### **3.3. Control Variable**

Party identification, Taiwanese/Chinese identity, and position on the cross-Strait relations are significant political attitudes that affect one's vote choice in Taiwan. People who identify with the pan-Green camp, keep a Taiwanese identity and support Taiwan independence are more likely to vote for the DPP candidate. Alternately, people who identify with the pan-Blue camp, keep a Chinese identity and support Unification with China are more likely to vote for the KMT candidate. (Sheng and Chen, 2003; Shyu, 2005; Chen *et al.*, 2012). Candidate competence also plays a role in vote choice. Voters will vote for a candidate who has been assessed as being the most competent (Hawang, 1996; Lin, 2006;

Liu *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, those important political attitudes will be controlled in the model analysis. An individual's socio-demographic characteristics also play roles in vote choice. Among them, gender, age and education are found to be of utmost importance in vote choice. Therefore, variables of gender, age and education will include in the model analysis as well.

During the campaign, social welfare, the cross-Strait relations, income gap, corruption, and economy issues all raise by the two candidates.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, we might find these issues, more than the rest, will correlate with an individual's vote choice. We shall also find that party competence evaluation is positively associated with one's vote choice. A binary logit model will be applied here to tackle the questions mentioned above. We shall find that the more positive a voter's evaluations of the party, the more he/she is likely to vote for the candidate from that party.

#### 4. Individual-level Evidence for Party Competence

As mentioned above, several issues were raised and hotly debated by political elites during the election such as cross-Strait relations, "92 Consensus", social justice, and unemployment etc. Table 1 shows the most pressing issues during the election from Taiwanese voters' perspective. Not surprisingly, the top two problems are economy and cross-Strait relations. They take up around 60 per cent of respondents. It follows social justice and fairness in the third but only 3.4 per cent.

How do Taiwanese voters assess a party's competence on different issues? Table 2(1) and Table 2(2) give us an overall picture. It is clear that the KMT enjoys advantages in cross-Strait relations, economic development, social welfare, fighting corruption, ethnic harmony, and raising Taiwan's international status. After Ma Ying-jeou took office in 2008, the government had launched direct transport and communication links with China through the "big three links" agenda. In his inauguration in 2008, Ma Ying-jeou proposed "no unification, no independence, and no military force", and the Ma government has resumed bilateral negotiations under the 1992 consensus and encouraged

**Table 1** The Most Important Problems during This Election

	Frequency	Percentage
Economy	709	38.8
Cross-Strait relations	362	19.8
Social justice and fairness	62	3.4
International status and diplomacy	47	2.6
Integrity	32	1.8
Social welfare	27	1.5
Governing competence	22	1.2
Education reform	20	1.1

Source: Chu (2012).

more trade and exchange interactions. In 2010, both sides of the Taiwan straits signed the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA). These measures were seen as reducing tensions on the cross-Strait relations and contribute to economic growth. Moreover, Taiwanese passport holders are allowed to enter more than 120 countries by January 2012. The success of visa-free programmes was emphasized as a key governing performance during the 2012 campaign. Therefore, it is understandable that the KMT was seen a party which is capable of dealing with the cross-Strait relations, economy, and diplomacy.

By contrast, the DPP has a reputation of dealing with the income gap, environmental protection, and democratic reform. Ever since it was established in 1986, the DPP appealed for political reforms and democracy. It has been credited with contributing to democracy for a

long time (Lin, 2006). The DPP is also known for advocating nuclear-free policy. Therefore, it is reasonable that voters assessed the DPP as being more capable of democratic reform and environmental protection. During the campaign, Tsai Ing-wen proposed a social housing programme and to provide a state-run childcare centre to help reduce the burden on young people. Tsai's camp appealed to issue of living justice, income gap, and youth poverty. Thus, it is probably not surprising that more voters think the DPP did better than the KMT in terms of reducing the gap between rich and poor.

On the issues of resolving the problem of high property prices, there are around one-fifth voters assessing that the KMT and the DPP did better, respectively. Moreover, based on the results from Table 2(1) and Table 2(2), 18 per cent of the respondents do not know how to answer this question. Also more than 10 per cent of the respondents on each question could not give their opinions, especially on environmental issues, democratic reform issue, and raising country's international status. The lack of familiarity with the issues suggests that voters pay less attention to these issues. Alternatively, it is possible that these issues are not important either. In any case, more data and a further study are required to answer this puzzle.

Evaluation of party competence was also measured in the 2008 legislative election survey. The data allow us to compare the changes within the party's ability in managing issues both in the KMT and the DPP (see Table 3(1) to Table 3(5)). In summary, both parties gained more positive evaluations in terms of cross-Strait relations, fighting corruption, democratic reform, and improving the country's international status for the past four years. It should be added that the KMT's reputation gained 19.8 per cent more in fighting corruption. Although the KMT has an advantage on the issue of economic development and ethnic harmony, its competence's percentage decreased slightly. The DPP's competence also decreased a bit on the environmental protection issues. As for the issue of reducing the gap between rich and poor, the DPP's reputation gained 18.1 per cent more for the past four years while the KMT lost 13.2 per cent.

**Table 2(1)** The Descriptive Statistics of Party Competence Assessment (%)

	Cross-Strait relations	Economic development	Reducing the gap between rich and poor	Resolving the problem of high property prices	Environmental protection
DPP better	11.1	14.5	28.4	21.8	25.6
No difference	17.5	23.1	34.4	39.2	36.6
KMT better	62.0	51.9	24.5	21.0	21.9
Don't know	9.4	10.5	12.7	18.0	15.9
<i>N</i>	1826	1826	1826	1826	1826

Source: Chu (2012).

**Table 2(2)** The Descriptive Statistics of Party Competence Assessment (%)

	Social welfare	Fighting corruption	Democratic reform	Ethnic harmony	Raising our international status
DPP better	24.7	19.3	35.7	15.9	14.4
No difference	34.8	34.1	28.1	30.3	19.9
KMT better	28.2	34.8	21.0	39.9	51.3
Don't know	12.3	11.9	15.2	13.9	14.4
<i>N</i>	1826	1826	1826	1826	1826

Source: Chu (2012).

**Table 3(1)** Cross-Strait Relations and Economic Development Issues (%)

	Cross-Strait relations			Economic development		
	2008	2012	Diff.	2008	2012	Diff.
DPP better	7.7	11.1	3.4	6.7	14.5	7.8
No difference	23.4	17.5	-5.9	26.0	23.1	-2.9
KMT better	54.3	62.0	7.7	52.5	51.9	-0.6
Don't know	14.5	9.4	-5.1	14.8	10.5	-4.3

Note: Diff. – the difference is by subtracting the percentage between the results in 2012 and 2008.

Source: Chu (2008, 2012).

**Table 3(2)** Fighting Corruption and Democratic Reform Issues (%)

	Fighting corruption			Democratic reform		
	2008	2012	Diff.	2008	2012	Diff.
DPP better	18.2	19.3	1.1	34.6	35.7	1.1
No difference	51.4	34.1	-17.3	28.1	28.1	0.0
KMT better	15.0	34.8	19.8	16.1	21.0	4.9
Don't know	15.4	11.9	-3.5	21.3	15.2	-6.1

Note: Diff. – the difference is by subtracting the percentage between the results in 2012 and 2008.

Source: Chu (2008, 2012).

**Table 3(3)** Reducing the Gap between Rich and Poor and Social Welfare Issues (%)

	Reducing the gap between rich and poor			Social welfare		
	2008	2012	Diff.	2008	2012	Diff.
DPP better	10.3	28.4	18.1	27.5	24.7	-2.8
No difference	31.8	34.4	2.6	33.6	34.8	1.2
KMT better	37.7	24.5	-13.2	21.1	28.2	7.1
Don't know	20.2	12.7	-7.5	17.9	12.3	-5.6

Note: Diff. – the difference is by subtracting the percentage between the results in 2012 and 2008.

Source: Chu (2008, 2012).

**Table 3(4)** Environmental Protection and Ethnic Harmony Issues (%)

	Environmental protection			Ethnic harmony		
	2008	2012	Diff.	2008	2012	Diff.
DPP better	28.6	25.6	-3.0	10.9	15.9	5.0
No difference	33.9	36.6	2.7	31.9	30.3	-1.6
KMT better	15.3	21.9	6.6	40.3	39.9	-0.4
Don't know	22.2	15.9	-6.3	16.9	13.9	-3.0

Note: Diff. – the difference is by subtracting the percentage between the results in 2012 and 2008.

Source: Chu (2008, 2012).

**Table 3(5)** Raising Country's International Status Issue (%)

	2008	2012	Diff.
DPP better	11.5	14.4	2.9
No difference	27.7	19.9	-7.8
KMT better	42.8	51.3	8.5
Don't know	18.0	14.4	-3.6

Note: Diff. – the difference is by subtracting the percentage between the results in 2012 and 2008.

Source: Chu (2008, 2012).

On the whole, the KMT secured its reputation on issues of cross-Strait relations, economy, ethnic harmony, and the country's international status. By contrast, the DPP dominated the issue of environmental protection. Moreover, the KMT gained better assessment than the DPP on issues of fighting corruption and social welfare, however, the KMT failed to keep its advantage in reducing the gap between rich and poor.

Does an evaluation of party competence yield an association with vote choice? The analysis from cross-tabulation analysis which is displayed in Table 4(1) and Table 4(2) indicates that one's evaluations of party competence are associated with his/her vote decision. Those who assessed the KMT as being more competent tend to vote for Ma Ying-jeou, and vice versa. It is worth to note that those who cannot tell the parties difference on cross-Strait relations, economic development, ethnic harmony, and raising international status tend to vote for Tsai Ing-wen. By contrast, those who cannot tell the parties difference on the issue of reducing the gap between rich and poor, resolving the problem of high property prices, environmental protection, social welfare, and democratic reform tend to vote for Ma Ying-jeou. In other words, among the KMT advantage issues, voters with indistinct assessments tend to



**Table 4(1)** Party Competence by Vote Choice

	Ma Ying-jeou	Tsai Ing-wen	<i>N</i>
<i>Cross-Strait relations</i>			
DPP better	2.5%	97.5%	161
No difference	28.1%	71.9%	196
KMT better	77.4%	22.6%	945
$\chi^2=426.04$ $df=2$ $P<0.001$			
<i>Economic development</i>			
DPP better	6.3%	93.8%	208
No difference	35.2%	64.8%	281
KMT better	84.1%	15.9%	792
$\chi^2=516.73$ $df=2$ $P<0.001$			
<i>Social welfare</i>			
DPP better	24.7%	75.3%	373
No difference	62.3%	37.7%	453
KMT better	88.4%	11.6%	432
$\chi^2=340.72$ $df=2$ $P<0.001$			
<i>Fighting corruption</i>			
DPP better	16.0%	84.0%	294
No difference	50.2%	49.8%	428
KMT better	90.5%	9.5%	546
$\chi^2=464.11$ $df=2$ $P<0.001$			
<i>Ethnic harmony</i>			
DPP better	10.2%	89.8%	235
No difference	45.6%	54.4%	388
KMT better	88.5%	11.5%	628
$\chi^2=491.22$ $df=2$ $P<0.001$			
<i>Raising our international status</i>			
DPP better	8.8%	91.2%	215
No difference	40.0%	60.0%	235
KMT better	80.5%	19.5%	786
$\chi^2=412.94$ $df=2$ $P<0.001$			

Source: Chu (2012).

**Table 4(2)** Party Competence by Vote Choice

	Ma Ying-jeou	Tsai Ing-wen	<i>N</i>
<i>Reducing the gap between rich and poor</i>			
DPP better	21.3%	78.7%	414
No difference	64.2%	35.8%	450
KMT better	92.9%	7.1%	395
$\chi^2=436.97$ $df=2$ $P<0.001$			
<i>Resolving the problem of high property prices</i>			
DPP better	21.3%	78.7%	329
No difference	66.5%	33.5%	514
KMT better	88.4%	11.6%	329
$\chi^2=325.62$ $df=2$ $P<0.001$			
<i>Environmental protection</i>			
DPP better	31.6%	68.4%	376
No difference	61.1%	38.9%	481
KMT better	87.8%	12.2%	352
$\chi^2=238.81$ $df=2$ $P<0.001$			
<i>Democratic reform</i>			
DPP better	27.3%	72.7%	528
No difference	70.1%	29.9%	351
KMT better	93.9%	6.1%	343
$\chi^2=407.62$ $df=2$ $P<0.001$			

Source: Chu (2012).

vote for the DPP candidate rather than the KMT candidate, and vice versa. A possible explanation for this is that these voters might value candidate factors more in making their vote decisions.

## 5. Party Competence and Vote Choice

In this section, I tested the effect of party competence on vote choice. The results presented in Table 5 suggest that overall party competence yields an effect on vote choice. Holding other variables constant, those

**Table 5** Binary Logit Model for the 2012 Presidential Vote Choice

	Model 1 KMT/DPP	Model 2 KMT/DPP
Male (female=0)	-0.54(0.35)	-0.44(0.34)
Age	0.01(0.02)	0.01(0.01)
Education (university and above=0)		
Elementary school	0.82(0.89)	0.29(0.79)
Junior high school	-0.32(0.62)	-0.52(0.59)
Senior high school	-0.31(0.44)	-0.37(0.41)
College	-0.70(0.52)	-0.66(0.50)
Party Identification (independent and nonresponse=0)		
Pan-Blue	2.76*** (0.47)	2.80*** (0.46)
Pan-Green	-2.75*** (0.44)	-2.63*** (0.41)
National identity (join identity=0)		
Taiwanese identity	-0.45(0.37)	-0.39(0.35)
Chinese identity	-0.55(0.92)	-0.43(0.90)
Unification/Independence Issue (status quo=0)		
Unification	-0.29(0.42)	-0.29(0.40)
Independence	-0.08(0.56)	0.01(0.55)
Candidate Competence (no difference=0)		
Tsai is more competent	-3.15*** (0.73)	-3.26*** (0.73)
Ma is more competent	0.87* (0.37)	0.96** (0.35)
Party Competence		
Cross-Strait relations	0.64† (0.33)	
Economic development	0.42(0.30)	
Reducing the gap between rich and poor	0.06(0.27)	
Resolving the problem of high property prices	0.18(0.28)	
Environmental protection	-0.39(0.27)	
Social welfare	0.23(0.26)	
Fighting corruption	0.14(0.27)	
Democratic reform	0.45† (0.27)	
Ethnic harmony	0.18(0.29)	
Raising our international status	0.30(0.29)	
Overall party competence		2.04*** (0.50)
Constant	-0.08(0.71)	0.21(0.65)
N	979	979
pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.792	0.785

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; †  $p < 0.10$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ,  
 \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Source: Chu (2012).

who assess the KMT as being more competent are more likely to vote for the KMT candidate. Meanwhile, candidate evaluation and party identification also have a significant influence on vote choice.

As mentioned above, the KMT and the DPP are more distinct on cross-Straits relations, economic development and political reform. We might find the evaluations of these three issues showing a significant influence on the vote choice. Indeed, the analysis in model 1 reveals that both cross-Straits relations and democratic reform are positively related to vote for KMT candidate. For a long time, the KMT has been viewed as the party better to handle cross-Straits relations and political stability. The DPP held a similar reputation as the party of democratic reform. The data confirms that these two issues, to some extent, are of importance in Taiwanese politics.

Scholars of voting behaviour have suggested that party identification, candidate factor and issues play roles in voting decision. It is probably not surprising that the analysis in Table 5 also confirms the arguments. Compared with independent and non-response voters, those who identify with the KMT are more likely to vote for the KMT candidate than the DPP, vice versa. Those who assess Ma Ying-jeou as having a better ability to manage most current and important problems tend to vote for him than vote for Tsai Ing-wen. The rest of the variables in the model did not yield any significant effect on the 2012 presidential vote choice.

## **6. Summary and Conclusion**

This paper has argued that party competence is important in understanding the 2012 presidential vote. It has demonstrated that the evaluations of party ability affect voters' voting consideration. The analysis reveals that the KMT enjoys an advantage on the cross-Straits relations, economic development, social welfare, fighting corruption, increasing country's international status, while the DPP has a reputation for reducing the gap between rich and poor, environmental protection and democratic reform. Based on the results from the binary model

analysis, political parties in Taiwan which gain ground on the cross-Strait relations and democratic reform contribute to its vote shares.

Overall, the KMT secured its reputation on issues of cross-Strait relations, economy, ethnic harmony, and the country's international status. By contrast, the DPP dominated on issues of environmental protection. While the KMT gained better assessment on issues of fighting corruption and social welfare, it failed to keep its advantage in reducing the gap between rich and poor.

On whether there is a steady issue ownership in Taiwanese politics there is still a need for more data to come to any conclusion. However, this paper demonstrates that party competence does yield an effect on vote choice. Party competence is significantly and positively related to voters' preference in the 2012 presidential vote.

## Notes

- \* Dr Chiung-chu Lin 林瓊珠 is Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at Soochow University, Taiwan. She received her Ph.D. in Government from University of Essex. Her research interests include party politics, voting behaviour, and public opinion. <Email: [clinf@scu.edu.tw](mailto:clinf@scu.edu.tw)>
1. There are two more parties won seats in the Legislative Yuan in the 2012 Legislative election, however, the Kuomintang (KMT) and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) together won more than 90 per cent of seats.
  2. Election Study Center, NCCU, Important Political Attitude Trend Distribution <<http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/modules/tinyd2/content/partyID.htm>> (accessed on 10/10/2013)
  3. The questionnaires were asked: I'd like to ask you what you think are the good and bad points about the two national parties: Is there anything in particular that you like about the Democratic Party? (If yes,) What is that? Anything else? Is there anything in particular that you don't like about the Democratic Party? (If yes,) What is that? Anything else? Is there anything in particular that you like about the Republican Party? (If yes,) What is that? Anything else? Is there anything in particular that you don't like about the Republican Party? (If yes,) What is that? Anything else?
  4. The coordinator of multi-year project TEDS is Professor Chi Huang (National Chengchi University). The principal investigator professor Yun-han Chu. The Election of National Chengchi University is responsible for

the data distribution. The author appreciates the assistance in providing data by the institute and individuals aforementioned. The author is alone responsible for views expressed herein.

5. Those with non-response answers are excluded in the analysis.
6. See “Golden 10-year” manifesto announced by Ma Ying-jeou’s and Tsai Ing-wen’s “Next 10-year manifesto”.

## References

- Baumer Donald C. and Howard J. Gold (1995), “Party Images and the American Electorate”, *American Politics Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 33-61.
- Brewer, Mark D. (2009), *Party Images in the American Electorate*, New York: Routledge.
- Campbell Angus, Gerald Gurin and Warren E. Miller (1954), *The Voter Decides*, Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson.
- Chen, Lu-huei, Ying-Nan Chen and Hsin-Hsien Wang (2012), “Economic Interest and Symbolic Attitudes: Analyzing the Dynamics of Taiwan Identity”, *Soochow Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 30, No. 3, pp. 1-50.
- Chu, Yuan-han (2008), “Taiwan’s Election and Democratization Study, 2005-2008(III): the Legislative Election, 2008(TEDS2008L)”, NSC 96-2420-H-002-025, Taipei: National Science Council Research Project Report.
- Chu, Yuan-han (2012), “Taiwan’s Election and Democratization Study, 2009-2012(III): the Survey of the Presidential and Legislative Elections, 2012(TEDS2012)”, NSC 100-2420-H-002-030, Taipei: National Science Council Research Project Report.
- Cover, Albert D. (1986), “Party Competence Evaluations and Voting for Congress”, *The Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 39, No. 2, pp. 304-312.
- Dalton, Russell J. (2004), *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices: The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Flanigan, William H. and Nancy H. Zingale (2006), *Political Behavior of the American Electorate*, 11th edition, CQ Press.
- Geer, John G.. (1991), “The Electorate’s Partisan Evaluation: Evidence of a Continuing Democratic Edge”, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 55, pp. 218-331.
- Hawang, Shioh-duan (1996), “The Importance of Candidate Images and Capabilities in Presidential Elections”, *Journal of Electoral Studies*, Vol. 3,

- No. 1, pp. 103-135.
- Holmberg, Sören (2003), "Are Political Parties Necessary?", *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 22, pp. 287-299.
- Klingemann, Hans-Dieter and Martin P. Wattenberg (1992), "Decaying Versus Developing Party System: A Comparison of Party Images in the United States and West Germany", *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 131-149.
- Lin, Chiung-chu (2006), "The Evolution of Party Images and Party System in Taiwan, 1992-2004", *East Asia*, Vol. 23., No.1, Spring, pp. 27-47.
- Lin, Chiung-chu (2012), "A Study of Party Members' Involvement and Incentives", paper presented at the *2012 Electoral System in Hong Kong and Macau and Democratic Governing*, Taipei. 18th June.
- Liu, Jia-wei, Su-Feng Cheng and Lu-Huei Chen (2009), "Image and Ability: the Candidate Factors in the 2008 Presidential Election", in Lu Huei Chen, Chin-shin Yu and Huang Chi (eds), *The 2008 Presidential Election: Critical Election of the Second Turnover*, Taipei: Wu-nan Publisher, pp. 235-258.
- Matthews, Donald R. and James W. Prothro (1966), *Negroes and the New Southern Politics*, New York, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.
- Mangum, Maruice (2012), "Party Competence Perceptions and the Party Identification of African Americans", *Party Politics*, March, pp. 1-18.
- McCann, James A. (1990), "Changing Electoral Contexts and Changing Candidate Images During the 1984 Presidential Campaign", *American Politics Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 2, pp. 123-140.
- Miller, Arthur H. and Ola Listhaug (1990), "Political Parties and Confidence in Government: A Comparison of Norway, Sweden and the United States", *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 20, No. 3, pp. 357-386.
- Petrocik, John R., William L. Benoit and Glenn J. Hensen (2003-4), "Issue Ownership and Presidential Campaigning, 1952-2000", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 118, No. 4, pp. 599-626.
- Pope, Jeremy C. and Jonathan Woon (2009), "Measuring Changes in American Party Reputations, 1939-2004", *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 62, No. 4, pp. 653-661.
- Rose, Richard and Ian McAllister (1990), *The Loyalties of Voters: A Lifetime Learning Model*, London: Sage Publications.
- Sanders, Arthur (1988), "The Meaning of Party Images", *Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 41, pp. 583-599.
- Schattschneider, E.E. (1942), *Party Government*, New York: Farrar and Rinehart.

- Sheng, Shing-Yuan and Chen Yih-Yan (2003), "Political Cleavage and Party Competition: An Analysis of the 2001 Legislative Yuan Election", *Journal of Electoral Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 7-40.
- Shyu, Huo-Yan (2005), "Cognitive Mobilization, Cultural Mobilization and Voting Behavior in Taiwan's 2004 Presidential Election: An Exploratory Study of Electoral Mobilization", *Taiwan Democracy Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 4, pp. 31-66.
- Trilling, Richard J. (1976), *Party Image and Electorate Behavior*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Wallas, Graham (1948), *Human Nature in Politics*, London: Constable.
- Webb, Paul (2000), *The Modern British Party System*, London: Sage Publications.

## Appendix

### A. Questionnaire Wording

#### Party Competence

Now we'd like to compare how well you think the KMT and DPP can handle some important problems.

1. On cross-Straits relations, how do the two parties compare?
2. On economic development, how do the two parties compare?
3. On reducing the gap between rich and poor, how do the two parties compare?
4. On resolving the problem of high property prices, how do the two parties compare?
5. On environmental protection, how do the two parties compare?
6. On social welfare, how do the two parties compare?
7. On fighting corruption, how do the two parties compare?
8. On democratic reform, how do the two parties compare?
9. On ethnic harmony, how do the two parties compare?

#### Party Identification

1. Among the main political parties in our country, including the KMT, DPP, PFP, NP, and TSU, do you think of yourself as leaning toward any particular party?
2. Do you feel yourself leaning a little more to one of the political parties than the others?
3. Which party is that?
4. Do you lean very strongly, somewhat, or just a little to this party?



### Unification/Independence Issue

Concerning the relationship between Taiwan and mainland China, which of the following six positions do you agree with: 1) immediate unification, 2) immediate independence, 3) maintain the status quo, and move toward unification in the future, 4) maintain the status quo, and move toward independence in the future, 5) maintain the status quo, decide either unification or independence in the future, 6) maintain the status quo forever

### Taiwanese/Chinese Identity

In Taiwan, some people think they are Taiwanese. There are also some people who think that they are Chinese. Do you consider yourself as Taiwanese, Chinese or both?

### Candidate Competence

1. During the presidential election campaign, many different problems faced by our country were raised. What do you think is the most important political problem facing Taiwan today?
2. Which presidential candidate do you think is most capable of dealing with it?

### B. The Descriptive Statistics of Party Competence Assessment

	<i>N</i>	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Cross-Strait relations	1654	-1	1	0.56	0.70
Economic development	1634	-1	1	0.42	0.75
Reducing the gap between rich and poor	1595	-1	1	-0.04	0.78
Resolving the problem of high property prices	1497	-1	1	-0.01	0.72
Environmental protection	1536	-1	1	-0.04	0.75
Social welfare	1601	-1	1	0.04	0.78
Fighting corruption	1609	-1	1	0.18	0.76
Democratic reform	1549	-1	1	-0.17	0.80
Ethnic harmony	1572	-1	1	0.28	0.76
Raising our international status	1563	-1	1	0.43	0.76

Source: Chu (2012).



## **Constitutional Implication of the 2012 Elections in Taiwan<sup>+</sup>**

Yujen Chou<sup>\*</sup>

*National Taipei University*

### **Abstract**

The year 2012 was the first jointly-held presidential and legislative elections since the Republic of China began the direct presidential election in 1996. The election outcomes not only reflect the influences of the new legislative electoral system amended by the seventh constitutional revision, but also the political impacts of the concurrent presidential and legislative elections on the constitutional operation. This paper will first illustrate the impacts of the 2012 legislative elections, and further assess the constitutional implication of the jointly-held presidential and legislative elections.

**Keywords:** *2012 presidential election, 2012 legislative election, constitutionalism, majority government, presidentialized system, rule by majority*

**JEL classification:** *D72, D78, H11, Z18*

### **1. Introduction**

In the 2005 constitution amendment, seats of the Legislative Yuan (LY) were halved from 225 to 113, which stipulates a single-district-two-votes system for legislative election. Voters could cast two ballots, one for a



district candidate and the other for a political party. Only those parties that acquire more than 5 per cent of the party vote can fill the seats.

According to Duverger's Laws, a plurality electoral system leads to two-party system and a coherent parliament and government; a proportional representation (PR) system leads to multi-party system.<sup>1</sup> Anthony Downs also argues that a "winner-take-all" election in a plurality system leads to two-party system.<sup>2</sup> The single constituency system reduces the number of effective parties.<sup>3</sup> It not only favours large parties, party that wins the legislative elections is also more likely to win the following presidential election.<sup>4</sup> If the presidential election and legislative elections are jointly-held or the former only slightly later than the latter, the possibility is also higher that party whose presidential candidate wins will also control the legislature.<sup>5</sup>

Legislative elections based on the single constituency system in Japan and the United Kingdom proved that the largest party won more seats than the votes it won. In 1996, for instance, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) won 38.6 per cent of the votes but 56.3 per cent of the seats in the Diet. The Labour Party won 43.2 per cent of the votes but 63 per cent of seats in the Lower House of the United Kingdom in 1997. Small parties had little chance to win under the single constituency system.

After the 2005 constitutional amendment in Taiwan, both the president and the legislator have four-year term. Legislative elections will precede the presidential election by only two to three months, unless the LY is dissolved in advance. In theory, a three-month time lag may produce a coattail effect or result in a "honeymoon election"<sup>6</sup>. This constitutional design therefore provides opportunity for the presidential election to influence the legislative election.

On January 2008, the KMT won 53.48 per cent of the votes for 78.08 per cent of the seats for single constituency legislators. The DPP won 38.65 per cent of the votes and won only 16.44 per cent of the seats. The PR system also did not favour small parties. Small parties can hardly cross the 5 per cent threshold.

On March 2008, voters chose Ma Ying-jeou of the KMT for a majority government which showed that the party that wins the legislative elections is more likely to win the following presidential

election. The coattail effect triumphs over the pendulum effect in the presidential election. The 2008 elections show that timing of the legislative and presidential elections may contribute to a majority government.<sup>7</sup> The likelihood of majority government will be higher than a minority one under the new constitutional design.

## **2. The 2012 Legislative Elections**

In 2012, Taiwan's presidential and legislature elections were held jointly. Although the voting rate for president declined from 76.33 per cent in 2008 to 74.38 per cent, the voting rate of legislature jumped up from 58.72 per cent in 2008 to 74.72 per cent. The KMT won the presidential election with 51.6 per cent of the vote; the DPP garnered 45.6 per cent. In the legislature, the KMT won 48 district seats (includes aboriginal legislators) with 48.18 per cent of the vote, the DPP 27 seats with 43.80 per cent, the People First Party (PFP) one seat, the Non-Party Alliance 2 seats, and one seat went to the independent. In the part of PR system, the KMT garnered 47.59 per cent of the party votes, and was allocated 16 seats; the DPP 36.98 per cent with 13 seats, the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) 8.82 per cent and 3 seats, and the PFP won 2 seats with 5.88 per cent. Among the 113 seats, the KMT maintained its majority with 64 seats.

The purpose of the 2005 constitutional revision that amended the legislative electoral system was as the following: moving towards the two-party political system, avoiding candidates from the same party to compete each other at one constituency, guiding winners to conduct moderate and mild manner, benefiting to an establishment of seniority in the legislature, and promoting qualifications of legislators so that the legislature's quality and legislative efficiency could be improved.<sup>8</sup> However, the new electoral system appeared some problems, including unequal values of votes in certain constituencies with wide population disparity, gap between percentage of votes and percentage of legislative seats too large to fully reflect the political reality, threshold of the PR legislator electoral system so high that small parties be suppressed, and smaller constituency narrowing legislators tantamount to the role of

local council members.<sup>9</sup> This paper will first illustrate the impacts of the 2012 legislature election, and then assess the constitutional implication of the jointly-held presidential and legislative elections.

### 3. Impacts of the New Legislative Electoral System

After the single constituency was adopted, although candidates from the same party compete at the primary, it becomes rare for a politician to break away from his/her party to compete in the formal election. Take the Eighth Legislature in 2012 as an example, candidates of the Pan-blue camp (including the KMT, the PFP, and the New Party) splitting from the KMT and attending the legislative election were few. The Pan-green camp appeared to be more united. Moreover, none of these candidates won.

In addition, small parties were almost wiped out from the Seventh legislative election in 2008. Among 113 seats, the PFP garnered only 1 seat, the Non-Party Alliance 3, and one for independent. In the 2012 election, the TSU and the PFP won only 3 seats, respectively, the Non-Party Alliance 2, and one for independent.

Take the formula of Markku and Taagepera for calculation.<sup>10</sup> The two party-plus systems existed from the Second to the Fourth Legislature, with two large political parties and one small. Since the legislature adopted the SNTV from 1992, small party and independent candidates had larger political space. Various political parties competed in the Fifth and Sixth Legislature. However, after the electoral system was amended in 2005, the space for small parties obviously shrunk, and it became difficult to form the third force<sup>11</sup>. This result is conformed to Shugart and Carey's arguments that single constituency system will reduce the number of effective political parties.

If the influences of former President Lee Teng-hui and former Governor James Soong failed to be remained in the coming legislature election, it will be more difficult for the TSU or the PFP to win the PR seats in the future legislature elections. Thereafter, Taiwan's political party system is quite possible to remain a two-party system under this new electoral system.

Finally, comparing the proportion of re-elected legislators from the Fourth to the Eighth Legislature, the percentage in the Seventh Legislature sharply increased because the legislature's total seats were halved. In terms of district legislators, the percentage of re-elected in the Eighth Legislature obviously went up to 65.75 per cent. Overall, the new electoral system gives an edge to incumbent district legislators in seeking re-election; and this should be helpful in establishing seniority in the legislature.

Generally speaking, the new legislative electoral system, to some extent, has moved Taiwan towards a two-party system. Taiwan's experiences prove Duverger's Laws and Anthony Downs' arguments that a plurality system leads to two-party system. However, what we are more concern is the constitutional implication of the concurrent presidential election and legislature election under the new legislative electoral system.

#### **4. Constitutional Implication of the 2012 Concurrent Elections**

In the 2005 constitutional revisions, the tenure of a legislature was extended from three to four years. In the past, the difference between the presidential tenure (4 years) and the legislature's tenure (3 years) resulted in the gap between both elections. From the first direct Presidential election in 1996 to the one in 2008, the biggest gap between both elections was 2 years and 8 months, and the least one was 2 months and 10 days. (See Table 1)

With a higher importance, the presidential election becomes a battlefield for political parties to mobilize all resources and manpower. Between 2000 and 2008, the turnout for the presidential election is about 16 per cent to 21 per cent higher than that of the legislative elections. However, the turnout of 2012 district legislative elections rise about 16 per cent.

In addition, in a view of split voting, the jointly-held elections may undermine the inclination of split voting, and make the results of presidential election and legislative elections more convergent. The turnout of the legislative elections was raised to 74.72 per cent in 2012

**Table 1** Schedules and Turnouts for Presidential and Legislative Elections

Time for presidential elections	Ninth 1996.03.23	Tenth 2000.03.18	Eleventh 2004.03.20	Twelfth 2008.03.22	Thirteenth 2012.01.14
Turnout for presidential elections (1)	76.04%	82.69%	80.28%	76.33%	74.38%
Time for legislative elections	Fourth 1998.12.05	Fifth 2001.12.01	Sixth 2004.12.11	Seventh 2008.01.12	Eighth 2012.01.14
Turnout for legislative elections (2)	68.31%	66.31%	59.35%	58.72%	74.72%
Gap of voting days	2 years, 8 months, and 13 days	1 year, 8 months, and 13 days	8 months and 21 days	2 months and 10 days	None
(1) – (2)	7.73%	16.38%	20.93%	17.61%	–0.34%

Note: The turnouts for the legislative elections consist of district legislators only.

Source: Chou Yujen, Liu Jia-wei and Li Chia-wei (2012: 23).

from 58.72 per cent in 2008, approximately 16 per cent in a rise. Overall, the vote for KMT district legislators was 5.3 per cent lesser than that of the previous election, and 5.15 per cent in increase for the DPP.

Compare the turnouts of the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections, the KMT experienced a setback in 6.85 per cent, and the DPP increased by 4.08 per cent. Without the interference of Chen Shui-bian's scandals, the results in the district election between the pan-blue and pan-green camps moved closer (49.62% : 43.8%).

A comparison of four presidential elections and four legislative elections between 2000 and 2012 discovers that the closer these two elections were held, the lesser of split voting became. In 2008, these two elections were held in an interval of two months and its coattail effect was quite obvious.<sup>12</sup> In 2012, the differences in the votes for these two elections for both the KMT and the DPP were reduced to a record low (see Table 2), with 3.42 per cent for the KMT and even as low as 1.8 per cent for the DPP. The Pan-blue camp might appear in split during the presidential election in 2012, but James Soong of the PFP garnered merely 2.77 per cent of the vote. The PFP received only 1.33 per cent votes in the district legislative elections, proving that the Pan-blue camp supporters did not split their votes in the presidential election or the legislature district election. However, in the PR legislators, thanks to the charismas of former president Lee Teng-hui and former governor James Soong, both camps obviously split their votes with the PFP gaining 5.49 per cent vote and two seats, while 9.57 per cent for the TSU to grasp three seats.

The PFP and the TSU had once been quite active between 2000 and 2004, so voters had more options in voting. After the new electoral system was introduced in 2008, small political parties were almost wiped out from the political arena, limiting choices of voters in split voting. With regard to the presidential elections, if excluding the 2004 presidential election which was probably affected by the March 19 Shooting Incident, the vote for the Pan-blue camp after 2000 was between 51.6 per cent and 59.94 per cent, and figures for the Pan-green camp were between 39.3 per cent and 45.6 per cent at the same period of time. In 2008 when the DPP was in deep trouble because of the Chen Shui-bian scandal, its seats in the legislature significantly dropped to 27, less than a quarter of 113. Nonetheless, its presidential candidate still enjoyed 41.55 per cent vote. By excluding the Chen Shui-bian cause, the



**Table 2** Percentages of Votes for Political Parties between 2000 and 2012

		Presidential Election in 2000; Legislative Elections in 2001	2004	2008	2012
Gap between two elections		1 year, 8 months, and 13 days	8 months and 21 days	2 months and 10 days	None
KMT	Percentage of vote for Presidential Elections (1)	23.1	49.89	58.45	51.6
	Percentage of vote for district Legislative Elections (2)	28.6	32.83	53.48	48.18
	(1) – (2)	–5.5	17.06	4.97	3.42
DPP	Percentage of vote for Presidential Elections (1)	39.3	50.11	41.55	45.6
	Percentage of vote for district Legislative Elections (2)	33.4	35.72	38.65	43.8
	(1) – (2)	5.9	14.39	2.9	1.8
PFP	Percentage of vote for Presidential Elections (1)	36.84	0	0	2.77
	Percentage of vote for district Legislative Elections (2)	18.6	13.9	0.02	1.33
	(1) – (2)	18.24	–13.9	–0.02	1.44
TSU	Percentage of vote for Presidential Elections (1)	0	0	0	0
	Percentage of vote for district Legislative Elections (2)	7.8	7.79	0.96	0
	(1) – (2)	–7.8	–7.79	–0.96	0

Source: Chou Yujen, Liu Jia-wei and Li Chia-wei (2012: 28).

vote basis for the Pan-blue and Pan-green camps in both elections was roughly maintained at 55:45.

The ruling party KMT won in both the 2012 presidential election and legislature election, which allows President Ma to organize a majority government again and which seems should strengthens his power over the government through participation in government's political procedure.

Ginsburg argued that the constitutional design matters in determining the locus of political power.<sup>13</sup> According to the Republic of China (ROC) Constitution, "the Executive Yuan (EY, cabinet) shall be the highest administrative organ of the State" (Article 53) and therefore, the premier shall be the head of the government. Like the design in parliamentary system, the cabinet "shall be responsible to the Legislative Yuan (LY)" (Article 57) and the President shall, in accordance with law, promulgate laws and issue mandates with the counter-signature of the premier (Article 37). These Articles rules that the ROC Constitution does not authorize real or independent power to the President. However, since the Constitution was put into effect in 1947, the leaders of the majority party in the LY chose to serve as President rather than premier, and therefore, shifted the political power from premier to the President. In other words, constitutionalism seems not realized in Taiwan since 1947.

"Constitutionalism means that the power of government is limited ... A constitution is also a blueprint, a written description of who does what in government, defining the authority and limiting the powers of each branch.<sup>14</sup> However, Duverger argues that there was a disjunct between formal power and informal power in the assignment of presidential powers in Europe. He argued that informal powers were more important than formal powers.<sup>15</sup> Before 1990 in Taiwan, the President's informal political power was promoted through controlling the ruling party and its members in the EY and LY.

Since 1991, the ROC's Constitution has undergone amendments for seven times. The 1992 revision ruled that the President shall be elected by the people. The 1997 amendment adopted a revised dual-executive system and the President is authorized the power to appoint the premier

without the confirmation by the LY. However, according to the Additional Articles, the premier remains the head of government and still should be responsible to the LY rather than to the president.

Although the 1997 amendment designs a so-called “dual-executive” system of government, the President only has the appointment power of the premier and has no power to participate in government’s normal political procedure.<sup>16</sup> The President can only indirectly influence the operation of the cabinet through the premier. Most people take it for granted that the popularly elected President should be authorized real power to implement his political views and the premier he appointed should be the administrative CEO of the President.<sup>17</sup> Robert Elgie mentioned that one of the disadvantages of semi-presidentialism is that the directly elected president could encourage the rise of populist and autocratic leaders who felt that they had the legitimacy to act above the rule of law.<sup>18</sup> However, French experience shows that if a popularly elected President does not control the parliament majority, to assure that the cabinet is responsible to the legislature, he will ask the majority party in the National Assembly to form a cabinet. In other words, even the President enjoys constitutional power to appoint a premier, he also needs to consider his constitutional obligations that whether the premier he appointed could fulfil his constitutional role, that is, to be responsible to the legislature and play the role of the head of the government.

The constitutional practice after 1997 in Taiwan seems not follow the rule of constitution. Taiwan’s Constitution made it possible for the president to control government behind the scenes through appointment of the premier and his role as the leader of the ruling party.<sup>19</sup> In both majority and minority government periods, the President tried to control the government which made Taiwan’s political system more presidentialized. The 2000-2008 minority governments in Taiwan witnessed a period of policy paralysis and confusion<sup>20</sup>. Although President Chen tried to control the government through appointing premier, the division of executive and legislative powers between the ruling DPP and the opposition KMT “engendered political gridlock”.<sup>21</sup>

At the beginning of his term, President Ma faithfully obeyed the Constitution by letting his premier take charge of administration. Before

assuming office, Ma once said, “Since there is the “dual-executive” system stipulated in the constitution of the ROC, I will retreat to the second line.”<sup>22</sup> Moreover, he preferred to be the president of all the people rather than of his party alone. He therefore refused to be the chairman of the ruling Kuomintang at the beginning. One result is conflict between the legislature and the administration. For example, the Kuomintang lawmakers vetoed the vice-president and three members of the Control Yuan nominated by President Ma. Relations between President Ma and the Kuomintang legislative caucus have improved later, however. A series of serious problems arising from the worldwide financial crisis forced Ma to face the challenges as the chief executive rather than to remain a constitutionally figurehead president. President Ma becomes more powerful since he won the re-election in 2012. He not only exercise his power on defence, foreign affairs and mainland China affairs that constitutionally authorizes to the President, but also extended his power into economic affairs and other domestic affairs which constitutionally should be commanded by the premier.<sup>23</sup>

Taiwan’s experiences showed that a popularly elected President with limited constitutional power become a powerful president through appointment of the premier. The President therefore replaced the premier as the head of government and the President’s political power is no longer constrained by the constitution.

According to the analysis above, the jointly-held elections raised the turnout for the legislative elections, and the victory of the KMT presidential candidate also helped the victory of KMT legislative candidates, leading to the KMT majority in the legislature. The reduction of split-voting also facilitated the convergence of the votes in the presidential and legislative elections, which in turn helped in creating a majority government. Therefore, under the new legislative electoral system and the jointly-held elections, chance for minority government will be reduced. Furthermore, under the rule of majority government, the President with limited constitutional power would become powerful which goes beyond the rule of the constitution and the spirits of constitutionalism.

Finally, when a political party simultaneously holds executive and legislative powers, theoretically, it is helpful in promoting legislative efficiency. Most people think that decisions in the Legislature are dominated by majority; however, that is not the case under the inter-party negotiating system in Taiwan. Whenever there is controversy, any caucus could prevent a vote even after a month of negotiations. The negotiating system was established in 1999 which was designed to fasten the passage of legislation. The caucus members have the power to set the agenda for bills review. Under this system, all bills should be signed by all caucus members before reviewing and voting. As a result, even though the ruling party enjoys majority in the legislature, it still could not dominate the agenda or realize its majority vantage by voting. For example, before the Eighth Legislature 3rd regular session in 2013 ended at the end of May, no any major bills were passed. In addition, though “the Executive Yuan has the duty to present to the Legislative Yuan a statement of its administrative policies and a report on its administration.” (Article 57), Premier Jiang Yi-huah’s statement to the LY in the 4th session of 2013 was boycotted again and again by the opposition party for six times in one month.

For the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), the KMT government claimed that scope of the review of the ECFA by the LY should be limited to prevent modification of the agreement. For the executive branch, the LY should only engage in “wholesale review” and accept or reject the ECFA in its entirety rather than modify individual clauses. The opposition DPP argued for clause by clause review which allows possible amendment of each clause. In inter-party negotiation, Speaker Wang Jin-pyng suggested to allow ECFA to be reviewed clause by clause, but be voted on as a whole.<sup>24</sup> Although the ECFA was passed finally, the cross-strait service trade agreement faced the same challenge in the LY. The DPP insisted clause by clause review and vote by clause, but the ruling party accepted “wholesale review” and “wholesale vote” only. Under the opposition’s continuous boycotts, it’s hard to tell when this agreement will be passed.

As a whole, even the ruling party controlled more than half seats in the LY, under the boycotts of the oppositional caucus by inter-party

negotiations; the majority government could not assure the efficiency in the LY and fulfilled its will. The basic principle of “rule by majority” in representative democracy failed to be realized in Taiwan’s LY.

## **5. Conclusion**

There are three findings in this article. First, jointly-held presidential and legislative elections helped elevate the turnout for the legislative elections. As long as wins the Presidency, the chance for a majority government will be increased. Second, the chance that a minority government will become lower means that Taiwan’s constitutional system will be presidentialized even though the Constitution did not authorized the president real power to involve in government’s normal political procedure. Third, constrained by party negotiation mechanism in the LY, ability for the majority government to control legislative agenda is still limited.

The jointly-held presidential and legislative elections showed that concurrent election will make majority government more possible and the President will become more powerful in the operation of government, which challenges the constitutional role of the premier. The role of premier to be the head of the government was weakened and his responsibility to the LY was also deteriorated. Nevertheless, a powerful president still could not realize his will through his control over the LY owing to the boycotts of party negotiating mechanism in the LY.

Taiwan’s experience highlights the fact that concurrent presidential and legislative elections may contributed to the presidentialization of the dual-executive system, which will challenge the spirits of constitutionalism. Nevertheless, the majority government will be unable to dominate the policy-making process if the legislature failed to follow the basic principle of representative democracy, that is, rule by majority. It is obvious that concurrent presidential and legislature elections could not guarantee an efficient and workable majority government.

## Notes

<sup>+</sup> The author would like to express his appreciation to Jia-wei Liu, Associate Professor, Department of Public Administration and Policy, National Taipei University and Chia-wei Li, Senior Assistant Research Fellow, National Policy Foundation, for their assistance to get together related data.

<sup>\*</sup> Dr Yujen Chou 周育仁 is a full Professor (1994) in the Department of Public Administration and Policy at National Taipei University (NTPU) since 1990. He was chair of this Department (2006-2008), Convener of the Program of Human Resources Development in Public Sector and Civil Society (2007-2008) and Dean of the College of Public Affairs (2009-2012) of the NTPU. He is also Fellow (since 2000) and Deputy Convener (since 2008) of the Constitutional and Legal Section in the National Policy Foundation as well as Secretary-General of World League for Freedom and Democracy (WLFD) (since 2012). He was elected president of the Chinese Association of Political Science (2008-2009). His research interests include political economy, executive-legislative relationship, and Taiwan's politics. His publications include contributions to *Issues & Studies*, *Chinese Political Science Review* and the *Journal of National Development*. <Email: elites@ms17.hinet.net>

1. M.A. Duverger (1986), "M. Duverger's Law: Forty Years Later", in Bernard Grofman and Arend Lijphart (eds), *Electoral Laws and Their Political Consequence*, New York: Agathon Press, p. 70.
2. A. Downs (1967), *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, New York: Harper & Row, p. 124.
3. Matthew Soberg Shugart and John M. Carey (1992), *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitution Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 18-27; M.S. Shugart (1995), "The Electoral Cycle and Institution Source of Divided Presidential Government", *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 89, No. 2, pp. 327-343; A. Lijphart (1994), *Electoral Systems and Party Systems: A Study of Twenty Seven Democracies, 1945-1990*, Oxford University Press, pp. 102-112.
4. Su-feng Cheng, Lu-huei Chen and Jia-wei Liu (2005), "The Candidate Factor in Taiwan's 2004 Presidential Election", *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 32.
5. Chia-lung Lin (2000), "Semi-presidentialism, Multi-Party System and Unstable Democracy", in Lin Jih-wen (ed.), *Political Institutions*, Taipei: Academia Sinica, p. 196; Hong-ming Chen and Jung-Hsiang Tsai (2008),



- “Impact of the Electoral Cycles on Government Formation in Semi-presidentialism: A Comparative Study”, *Soochow Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 26, No. 2, p. 120; Yu-chung Shen (2005), “Relationship between the Executive and the Legislative under the Condition of Institutions: A Case Study of Taiwan’s Constitutional Framework after 1997”, *Taiwanese Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 23, pp. 51-52.
6. Jih-wen Lin (2006), “Power Division, Voting Rule, and Party System: What Do We See When They Are Considered Together?”, *Journal of Electoral Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2, p. 9.
  7. Yujen Chou (2006), “Impacts of Legislative Reform on Taiwan’s Political Party System”, in Chen Wen-sow (ed.), *Beijing Taiwan Study Forum, Vol. 1. – The Retrospect and Prospect of Development on Taiwan’s Political Party Politics*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong Social Science Publisher, p. 116.
  8. See Huang Teh-fu, Yang Chun-chih, and Nien-Hsia Liu (2001), “Contending Discussions on Reform of the Legislative Electoral System and the Constitutional Revision” (in Chinese), Research Paper of the Interior Division in the National Policy Foundation <<http://old.npf.org.tw/PUBLICATION/IA/090/IA-R-090-096.htm>>; Shih Cheng-feng (2002), “Thoughts on the Reform of the Electoral System” (in Chinese), paper delivered at Conference on Vision for Taiwan after Elections, held in Taipei on 12th January 2002; Hsu Yung-ming (2004), “Reform in the Legislative Electoral System and Normalization of the Legislative Yuan” (in Chinese), *Journal of Forum on Taiwan New Century*, No. 27, pp. 108-110; Wang Yeh-lih (1996), *Political Impact of Electoral Systems in Taiwan* (in Chinese), Taipei: Wu-Nan Culture Enterprise; Lin Jih-wen (1999), “The Single District-Two Votes System and Reform of the Electoral System” (in Chinese), *Journal of Forum on Taiwan New Century*, No. 6, pp. 69-79.
  9. See Lin Cho-shui (2012), *Ending Chaos: The White Paper on Reform of the Legislative Yuan* (in Chinese), Taipei: the Taiwan Think Tank.
  10. The effective formula for the number of political parties is  $N_s = 1/\sum P_i^2$ , with  $s$  representing seats of each political party, and  $P_i$  the ratio of each political party in the Legislative Yuan. When the number of effective political parties in the Legislature is between 1.25-1.75 represents the one-party system; between 1.75-2.25 for the two-party system, between 2.25-2.75 for the existence of two large and one small political parties (alliance), and 2.75 for the multi-party system. See M. Laakso and R. Taagepera (1979), “Effective Number of Parties: A Measure with Application to West Europe”, *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 12, pp. 3-27.



11. Yujen Chou, Liu Jia-wei and Li Chia-wei (2012), "Effects of 2012 Presidential and Legislative Elections on Constitutional and Political Systems", *Taiwan Development Perspective*, p. 18.
12. On the coattail effect and the study on correlation between the Presidential and legislative elections, see Lin Chia-lung (2000), "Semi-Presidentialism, Multi-Party System, and Unstable Democracy", in Lin Jih-wen (ed.), *On Political System* (in Chinese), Research Center for Humanities and Social Sciences of the Academia Sinica, p. 196; Chen Hong-Ming and Tsai Jung-Hsiang (2008), "Impact of the Electoral Cycles on Government Formation in Semi-presidentialism: A Comparative Study", *The Soochow Journal of Political Science* (in Chinese), Vol. 26, No. 2, p. 120; Shen Yu-chung (2005), "Relationship between the Executive and the Legislative under the Condition of Institutions: A Case Study of Taiwan's Constitutional Framework after 1997", *Political Science Review* (in Chinese), Vol. 23, pp. 51-52; Lin Jih-wen (2006), "Power Division, Voting Rule, and Party System: What Do We See When They Are Considered Together?", *Journal of Electoral Studies* (in Chinese), Vol. 13, No. 2, p. 9; M.S. Shugart and J.M. Carey (1992), *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitution Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; M.S. Shugart (1995), "The Electoral Cycle and Institution Source of Divided Presidential Government", *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 89, No. 2, pp. 327-343; A. Lijphart (1994), *Electoral Systems and Party Systems: A Study of Twenty Seven Democracies, 1945-1990*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 102-112.
13. T. Ginsburg (2005), "Constitutional Choices in Taiwan: The Implications of Recent Global Trends", paper delivered at the International Conference on Constitutional Reengineering in New Democracies – Taiwan and the World, 28th-29th October, Constitutional Reform Promotion Panel, Office of President, Taipei, p. 223.
14. M.G. Roskin, R.L. Cord, J.A. Medeiros and W.S. Jones (2010), *Political Science: An Introduction*, 11th edition, New York: Pearson Education, Inc, pp. 81-82.
15. M.A. Duverger (1980), "New Political System Model: Semi-Presidential Government", *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 8, No. 2. pp. 165-187.
16. Tzung-Jen Tsai (2005), "The Choice of Government System in Taiwan's Constitutional Reform: On the Role of Presidency", paper delivered at the International Conference on Constitutional Reengineering in New Democracies – Taiwan and the World, 28th-29th October, Constitutional

- Reform Promotion Panel, Office of President, Taipei, pp. 267-288.
17. For example, Shen argued that “The legitimacy of the president to lead the government comes from direct election”. (Yu-chung Shen (2012), “Presidentialized Semi-presidentialism in Taiwan: View of Party Politics and Institutional Norms”, in *Democracy and Development – Taiwan and the Baltic Countries in Comparative Perspective*, Proceedings and Materials of the International Conference on 27th-28th April, held in Riga, Latvia. p. 79.
  18. R. Elgie (1999), *Semi-Presidentialism in Europe*, New York: Oxford University Press, p. 16.
  19. Yu-tzung Chang, Yu-han Chu and Min-hua Huang (2011), “Procedural Quality Only? Taiwanese Democracy Reconsidered”, *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 32, No. 5, pp. 598-619.
  20. Y.-S. Wu (2007), “Taiwan’s Developmental State after the Economic and Political Turmoil”, *Asian Survey*, Vol. 47, No. 6, pp. 977-1001.
  21. John Copper (2003), “Taiwan: Consolidating Its Democracy?”, *China: An International Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 326-338.
  22. Duh-ching Swei (2012), “Retrospection and Prospect of Constitutional Rule in 2012 Interaction among President, Cabinet, and Legislature”, *Taiwan Development Perspective*, p. 128.
  23. Yujen Chou (2012), “Constitutional Reforms and Constitutionalism in Taiwan”, in *Democracy and Development – Taiwan and the Baltic Countries in Comparative Perspective*, Proceedings and Materials of the International Conference on 27th-28th April, held in Riga, Latvia. pp. 70-71.
  24. Jerome A. Cohen and Yu-Jie Chen (2010), “ECFA and Taiwan’s Political System”, *South China Morning Post*, 7th July.





## **The Government Performance System Reform in Taiwan: Localized Focus and Citizen Participation<sup>+</sup>**

Eric Rong-yang **Huang**<sup>\*</sup>  
*Chinese Culture University*  
Chun-yuan **Wang**<sup>\*\*</sup>  
*Central Police University*  
Yan-yi **Chang**<sup>\*\*\*</sup>  
*Chung Hua University*

### **Abstract**

The relations between local governments and citizens have grown increasingly closer in the past two decades. Several governmental performance reforms have taken place among developed countries that have mainly increased their local governance capacity by expanding citizen participation and deregulating the central government. However, in light of citizens' expectations and requirements, it is necessary for local governments to adopt performance management efforts to enhance their public services. From 25th December 2010, the new five municipalities in Taiwan have brought new challenges to local governance and also to their performance management. This study attempts to understand the current status of performance management in Taiwanese local governments. The study used a focus group, in-depth interviews, and a survey to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. Based on the results, it provides policy recommendations to improve citizens' participation in Taiwan's local governmental performance management efforts. They include providing incentives for encouraging





people to participate in performance measurement and weigh civil participation while designing the performance management mechanism.

**Keywords:** *performance management, local government, citizen participation, performance information, competitiveness*

**JEL classification:** *H11, H70, H73, H83*

## 1. Introduction

In response to globalization and new public policy issues, developed countries have embarked on deregulation and encouraged citizen participation to improve the capacity of governments. It is important for governments to comprehend the values of civil society in order to build a foundation for better governance. Thus, the modern government should not only focus on the public's demand by providing efficient and quality public services, but also enforce its decision-making and policy-execution abilities in order to integrate a network with the private sector in terms of industry development, public security, quality of life, environmental protection, social welfare and etc. By improving its services, governments can develop a higher reputation among the public. Accordingly, performance management action and process is a useful tool for monitoring and evaluating effectiveness and results of government performance.

The current performance management system of Taiwan government was implemented since 2002.<sup>1</sup> For the implementation of good governance and promoting government competitiveness, ROC Executive Yuan has adopted transparency, accountability, public participation and effectiveness as four principles of establishment of governance performance management mechanism. Using the "Government Performance Management network" (GPMnet) to promote effective governance in the ministries level of government (Huang *et al.*, 2013: 3). In general, the issues of performance management in public sector among academics and practitioners in Taiwan has begun from the concept and system design, and then gradually transferred its focus to



measurement process, indicators establishment and relevant implementation problems (Hu, 2011: 10). However, compare the results of governmental performance measurement with how people feel them remain a tangible gap. As Goodsell (2006) argues, the ultimate aim of government policy is to establish and maintain public confidence to the government, that is, public trust. On account of local governance enhance direct impression of public to the government; Recently, ROC government has tried to extend citizens' participation in improving public governance, particularly on county/city level.

## 2. Citizen Involves Performance Management in the Public Sector

As Osborne and Gaebler (1992) argue in *Reinventing Government*, people cannot foresee success or failure if they do not evaluate performance of their actions. In general, the values of new public management (NPM) are deeply influenced by the private sector. Performance management is the process of tracking organizational performance so that an organization can achieve its mission. It targets organizations, not their members (Monaghan and Ball, 1993). In a sense, performance management is obviously more than performance evaluation - which merely has its "control" function in terms of management.

As an important management tool for the private sector, performance management is the same as the return on management (ROM), which is the ratio of values produced to the effort of management (Simmons and Davila, 1998). The active effect is to unite the objectives of the individuals and the organization in order to have an effect on the individual actors.

As Heinrich (2002) has argued, the results-oriented performance management at all levels of government has increased the activities of performance evaluation, however, problems remain in the public sector, such as those related to mechanism design. One of the critical problems is "accountability". Indeed, a governmental performance evaluation system should consider the characteristics of the public sector mainly because of the conflicting nature of performance evaluation compare to

the private sector. It should apply multiple indices, including the dimensions of policy execution (tangible and intangible), and reflect the interests of all stakeholders (politicians, managers, capitals, providers, buyers, and consumers) (Van Thiel and Leeuw, 2002). Sanger (2008) argues that performance evaluation has a notable effect on the stakeholders, including the public and politicians, who should understand how to meet public demands and consider if their policy proposals may conform to these political demands. All these factors are believed to be able to maximize the political interest of politicians.

Due to the transformation of managerial style in the past 30 years, the so-called “localization” has become important part of governance (Goss, 2001; Leach and Percy-Smith, 2001). Robertson (1992) argued that local government and civil social organizations are more capable than other levels of government in responding to the challenges of globalization because local governments engage more closely with the public, discussing problems, reflecting environmental changes rapidly, and meeting demands. Therefore, a responsive government will provide local governance with a more spacious territory.

Since the 1980s, performance management exercise has been widely adopted in practice. For example, in the UK, Public Service Agreements (PSAs) were adopted in 1998, offering a promise of the public services that will be provided. Under the terms of the *Local Government Act* passed in 1999, all local governments are required to formulate a Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) as part of the PSA. This mechanism has largely emphasizes the role of citizen participates in government performance measurement (Huang *et al.*, 2013).

Wichowsky and Moynihan’s (2008) work explain how performance evaluation excludes citizens. After examined the Program Assessment Ratings Tool (PART) of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), they conclude civic spirit has long been excluded from the evaluation system. Wichowsky and Moynihan demonstrate that performance evaluation does not conflict with citizens’ rights, and argue government performance reflect and incorporate policy-planning and execution in civil life.

Heikkila and Isett (2007) argued that it is difficult to promote citizen participation in policy-making, which requires reconciling different kinds of citizen opinions and participation. Huang and Wang (2012) have tried to study on how citizens participate in performance management decisions. They using discussions among a focus group conducted in research, then, categorized several ideas that might be useful to the research: (1) collect opinions about the performance standard from the citizens; (2) improve the process of evaluation management in order to improve more citizen participation; and (3) more efficiently communicate with citizens about performance knowledge.

The link between government performance management and citizen participation has been identified in the past decade (Holzer and Yang, 2004; Yang and Holzer, 2006). According to Tong-Len Hu (2007), the expansion of public participation is by all means what the public expected – namely in terms of active participation and the chance to engage in co-planning. Hu suggested “government performance management led by citizens” as one way to transfer the authority of evaluation from the government to citizens. In this way, leadership is returned to the public in order to establish the value of citizen-centred public services.

However, some limits to citizen participation do exist in performance management. For example, including public opinions in performance decisions requires assuming that citizens will care about local governmental decisions. Yet, members of focus group in Huang’s research realized that not everyone is interested in policy decision-making. Citizens who do participate are probably not representative of the community. Moreover, people who participate in the process may not want to spend much time on policy-making (Heikkila and Isett, 2007).

### **3. Empirical Research and Selected Findings**

Support by the Research, Development, and Evaluation Commission (RDEC), the Executive Yuan, ROC. Huang, Wang and Chang (2013) had conducted a large-scale empirical research to Taiwanese governmental



performance management system. The study included interviews, focus group seminars and questionnaires survey. In-depth interviewing conducted in 11 sessions with 29 people from five municipalities, county-city governments, and central governments in Taiwan. The interviewees were asked about the performance evaluation system, the challenges they have confront, the link between policy execution and budget, what performance evaluations should consider, how the performance index should be established, and how the results of a performance evaluation can engage citizens.

The research also conducted three “focus group seminars” with totally 16 individual members from the central government, municipalities and county-city governments, and auditing departments as well as scholars in the fields of local government management, regional development, and performance management in public sector. Finally, Huang and his colleagues (2013) use questionnaires method to collect opinions from the populations represented include 488 first-level departments in 22 municipals and county (city) governments. Every department was sent two questionnaires: one to the director or vice director of the department and the other to its administrator. This resulted in 976 questionnaires being sent. Within three weeks, 689 had been returned, yielding a return rate of 70.59 per cent. Of these, 45 were not usable: 10 were incomplete and 35 were default answers. This left 644 usable questionnaires, which is a return rate of 65.98 per cent.

The research concludes with some findings selected as below:

First of all, the qualitative information suggests that local government performance evaluation systems and central government units would show differences in targets and project channel of policies, financial sources stability and methods of performance evaluation. Table 1 depicts the results of the opinions of the respondents. The contents of the interview also indicate that the heads of some local governments focus only on immediate results and the reflection of public voices. The performance reflected by the implementation of the government policies receives less attention. Some respondents from city/county governments even insisted that the performance management evaluation was just for show. Nevertheless, a majority of the respondents declared that the

performance management evaluation remains mandatory for the local government.

**Table 1** Qualitative Analysis for Performance Evaluation

Code of respondents Opinion expressed	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1. Differential targets and project channels of policies between central and local governments	V	V	V		V	V	V		V		V
2. Differential financial and resource stability between central and local governments	V	V		V	V				V		
3. Differential methods of performance evaluation between central and local governments	V		V	V			V				

Source: Authors.

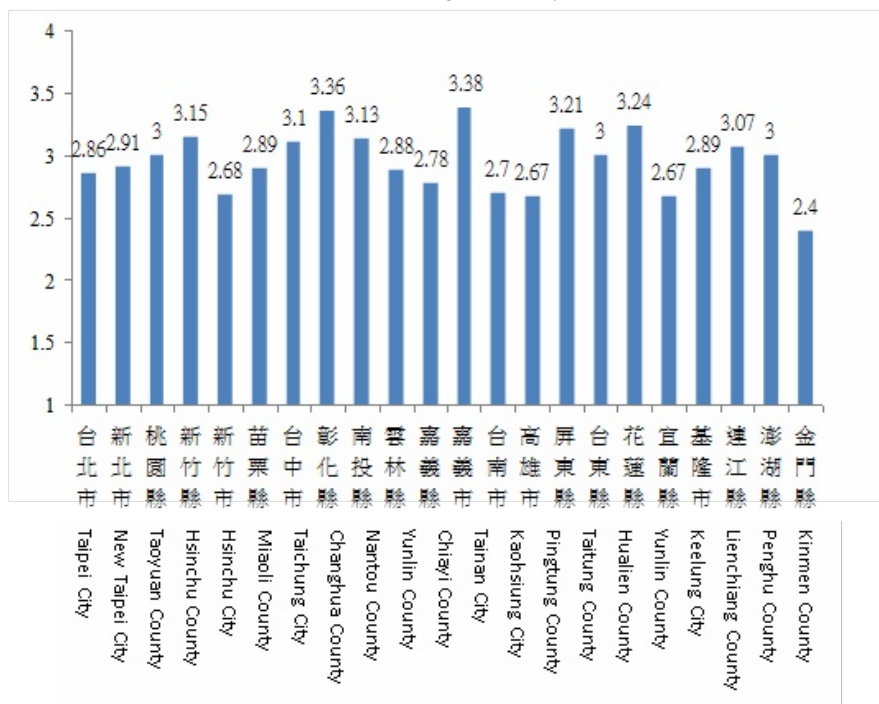
As Table 1 indicates, many local governments held that their performance management evaluation systems show quite a few differences with the comparable systems of the central government. This point is worth noting when promoting a performance management mechanism. Among the 11 respondents (A to K) interviewed, only eight believed that the central and local governments would show different channels in the political targets and formation of the programmes. Five stated that the central and local governments show different financial and resource stability. Four interviewees predicted that the central and local governments would show different types of performance management. Such an influence would, therefore, be shown in the local governments' awareness of the link to performance management

evaluation and would present multiple styles.

The contents of the interview indicate that the heads of some local governments focus only on immediate results and the reflection of public voices. The performance reflected by the implementation of the government policies receives less attention.

Secondly, the tests suggest that different regions have different viewpoints to implementation of the performance management evaluation and the enhancement of the business operation. Among them, the performance management evaluations implemented in central and southern Taiwan were better than those implemented in 5 municipalities.

**Figure 1** The Average of the Operation That Can Be Improved under Current Performance Management Systems



Source: Authors.

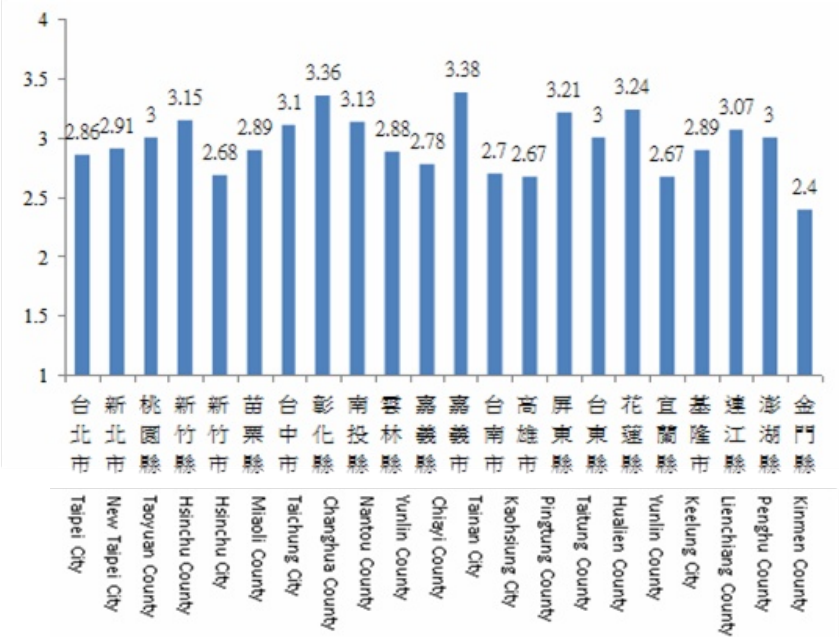
Figure 1 shows that among municipal and county (city) governments, Changhua County scores the highest average value; thus, its provisional system shows the most improvement in business operations. Changhua County is followed by Chiayi City. Given the documented analyses conducted by our study team members and the information and data from the Changhua County representatives, we see that these two municipality governments are currently utilizing government performance management evaluation systems. Interestingly enough, our study team members determined that both Tainan City Government and Kinmen County Government have accomplished integral performance management evaluation systems, rules, and regulations, yet these governments scored lowest on average. The qualitative information and data also presented the equivalent causes, including the belief that “the law alone cannot be enforceable” or that the prevailing systems, rules, and regulations indeed fail to reflect the substantial needs. Another possibility also emerged: These governments had relatively few respondents.

In addition, a majority of the municipal and county (city) governments are still looking forward to establishing government performance management evaluation systems. Figure 2 gives the average values of future enhancement in business operations held by respondents about the performance management.

Thirdly, the outcomes of statistical analysis indicated different duties in organizations and different viewpoints about the performance management. It indicates that the department heads and deputy heads show more confidence in the performance management evaluation systems than their subordinates, who believe that the function that could be demonstrated by government performance management evaluation systems is too low.

The research then conducted a data analysis using questionnaire surveys. It identifies five key points or key items including “organizational competence”, “financial standing”, “serving citizens”, “transparent information” and “opportunities for citizens’ participation in performance evaluation” in an attempt to analyze the perceived of performance evaluation criteria in different local governments. In a

**Figure 2** The Average of Future Enhancements in Business Operations Held by Respondents about the Performance Management



Source: Authors.

system of score 1 represents extraordinary disagreement while 5 is extraordinary agreement. The final results as Table 2 has shown: the capability in the implementation of programmes, financial performance and information transparency level score between 3 and 3.5, with serving people scoring highest on average at 3.47. However, the average of citizenship participation score is lower (2.66).

In Table 3, it can be found the Personnel Mission and Service Quality have higher scores. On the contrary, Financial Resource apparently shows low scores among the five items. When the mayor candidate runs the election, their political ideas are always more abstract

**Table 2** Average of the Perceived Achievement in Different Local Government's Performance Evaluation Criteria

Local Government's Performance Evaluation Criterion	Average
Organizational Competence	3.35
Financial Performance	3.15
Serving Citizens	3.47
Transparent Information	3.35
Opportunities for Citizens' Participation in Performance Evaluation	2.66

Source: Authors.

**Table 3** Perception of Performance Evaluation in Local Governments

Item	Average	Standard Deviation	Variance
Organizational Goal	3.351	0.868	0.753
Personnel Mission	3.824	0.743	0.553
Financial Resource	2.763	0.840	0.706
Inclusion Convergence	3.279	0.809	0.655
Service Quality	3.612	0.749	0.560

Source: Authors.

or vogue. Therefore, after they won the campaign, implementing policy has its difficulties and also causes many problems, including the strategy goal and strategies planning, etc.

Apparently, in the design of government performance management evaluation systems, there is still room for enhancement to ensure that



these five aspects are more accurately measured. In terms of comprehensiveness, the design of the performance management evaluation system offers no mechanism for participation and thus cannot accurately reflect instant responses. The process and result of the 2012 Taiwan Presidential Election may partly reflect why politicians are so constrained by peoples' voice, and why governmental performance measurement should have more localized emphases and citizen participation.

Fourthly, 2012 Taiwan Presidential election was particularly tense. The pre-election opinion polls had shown almost no difference of support proportion between two major groups of candidates in the last moment. In fact, there had been only a difference of 3 per cent or less between Ma Ying-jeou 馬英九 and Tsai Ing-wen 蔡英文 within one month before polling day. In some cases there is even prediction that the Democratic Progressive Party candidate Tsai will win the campaign. However, the final result had actually shown a gap with the prediction – Ma, with approximately 6 per cent won the election. Analysts may have many interpretations about this outcome and possible causes; however, we are trying to view this issue from a position/valence ground versus performance calculation.

As Harold Clarke and David Sanders (2009) have studied connection between performance politics and British voters. They argue that voters rely heavily on their party identifications and their images of the party leaders when making their choice. However, voters may also revise their party identifications and leader images in light of ongoing performance evaluations. In this case, voters in the UK adopted a position/valence model of electoral choice, rather than a performance calculation (Clarke *et al.*, 2009: 5-6). How about Taiwanese voters? Is this a case to explain Taiwan politics and electoral behaviours?

From the National Advances rates, which countries have taken to evaluate their performance, Ma Ying-jeou's governance results in his first term were not too bad; not only compared to developments of the past 20 years, but also compared with other advanced societies' leadership, Ma's administrative team has recorded considerable internal and external performance.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, Ma did not take any advantage



with these in opinion polls, and the results of 2012 presidential election, in some ways, has shown that Taiwanese voters in the 2012 Presidential election were well described by the position or valence model of electoral choice, rather than performance consideration. For sure, governments in Taiwan, not only the central or local levels, may increasingly focus on instant responses to the public. Public managers must take such responses into account and weigh civil participation while designing their performance measuring mechanisms.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Performance management must be combined with strategic planning to inspire all members of the organization to meet common goals. Such a description corresponds to the theme in the literature that the passive aspect of performance management is “control.” In the organization, it is important to maximize the advantages of performance management to reconcile individual and collective goals. The purpose of examining performance management is not the comparison or evaluation among all government units or among municipality and county (city) governments. Rather, it is to compare an individual organization or unit’s past and future or to compare its future outcomes with current performances. Thus, performance management efforts can be used to answer three questions: Is the organization on track to meet its strategic goals? How close has it come to the fulfillment of the strategic goals? During hands-on practice, is the resource laid out and used in a reasonable manner?

The main contribution of the study is the examination of the current performance management practice conducted by local governments in Taiwan. The data indicate that local governments have little awareness of the reason for conducting performance management evaluations and less idea about how to move forward, despite being requested by the audit authority to proceed with performance management evaluation. This study suggests the central government should take into account the needs of local government while integrating performance management information systems, enable e-Government operating well at all levels of government.



Based on the results of this study, several policy recommendations are provided:

First, in terms of the design of the mechanism for motivating participation, local governments should be encouraged to participate by *providing incentives* before the advantages of performance management can be demonstrated. Two kinds of incentives are possible: positive incentives fall in the upper position of the mechanism and include auxiliary links to competition-oriented programmes that would assign scores to those who submit performance management reports; meanwhile, the norms of specifications help organize “strategy development committees” in various municipal or county (city) sectors so that mayors and magistrates could respond to mass media, in turn focusing on the performance management evaluation systems. In addition, the local government should provide more opportunities and incentives for citizens to participate. One possible incentive is to make citizens realizing how their participation in government performance management can improve their daily lives.

Second, the *design of the performance evaluation mechanism* should be improved. In terms of strategic goals and annual programmes, local governments are not necessarily capable of paying for the funds required for mid or long-term programmes or of mapping out or implementing such programmes. Thus, systems should have annual programmes or biannual short-term goals for mapping out or measuring performance. Although the annual programme could be used for performance ratings, during the evaluation, one must focus on the annual programmes and the county (city) government heads in government performance. Next, in terms of performance measurements, the current municipality and county (city) governments should focus on *instant responses to the public*. They must take such responses into account and weigh *civil participation* while designing performance measuring mechanisms. Importantly, the index design should take a progressive approach by focusing on the short-term output. After the local governments accumulate more know-how and practical experience with the index design, they might be able to convert performance measurement styles into result or influential index focuses.

## Notes

- <sup>+</sup> The authors are grateful to the Research, Development, and Evaluation Commission, the Executive Yuan, ROC. Project No.: RDEC-RES-100-009.
- <sup>\*</sup> Dr Eric Rong-Yang Huang 黃榮源 is Associate Professor, Department of Public Administration and Management, Chinese Culture University, Taiwan. He was awarded Ph.D. degree in Government at the University of Essex in 2004. His areas of research focus on public management, performance management in public sector, European Union and UK government. Huang's recent publications and researches include Taiwanese local government governance, EU regions and cross-regional cooperation. <Email: hry2@ulive.pccu.edu.tw>
- <sup>\*\*</sup> Dr Chun-yuan Wang 王俊元 is Assistant Professor, Department of Administration Police, Central Police University, Taiwan. He received Ph.D. degree in Public Administration at National Chengchi University in Taiwan in 2008. His main research interests are crisis management, strategic management, policy analysis, and public human resource management. <Email: g885422@seed.net.tw>
- <sup>\*\*\*</sup> Dr Yan-yi Chang 張筵儀 is Assistant Professor, Department of Public Administration, Chung Hua University, Taiwan. He received Ph.D. degree in Political Science at National Chung Cheng University in Taiwan in 2011. His main research interests are China climate change governance, local government and public policy, mixed methods research, public management, and qualitative research software. <Email: cyy@chu.edu.tw>
1. *The Guideline of Policy Performance Evaluation to Affiliated Agencies of the Executive Yuan* (行政院所屬各機關施政績效評估要點) was effective from 2002, and had undergone minor amendment in 2006.
  2. For instance, according to the Global Competitiveness Report that was published by The World Economic Forum (WEF), Taiwan garners No. 13 spot in 2011 among 144 economies worldwide in overall ranking, advancing gradually in the past four years from 17th place in 2007-2008 Report. And, according to poll announced by the Chinese language Vision Magazine in January 20, 2011, "satisfaction" and "trust" of Taiwanese people toward Ma Ying-jeou had risen respectively in January, which was the best since his taking office in 2008.

## References

- Clarke, Harold, David Sanders, Marianne C. Stewart and Paul Whiteley (2009), *Performance Politics and the British Voter*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Goodsell, Charles (2006), "A New Vision for Public Administration", *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 66, No. 4, pp. 623-635.
- Goss, S. (2001), *Making Local Governance Work: Networks, Relationships and the Management of Change*, New York, NY: Palgrave.
- Heikkila, T. and K.R. Isett (2007), "Citizen Involvement and Performance Management in Special-purpose Governments", *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 67, pp. 238-248.
- Heinrich, C. (2002), "Outcomes-based Performance Management in the Public Sector: Implications for Government Accountability and Effectiveness", *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 62, No. 6, pp. 712-725.
- Holzer, Marc and Kaifeng Yang (2004), "Performance Measurement and Improvement: an Assessment of the State of the Art", *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, Vol. 70, No. 1, pp. 15-31.
- Hsiao, Yi-Ching 蕭怡靖 (2013), "The Perceptions, Evaluation and Impact of Political Accountability in Taiwan", *Taiwan Journal of Democracy* (台灣民主季刊), Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 73-104 (in Chinese).
- Hu, Long-Ten 胡龍騰 (2007), "Toward a Citizen-led Government Performance Management in Taiwan: A Preliminary Study", *Public Administration and Policy* (行政暨政策學報), Vol. 44, pp. 79-128 (in Chinese).
- Hu, Long-Ten 胡龍騰 (2011), "Analysis of Performance Information Use in Taiwan: Practices and Issues", *RDEC Bimonthly* (研考雙月刊), Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 10-22 (in Chinese).
- Huang, Rong-yang 黃榮源 (2011), "Local Government Performance Management System in the UK: From CPA to CAA", in Y.C. Kuo (ed.), *Public Governance and Local Affairs* (公共治理與地方事務) V, Hsinchu: Hsuan Chuang University, pp. 1-21 (in Chinese).
- Huang, Rong-yang 黃榮源, Chun-yuan Wang 王俊元 and Yan-yi Chang 張筵儀 (2013), *Study of Local Government Performance Evaluation Mechanism* (地方政府施政績效評估機制之研究), Taipei: RDEC, Executive Yuan (in Chinese).
- Huang, Rong-yang and Chun-yuan Wang (2012), "Citizen Participation in Local Government Performance Management: Lessons from Taiwan", *Open University Public Administration Review*, Vol. 24, pp. 92-113.

- Leach, R. and J. Percy-Smith (2001), *Local governance in Britain*, New York, NY: Palgrave.
- Monaghan, C. and R. Ball (1993), "Gearing Up for Performance Review", *Local Government Policy Making*, Vol. 20, No. 3, pp. 11-18.
- Osborne, D. and T. Gaebler (1992), *Reinventing Government*, Reading, MA: Addison Wesley.
- Robertson, R. (1992), *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, London: Sage Publications.
- Sanger, M.B. (2008), "From Measurement to Management: Breaking Through the Barriers to State and Local Performance", *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 68, No. S1, pp. S70-S85.
- Simons, R. and A. Davila (1998), "How High is Your Return on Management?", *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 76, No. 1, pp. 71-80.
- Van Thiel, S. and F.L. Leeuw (2002), "The Performance Paradox in the Public Sector", *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 267-281.
- Wichowsky, A. and D.P. Moynihan (2008), "Measuring How Administration Shapes Citizenship: A Policy Feedback Perspective on Performance Management", *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 68, No. 5, pp. 908-920.
- Yang, Kaifeng and Marc Holzer (2006), "The Performance-Trust Link: Implications for Performance Measurement", *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 66, No. 1, pp. 114-126.





## **Taiwan in the Cross-Strait Arms Dynamics: Past and Present**

Shang-su Wu\*  
*Nanyang Technological University*

### **Abstract**

The military confrontation between Taiwan and China used to be a famous example of arms dynamics, but the context has gradually changed from the 2000s (Buzan and Herring, 1998: 80). This has occurred as Taipei's recently lukewarm responses to the increasingly serious challenges from the People's Liberation Army (PLA). According to the recent military build-ups, Taiwan seems to shift to a denial-oriented strategy to counter China's achieving aerial and naval superiorities; nevertheless, this new approach to the cross-Strait arms dynamics may be eclipsed by a range of issues.

**Keywords:** *Taiwan, arms dynamics, People's Liberation Army*

**JEL classification:** *F51, F52, H56, N45*

### **1. The Past of the Cross-Strait Arms Dynamic**

The arms dynamic across the Taiwan Strait is historically related to the Chinese Civil War between the Chinese Nationalist Party (commonly known as Kuomintang, KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) after the Second World War. The regime of the KMT, the Republic of China (ROC), fled to Taiwan in 1949 after it lost control over almost all



of the territory of China to the CCP, whose newly-established regime, the People's Republic of China (PRC), claimed it would capture Taiwan in order to terminate the civil war. Thereafter, the ROC regime in Taiwan desperately armed itself for survival, with the additional goal of "retaking the mainland", whilst an important concern for the PRC's military build-ups was the invasion of Taiwan (Cole, 2006a: 15, 20). This situation meant that the ROC and the PRC regimes both came to fit the criteria of an arms dynamic: that both actors acquire armed forces and pursue their progress concerning each other at different levels (Buzan and Herring, 1998: 5). As a challenger in the cross-Strait arms dynamic, Beijing's efforts match with most Hammond's criteria for an arms race, corresponding military and diplomatic policies, political-military linkage, growth of defence expenditure at more than 8 per cent per annum in the last decade, focus on particular weapon systems, such as ballistic missiles, and the purpose of annexing Taiwan (Hammond, 1993: 31; TAO, 2011). Taiwan, in comparison, would have been more likely to maintain the status quo after substantially giving up its goal of "retaking the mainland" in the mid-1960s, with the result that its relatively moderate movements would have turned the cross-Strait dynamic into an arms competition (Cole, 2006a: 52; Buzan and Herring, 1998: 80).

The cross-Strait arms dynamic has been more than bilateral due to the involvement of several international powers. Firstly, both sides rely more or less on foreign arms suppliers for advanced weapon systems and relevant technologies. After the foundation of the PRC in 1949, the Soviet Union provided a wide range of sophisticated weapon systems, such as diesel-electric submarines (SSK), jet fighters and destroyers, until the split between them in the early 1960s (Cole, 2001: 162). In the subsequent two decades, its revolutionary diplomacy resulted China into a degree of international isolation. The Sino-US rapprochement of 1971 gradually helped China to gain access to weapon systems from the US and Western European countries, until the arms embargo on China following the Tiananmen massacre in 1989 (Archick, Grimmer and Kan, 2005: 1). Simultaneous to the Western embargo, the resumption of military ties with the Soviet Union, and then Russia, has maintained

China's access to foreign advanced arms to this day. As for Taipei, the US has been the only major continuous source of arms, in addition to limited procurements from France and other countries from the 1950s on (SIPRI; Kallgren, 1963: 36-38). Secondly, the US has directly intervened in the ROC-PRC arms dynamic by providing military presence, such as deploying aircraft battle groups during the missile crisis in 1996, diplomatic pressure, such as forcing Taiwan to abandon nuclear weapon projects, and other means (Roy, 2003: 143-144; Tucker, 2009: 96). In sum, the cross-Strait arms dynamic has been deeply shaped by the international powers. It is clear however that Beijing has a much larger capacity to decrease foreign influence than Taipei.

China has indeed far more advantages than Taiwan in the cross-Strait arms dynamic for several reasons. Firstly, its widely recognized international status and economic conditions endow Beijing with greater access to foreign arms suppliers, a fact which puts pressure on Taipei not to try to do the same, because of the latter's inadequate foreign policy as well as its inferior physical conditions. From 1949, both the ROC and the PRC regimes waged diplomatic war over who would be the exclusive representative of China, by competing to gain official recognitions from other countries as the only legitimate Chinese regime, and vying for the membership in major international organizations, particularly the United Nations. It is clear that the contest is asymmetrical in nature, as the majority of countries would naturally choose the PRC on the basis of its actual governance of China and other factors, such as its huge population. In this disadvantageous scenario, Chiang Kai-shek insisted on the orthodoxy of his ROC regime and kept struggling until his eventual loss of the UN membership in 1971 and the cessation of formal relationship with most countries in the world in the 1970s and 1980s (Tucker, 2009: 31, 35-36; Ravenal, 1971: 46). After that, Taipei was isolated on an international level, with arms deals all suffering from diplomatic and economic pressure from Beijing. What remains is the US government's Taiwan Relation Act (TRA), which leaves a relatively stable channel to arms, restricted however by Washington's near monopoly to control Taipei's military capability (AIT, 1979). As the main concern for the US is to stabilize the situation and



maintain the military balance in the Strait, Taiwan is confined to almost “non-offensive defence” and is unlikely to develop other strategies such as pre-emptive or punishment deterrence (SIPRI, 2013).

Secondly, China has a much better industrial base from which to facilitate the arms dynamic, compare to Taiwan. The Chinese modern defence industries were started with massive Soviet technological aid, from the training of professional personnel to providing blue prints and assembly lines in the 1950s and early 1960s, and several advanced weapon systems, such as the P-15 anti-ship cruise missile (ASCM), which could be produced domestically (FAS, 1999; Bussert and Elleman, 2011: 2, 4; Shen, 2012: 257-258). This foundation provided Beijing with considerable capability to clone other weapon systems without authorization and to develop their own new designs. The Chinese defence industry then benefited from technological assistance from Western European countries and the US in the 1970s and 1980s. Later, due to the economic difficulties after the Cold War, the ex-Soviet defence industry and associate expertise contributed to the Chinese defence industry. In addition, Chinese industrial spies provided advanced defence technology through illegal approaches (Archick, Grimmett and Kan, 2005: 4, 13-14). The domestic arms supply in China has gradually developed to provide comprehensive supplies, whereas foreign products are purchased for reverse engineering or in areas where capabilities are lacking, such as turbine engines (Hsu, 2013). Taiwan’s defence industry was established in the late 1960s for the Nixon Doctrine and was dramatically expanded in the period of international isolation in the 1970s (Nolan, 1986: 19, 28, 35). In its heyday in the late 1980s, Taiwan domestically produced several major weapon systems such as jet fighters, but still depended highly on American assistance and authorization (Tucker, 2009: 150-152). Hence, the defence industry would not have been a sound alternative for Taipei to maintain the arms dynamic.

Despite the difficulties in the cross-Strait arms dynamic, strategic conditions compensate Taiwan’s inferiority. Firstly, the Taiwan Strait, with a width of more than 100 kilometres forms a significant barrier for an invader. A number of technical limitations on crossing the Strait

somehow neutralize China's overall superiority in the cross-Strait arms dynamic. The geographic environment would make China's huge group troops generally irrelevant to the dynamic, because China has to achieve sea and air control in order to project its army to Taiwan. Furthermore, the PLA Navy (PLAN) also faces different natural challenges: due to climatic factors at play in the region, the sea surrounding Taiwan is often choppy with large waves and seasonal winds in winter and typhoons in summer (Shambaugh, 1996: 1317; Clough, 1978: 113-114). Secondly, the wide and complex strategic surroundings, including a number of territorial disputes such as the ones in the South China Sea, may prevent Beijing from concentrating its military superiority against Taipei. Thirdly, as far as its defensive position is concerned, Taiwan benefited from low logistic and quantitative requirements. Since the defenders would not be in a position to project their forces too far, supply is relatively easy. Additionally, historic attack and defence principles would indicate that the ratio of attack to defence would be at least 3 to 1 (Mearsheimer, 1983: 181). Thus, the pressure of quantitative inferiority on Taipei would be less serious. Finally, possible US intervention would reverse the arms dynamics in a specific theatre. Washington could intervene through arms sales and military presence to adjust the arms dynamic.

Based on several considerations, the different administrations in Taipei were keen to manage their arms dynamic in an action-reaction model in order to survive, rather than merely relying on the advantages mentioned above. Firstly, history has demonstrated that various invaders were able to overcome the Strait and conquer Formosa. In the 17th Century, the Koxinga and the Ch'ing (Qing) Empire successfully defeated the original regimes in Taiwan and established general control over the island (Lin, 2005: 11-12, 18-19). Since even pre-modern armed forces were able to achieve invasion across the Strait, Taipei needs to be concerned about Beijing's capability. Secondly, the US may not prove to continue to be reliable. In addition to the case of South Vietnam, the ROC regime was abandoned by the US during the end of the civil war in 1949, and severed formal diplomatic relations at a short notice in 1979 (Wang, 1990: 2; Ho, 1990: 30). With the increasing involvement into the

globalization and the uncertainty of the US intervention, a blitzkrieg is likely to be the ideal goal of China's military action against Taiwan. Based on its strategic conditions, Taipei has to maintain certain capabilities and capacities to counter any aerial or maritime challenge from Beijing, and it needs to do this in a way which is more qualitative than quantitative, in order to prevent a short, sharp and decisive victory by the latter. Prolonged warfare would lead to more uncertain strategic outcomes, which would be more difficult for Beijing's gambit, and may accumulate pressure on Washington to intervene, due to the disturbance of the global economy and the sea lines of communication (SLOCs).

Whilst the KMT was the ruling party until 2000, the challenge to maintain the arms dynamic centred on the access to arms. Taipei took several alternative approaches to supplement normal arms deals, such as indigenous development in the domestic defence industry, purchasing civilian versions of military aircraft, special trade arrangements and foreign technological assistance (Cole, 2006b: 128, 131). During the minority government of the Democracy Progress Party (DPP) between 2000 and 2008, domestic political struggle along with an insufficient budget situation became Taiwan's main obstruction to the arms dynamic. In 2000, the Bush administration made the unprecedented move of adding items to the arms sales list such as submarines and other major weapon systems, which Taiwan had required for decades. However, the special budget for such items had been refused, due to political concerns, in the congress as it was dominated by the opposite parties, mainly the KMT (AIT, 2009; Chase, 2008: 703-704, 710-721). Secondly, compared to the previous administrations, the minority government of the DPP did not invest adequately in national defence. Partially due to the obstruction in the congress, the overall defence budget was generally reduced down to a relatively small share of the gross domestic product (GDP) between 2000 and 2008 (Chen, 2006: 68; DGB, 2011). Thus, not only the submarines but also other defence projects had to be postponed. In 2007 and 2008, Taiwan's arms import dropped to the lowest points since 1951 (SIPRI, 2013).

## 2. The Present Arms Dynamics in the New KMT Administration

Currently, with the KMT being a majority in congress, the new administration has the potential to revive Taiwan's arms dynamic but has not fully done so. Military investment on a limited scale after 2008 is reflected in two areas. Firstly, although President Ma Ying-jeou pledged three percentage of GDP for the defence budget, this goal has never been attained, with the portion of GDP remaining similar to that of the previous DPP administration (Murray, 2013: 2). With rising human costs in adapting full-voluntary troops for service, the low budget investment becomes even more inadequate. Although Beijing seems to allocate a smaller portion of GDP (2 per cent) to defence to Taipei, China's unclear budget and substantial growth would give it in financial superiority over Taiwan in the cross-Strait arms dynamic. In China's published defence budget, several areas, such as the procurement of foreign equipment and systems, are omitted and the actual expenditure would in fact be higher (OSD, 2013: 45-46). Moreover, China's rapid economic growth provides a far larger budget than Taiwan's. Thus, the gap between Beijing and Taipei in defence expenditure has increasingly expanded, and the latter seems not to respond effectively.

Taipei's falling investment in defence might be interpreted as the result of the domestic political struggle during the DPP administration, but it could not apply to the inaugurate KMT administration with its majority of seats in congress. Although loosening of cross-Strait relations might be considered as an explanation, it fails down in the light of the PLA's expansion of its offensive capabilities and the official Chinese intention to use force. Social and economic concerns, such as the global financial crisis since 2008, might be able to explain the relatively low expenditure on defence. However, the previous KMT administrations insisted a high priority of national defence in economic crises. For instance, during the first oil crisis between 1973 and 1974, Taiwan's economy was significantly affected, but defence expenditure was not (IISS, 1973: 50; 1974: 53; 1975: 53; Minns, 2006: 193-194). Regionally, Taiwan's percentage of GDP spent on defence since the end of the Cold War has been surpassed by several regional countries, including South Korea, Singapore and Vietnam (SIPRI, 2013).

**Table 1** China's Expansion of Maritime and Aerial Capability since 2008

Type	Number	Note
Liaoning Class aircraft carrier	1	Carrying 18-24 J-15 fighters and 17 helicopters
Type 039A/B SSK (Yuan Class)	6/2	
Type 052C Destroyer	2	
Type 054/054A Frigate	2/15	
Type 056 Frigate	(6)	Launched and undergoing sea trials, but not yet in service
Landing Ship Mechanism (LSM)	12	
Type 071 Landing Platform Dock (LPD)	3	
JH-7/7A Fighter Bomber	152	
J-10/10A/10S Fighter	202+	
J-11/11B/Su-27SK/UBK Fighter	212	
J-15A/S Fighter	N/A	For aircraft carrier

Sources: IISS (2014, 2013 and 2008).

Secondly, with a limited budget, the extent of military modernization in Taiwan is more restricted than that of its Chinese counterpart, with an expanding maritime and aerial capability that can be used against Taiwan. The PLAN is acquiring a range of new major weapon systems and platforms with a purpose of strengthening its sea denial operations and also establishing a certain sea control capacity which is crucial for projecting forces to Taiwan. The PLAN Air Force (PLANAF) and the PLA Air Force (PLAAF) continue to introduce a



variety of advanced combat aircraft and the Chinese aero industry has even produced stereotypes of stealth fighters (OSD, 2013: 8). In contrast to Beijing's proactive attitude, Taipei's responses are relatively limited. Several projects that have been postponed for years, such as the P-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft and the AH-64D Apache attack helicopters, were revived in 2008 and passed by congress. Those projects were reflected in the recovery of Taiwan's arms import amount (SIPRI, 2013). Since then however, very few new projects have been launched. All that has been undertaken is the purchase of UH-60 utility helicopters, the upgrade of F-16A/B, F-CK-1 fighters and the E-2K air warning and command system (AWACS). Furthermore, several current projects such as UH-60 have been delayed as a result of the financial issues (IISS, 2011: 205). The majority of current projects are in fact those remaining from the previous administration, with the Ma administration in power since 2008 adding very few projects. The small number of projects could also be a result of restrictions by Washington; however, with limited budget, Taipei seems to be unlikely to use the domestic defence industry to provide a sound alternative which occurred during the 1970s and 1980s (IISS, 2010: 390).

With the limited resources and the strengthening opponent, applying asymmetrical perceptions could be a solution for Taiwan to preserve its gradually inferior status in the cross-Strait dynamic.

### **3. Asymmetrical Operations**

According to official publications, asymmetrical operations have been highlighted by the Ministry of National Defense (MND) in Taipei, due to the altered strategic environment (MND, 2013: 22). Derived from sea power theories, the concepts of denial and control are able to explain Taiwan's new countermeasures against Chinese military threats. Denial denotes the military capabilities to exclude an adversary's control over a specific space, whether sea, air or land, mainly through offensive tactics. Control is one step further on from denial, in which an enemy's control has been eliminated and the invading state takes over the control of a certain space in a specific time. For instance, submarines can deny an

**Table 2** Taiwan's Military Build-ups after 2008

Name	Number	Launched Time	Note
AH-64D Apache attack helicopters	30	2008	Delayed due to budget war in the congress
P-3CUP ASW aircraft	12	2008	Delayed due to budget war in the congress
Patriot Advanced Capability (PAC)-3 missile defence missiles	330	2008	Delayed due to budget war in the congress
UGM-84 sub-launched Harpoon ASCM	32	2008	
F-CK-1 fighter upgrade	127	2009	
F-16 Upgrade	145	2010	
E-2K AWACS upgrade	6	2009	
UH-60M utility helicopter	60	2011	Not fully funded
CM-32 Armoured Personnel Carrier (Indigenous)	650	2010	Developed in 2007
HF-IIIE ASCM (Indigenous)	245	2005	Under production
HF-III supersonic ASCM (Indigenous)	N/A	Earlier than 2004	Under production
RT-2000 Multi-Launch Rocket System (Indigenous)	57	1999	Under production
TK- III SAM	N/A	N/A	Under production

Sources: Waldron (2013); SIPRI (2013); IISS (2014, 2013); Kan (2013); DSCA (2013); Chang (2012).

adversary's sea control by sinking its major surface vessels, thus neutralizing the defender's fleet, and leaving a vacuum for the invader's surface vessels to build control (Grove, 1990: 12).

Before the PLA acquired its formidable denial capability, Taipei had focused on struggling for a control-oriented strategy, based around political and military concerns related to its military structure. Firstly, although launching offensive moves toward China became impossible in the mid-1960s, the ROC regime still held on to its political ideal to "retake the mainland", a political posture supported by maintaining some control capability plus offensive units, such as marine divisions (Cole, 2006a: 26). Secondly, as Taipei controls several islands near China's coastal lines, such as Matsu and Quemoy, and islands in the South China Sea, such as Itu Aba (Taiping) Island, control of the SLOCs is crucial to these islands. In order for the ROC regime to build its control capabilities, the ROCAF aimed to secure air superiority through its fighters, and the ROCN focused on sea control using its major surface vessels. However, in the last two decades both Taiwan's fighters and warships have become relatively vulnerable to the PLA's denial tactics, and face qualitative and quantitative challenges from their Chinese counterparts.

After several decades of development, the PLA now has considerable capability in two dimensions: denial and control. Although the potential confidence building measure across the Strait may provide some slight relief on the strategic pressure on Taiwan, the MND still has to cope on a structural level with the military challenges from China. China's denial capabilities are to block Taiwan's access to external support, including that of the US, and to sweep the air and maritime defences of Taiwan in order to achieve its air and sea control. The sphere of denial would be wider than that of control, because control requires extra efforts of defence and utilization rather than mere strikes. So far, Beijing's sphere of denial, based on the ranges of its various missiles, aircraft and submarines, is able to cover Taiwan and even further. China's sphere of control may cover Taiwan now or sometime in the near future (OSD, 2013: 32-33).



**Table 3** China's Air Denial Capacity

Type	Number	Range (km)	Note
Short Range Ballistic Missile (DF-11, DF-15)	1100+	300-600	
CJ-10 Land Attack Cruise Missile (LACM)	54	1500-2500	Subsonic
Kh-59 ASM	150	115	Equipped with Su-30MKK
Kh-31P Anti-Radar Missile (ARM)	760	110	Supersonic. Suppress air defence.
YJ-63 Air-Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM)	N/A	200-500	Subsonic, equipped with H-6 bombers
YJ-100 ALCM	N/A	1500-2000	Subsonic
YJ-91 ARM	N/A	120	Supersonic
KD-88 ARM	N/A	180-200	Subsonic

Sources: IISS (2014); Erickson and Yuan (2011); OSD (2013); Rosoboron Export (2005); SIPRI (2013).

The Chinese denial capability consists mainly of various anti-ground and anti-ship missiles, along with other means, such as submarines, with the aim of neutralizing the two strategic pylons of Taiwan's defence: fighters and major surface ships. The ROC Air Force (ROCAF) fighters, the backbone of Taiwan's defence, would be able to constrain the operations of their PRC counterpart, or even defeat them and obtain air superiority as they did in the 1950s (Clough, 1978: 108; Zhang, 2003: 281). However, these fighter fleets have become vulnerable in the face of China's aerial denial capability against the

airbases in Taiwan. Possibly inspired by the Iraqi tactic of using Scud missiles during the first Gulf War in 1991, China began to deploy short-range ballistic missiles in the areas adjacent to Taiwan from the early 1990s, reaching a total number in 2013 of at least 1100 (Kagan, 2007: 126; OSD, 2013: 38). In addition, an increasing number of Chinese cruise missiles went into service from 2010, as well as air-to-surface missiles (ASM) carried by bombers and fighters, thus providing up-to-date means for strikes on the air bases and air defence facilities in Taiwan (OSD, 2008: 2). Taiwan's limited number of air bases would mostly be paralysed, or at least significantly incapacitated by the missile attacks (Murray, 2008: 22; Hagen, 2010: 2-3). With the short strategic depth and response time for missiles crossing the Strait, the ROCAF may not be able to evacuate its fighters in time (Pollack, 2006: 66-67). Moreover, the fighters and bombers of the PLAAF and the PLANAF could launch air raids right after the first missile salvos, with the result that any delay in the ROCAF's interception operation caused by previous missile attacks would make China's raids more destructive. Unless replaced by vertical-taking-off-and-landing aircraft (VTOL), short-taking-off-and-landing aircraft (STOL) or by building more air fields, this vulnerability would prevail and be further exacerbated.

The expansive sea denial capability of the PLAN and other services also thwart Taipei's naval strategy. The ROC Navy (ROCN) with about 26 principle surface combatants would be an important factor to counter the threats from the PLAN through a decisive battle or a fleet-in-being strategy (IISS, 2014: 281). Taiwan's fleet-in-being strategy would be to deploy these ships of a safe distance away from China's strikes, and then threaten or return to intercept an all-out amphibious invasion by China (Corbett 2004, 167). Considering the rising number of Chinese long-range anti-ship missiles equipped on submarines, surface vessels and aircraft, combined with assistance from their ocean surveillance satellites, electronic intelligence aircraft and other means of detection, the ROCN's fleets would be located easily and may suffer serious damages. Chinese sea denial capability, the core of the anti-access and area denial strategy, is also aimed at a potential US intervention and blockade of the SLOCs to Taiwan (OSD, 2013: 32).

**Table 4** China's Sea Denial Capacity

Type	Number	Note
Type 091 nuclear attack submarines (SSN)	3	
Type 093 SSN	2	
Kilo (2 Project 877, 2 Project 636, 8 Project 636N) Class SSK	12	Equipped with 3M-54 anti-ship cruise missile (ASCM)
Type 035 SSK	20	Only equipped with torpedos
Type 039/039G SSK	16	Equipped with YJ-82 ASCM
Type 039A SSK	4	Equipped with YJ-82 ASCM
Type 039B SSK	8	Equipped with YJ-82 ASCM
JH-7/JH-7A Fighter bomber	120	Equipped with YJ-8 ASCMs
SU-30MK2 Fighter bomber	24	
H-6G Bomber (Tu-16)	30	
Y-8 Electronic Intelligence Aircraft	7	Collecting intelligence, maybe locating targets
Y-8 AWACS	10	Collecting intelligence, maybe locating targets
YJ-8 ASCM	N/A	Equipped with JH-7, range: 42km
YJ-82/YJ-83 ASCM	N/A	Equipped with JH-7, range: 180km
YJ-62	N/A	Equipped with H-6, range: 250km
3M-54 ASCM	150	Equipped with Kilo Class SSKs, range: 300km
<i>Potential support from the PLAAF</i>		
JH-7	120	
H-6A/H/K/M	90	
Su-30MKK	73	
Y-8 Electronic Warfare aircraft	13	
KJ-2000 AWACS	8	

Sources: IISS (2014); SIPRI (2014); Erickson and Yuan (2011).

**Table 5** China's Air Control Capacity (PLAAF and PLANAF)

Type	Number
J-10A/S Fighter	268+
J-11/Su-27 Fighter	328+
Su-30MKK/MK2	97
J-8 E/F/H Fighter	168
AWACS (Y-8 & KJ-200)	14+
JH-7	240
B-6	112
H-6 Tanker Refuel Aircraft	13

Source: IISS (2014, 2013).

In terms of control, the PLAN and the PLAAF may have both sea and air superiority thus achieving a definite capability of projecting their forces to Taiwan. The PLAN originally achieved quantitative superiority in surface vessels, but those ships were vulnerable to ASCMs and air strikes due to their poor air defence capability and other obsolete designs. In the last two decades, China's expanding fleets of new major surface vessels, including an aircraft carrier, with improved air defence capability, may be able to escort its growing amphibious fleet if it were intercepted by the ROCN, in a case where the latter were able to survive China's massive missile attacks (Bussert, 2011: 22, 47). Regarding air power, the increasing number of advanced fighters, backed up by their AWACS aircraft and refuel-tankers, have rapidly replaced the obsolete fighters and would provide a direct challenge to their ROCAF counterpart, with quantitative and perhaps qualitative superiority of fighters (Ulman, 2011: 45-47). Furthermore, the PLAAF and the PLANAF have also strengthened their ground-attack capability with

**Table 6** China's Sea Control Capacity

Type	Number	Note
Liaoning Class aircraft carrier	1	Carrying 18-24 J-15 fighters and 17 helicopters
<i>Hangzhou</i> ( <i>Sovremenny</i> ) Class Destroyer	4	
Type 051B Destroyer	1	
Type 051C Destroyer	2	
Type 051 DT/G Destroyer	4	Modernized Type 051 destroyers
Type 051 Destroyer	6	Lack of SAM, and ASCM counter capability
Type 052 Destroyer	2	
Type 052B Destroyer	2	
Type 052C Destroyer	4	
Type 054 Frigate	2	
Type 054A Frigate	15	
Type 056 Frigate	6	Launched, not delivered yet
Type 053H2G/H3 Frigate	14	
Type 053 H/H1/H1G/H2 Frigate	18	Lack of SAM, and ASCM counter capability

Source: IISS (2014).

ASMs, guided bombs and other munitions to suppress air defence forces and sweep out other defence in order to launch airborne or amphibious invasions (Shlapak, 2012: 201). Although China may not be able to concentrate all of its forces against Taiwan due to its wide and complicated strategic surrounding, with the PLA's increasingly quantitative and qualitative superiority over its counterpart, it would be likely for the former to gradually gather partial forces in order to use force against the latter.

As Beijing has achieved or will shortly achieve conventional military superiority over Taipei, asymmetrical operations are a feasible solution for the latter, given its limited investment in defence. As Taiwan's defence is mainly about protecting the democratic regime, its sovereignty, people and other traditional objects of national defence through its conventionally organized armed forces, most conditions of asymmetrical warfare do not apply in Taiwan's case (Snow, 2008: 296-299). Taipei's military build-up since 2008 could be interpreted as a shift on an operational level, from control to denial for its strategic reasons. Among various operational options, Beijing's strategic goal is clear: capture the island and annex it as territory. Accordingly, Taiwan's strategic goal should be to make China's air and sea control either unlikely or extremely costly. This goal could be served by using Taiwan's geographic environment to deny Chinese aerial and maritime platforms.

Aerial denial and sea denial are composed respectively of surface-to-air missiles (SAM) plus other air defence means, and ASCMs, sea mines and torpedoes on various platforms. These are relatively cheap and more likely to survive the first missile salvos from the PLA. Furthermore, less offensive SAMs and ASCMs are more likely to be supplied by the US than other weapon systems. Taiwan's defence industry also has certain capability and experience to produce such missiles. Finally, Taiwan can extend denial targets to China's adjacent airfields and ports in order to create larger strategic effects with its cruise missiles (Hsu, 2007; IISS, 2011: 333; Chang, 2012). When both sides lose certain numbers of their transport facilities, the invader would suffer more than the defender, as it would be less likely to attain its goal of



conquering the other. In order to avoid Taipei's denial capability, Beijing could adopt a distant sea blockade tactic to force Taipei to surrender due lack of food, fuel or material. However, if Taiwan prepares well, a siege would need considerable time to be effective, and have a major impact on China's economy during the wartime period. As China's overseas trade is highly dependent on sea transport, its sea blockade against Taiwan would impede its own export and import ability. Thus, in terms of using force, Beijing does not have much room to evade Taipei's denial capability.

The denial aspect was included in Taiwan's military capability during the Cold War, with the portion of denial having been expanded since 2008. For aerial denial, since 1958 when the first SAM was introduced, Taipei has established a network of several types of SAMs with high density (IISS, 2013: 336; Clough, 1978: 104). The American PAC-3 and the indigenous Tien Kung III SAMs are being added into the original SAM network to deny China's control over the air space around Taiwan, and somehow neutralize ballistic and cruise missiles attacks (IISS, 2013: 351; Chang, 2012). In terms of sea denial, Taipei first obtained SSKs, ASCM and missile boats in the 1970s. Submarines should be a major means of sea denial but Taiwan maintains a small flotilla of four diesel-electric submarines, which two Guppy II class were launched during the World War II and the rest Dutch Zwaardvis class are the mainstay, only equipped with torpedoes rather than sub-launched anti-ship missile (Tucker, 2009: 78; Freeman, 1997: 86). In 2008, the sub-launched UGM-84 significantly strengthened the strike radius of the submarines. Additionally, the continuous production of indigenous HF-2ER, HF-3 ASCMs and the KH-6 stealth missile boats is aimed at bettering the ROCN's sea denial capability. With an extended range of 600-800km, HF-2ER missiles can strike not only vessels but also targets on-shore. HF-3 supersonic ASCM, equipped on KH-6 missile boats and other platforms, would issue more serious threats to the PLAN with a shorter response time (IISS 2013, 275). Regarding aerial platforms, the introduction of airborne AGM-84 Harpoon missiles enhanced the ROCAF's sea denial function (Kan, 2013: 57).



For Taiwan, the final resort of denial is an anti-landing operation, which would be conducted mainly by the ROC Army (ROCA). The Army has catered for this strategic mission in its structure for decades. The new projects include the RT-2000 multi-launch rocket system (MLRS), and AH-64E Low Bow Apache attack helicopters with AGM-114 Hellfire anti-armour missiles and Javelin anti-armour missiles, which are useful for attacking approaching landing craft and invading troops (Hsu, 2001; Kan, 2013: 57; Nelms, 2013). Finally, some additional investments, including long-range early warning radar, the upgraded AWACS aircraft, and the modernized C4ISR system (command, control, communication, computer, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance), would comprehensively improve the effects of denial operations (IISS, 2013: 273).

Despite a range of projects for denial operations, it is uncertain as to whether this strategy would work for several reasons: economic vulnerability and the drawbacks of the military and civil sectors. In economic affairs, China has considerable means of leverages over Taiwan. Based on matters such as the common language, similar cultural background, China's lower labour costs and investment-friendly policies, Taiwan's investment in China has continue to grow since the 1990s, with a concomitant increase in the cross-strait trade. In short, Taiwan's economy is overly dependent on China. Theoretically, economic interdependence might promote peace by creating mutual interests, meaning that the use the economic leverages might create mutual economic losses. In fact, as many countries also invested in China to dilute Taiwan's portion of the investment there, the bilateral economic interdependence gradually evolved into a situation where Taiwan become unilaterally dependent on China. Since 2008, more than 40 per cent of Taiwan's export is towards China, including Hong Kong. (Bureau of Trade, 2014). Furthermore, Beijing has demonstrated its willingness to use trade as a political tool during disputes with Japan and the Philippines, and its authoritarian regime was successfully able to absorb the side effects (Raine and Le Miere, 2013: 73). Thus, China would have great potential to exert strong pressure via economic means on Taiwan. Since most economic levers are non-violent, it would be



difficult for any third party to intervene. In that case, denial strategy would be useless.

Militarily, the ROC armed forces have several challenges in pursuing a denial strategy. Even when direct military competition is avoided, a successful denial strategy still depends on sufficient budgetary allocation to match both quantitative and qualitative requirements. Quantitatively, the denial strategy relies on surviving capabilities, which are based on surplus numbers of units, command chains and surveillance facilities available to effectively carry out the strategy. In addition, adequate training and exercises would be critical to make the strategy credible. Thus, the MND should be in a position to afford enough munitions, facilities and other items for training and redundancy. Qualitatively, as countermeasures against SAMs and ASCMs are available, a workable strategy could be developed using technological upgrades and research on other means of denial. Without sound investment in technology, the denial strategy would not however be sustainable as China could develop a variety of measures to neutralize Taiwan's denial capabilities. Apart from the capabilities of the denial strategy, other auxiliary units in Taiwan would be unable to cooperate as their tight budgets have made existing some equipment obsolete. In the ROC armed forces, a number of World War II era weapon systems such as howitzers and landing ships are still in service (IISS, 2013: 336). The safety and reliability of these antique arms would be problematic, not to mention their performance and integration with other newer systems. When proper investment and management are lacking, a snowball-like effect occurs as, the oldest equipment remains in service, whilst other mid-life-span equipment is also aging, resulting into a continuous increase in the amount of outdated arms. This not only reduces defence capability but increases modernization costs. Although some funds will be saved by postponing Taipei's move to all-voluntary soldiers from 2013, the continuously decreasing portion of the defence budget allocated to training and investment indicates that the remaining budget could be still insufficient, and thus impede the denial strategy (Murray, 2013: 3; IISS, 2013: 273).

The PLA's irregular tactics, such as espionage and sabotage, pose serious threats to Taiwan's denial strategy. In recent years, several cases of Chinese espionage have been discovered in the ROC armed forces, one even involving a general who was in charge of the C4ISR project (Callick, 2011). Furthermore, a number of retired high-ranking officers of the ROC regime visited China and publicly demonstrated a shift in their loyalty to the PRC regime (Mo and Su, 2011). Both these sensitive intelligence matters are likely to decrease the survivability of the denial forces of Taiwan in the first waves of attacks. The penetration of the Chinese agents and soldiers for sabotage purposes pose another serious threat to Taiwan's denial strategy. The Ma administration has formulated a variety of policies allowing an increasing number of Chinese to visit Taiwan for tourism, academic study, employment, business, kinship and other purposes (MAC, 2013). In other words, the PLA could project thousands of unarmed soldiers into Taiwan, where they could avail themselves of weapons and other equipment through smuggling or other channels. Although Taipei examines the background of Chinese visitors, Beijing is able to provide complete cover documents with its authority. A large enough number of PLA troops, even without heavy arms, would be capable of successfully sabotaging both the infrastructure and key units of the ROC armed forces, such as the chain of command.

Even if Taiwan were not to suffer seriously from leaked defence information and the mainstay of its forces survived, its denial capability, such as its submarines, would be insufficient. The great denial capability of submarines has been proved in both World Wars by the German and American navies. Considering Taiwan's strategic environment, submarines would be crucial in deterring and repelling invasion. Furthermore, China's economy, especially energy and national income through export, relies considerably on sea transportation and would thus be vulnerable, allowing Taiwan to exert additional leverage. However, as Taipei lost the opportunity of procuring submarines in the 2000s, its poor flotilla is unlikely to be improved in the near future.

Taiwan's specific geographic conditions mean that the preparation of civil sectors is crucial to its denial strategy, mainly civil defence and development of wartime economic strategies. With its small territory

lacking in strategic depth and with a high population density, an armed conflict or war would leave the whole island as a warzone. Thus, the civil sectors would be a key factor in determining whether the denial strategy works. Under denial operations, it is unlikely that the ROC armed forces would maintain international trade during wartime, meaning that sufficient strategic materials such as fuels should be stored in advance. The strategic reservation of fuels and natural gas in Taiwan could last 60 and 25 days respectively (Bureau of Energy, 2008: 25-26). However, in reality, this could be reduced into a much shorter duration, as large and obvious oil tanks and other storage facilities are easy targets for Chinese missiles and sabotage. Even if they survived, island-wide distribution during wartime would present another challenge, due to wartime disruption to traffic in an already rugged terrain. As the denial strategy might see a passive response to the invader's aggression, with the intention of prolonging warfare to counter the invader's blitzkrieg, the endurance capability of the population matters. This depends on both the government and the people.

Measures taken by government in preparation for wartime scenarios, such as plans for the provision of food, medicine, shelter and other basic needs, could counter public panic and maintain morale during wartime. Furthermore, the introduction of several more extreme methods such as censorship and suppression, where required might prevent rumours spreading and riots occurring. However, considering the poor performance of the government's administrative capabilities during several natural disasters in recent years, such as Typhoon Morakot in 2009, its ability to deal with a wartime emergency may be severely lacking (Branigan, 2009). Although historic cases such as those of Britain, Japan and Vietnam demonstrated the strong resilience of population during bombardment, people in Taiwan may not respond in the same way due to a lack of national identity. On matters of both the government and popular support, the resolve of political leaders in Taipei is even more decisive. Unlike disasters and other events in peacetime, pressure from coercive diplomacy before war breaks out, combined with damages and casualties during wartime provide the ultimate test of the leaders on the both sides, particularly of weaker ones

(van Creveld, 2008: 93-94). In the history of the ROC, there have been several occasions of leaders fleeing during wartime (Barnouin and Yu, 2006: 118). The resilience of elected leaders thus provides the final determinant in the denial strategy.

#### 4. Conclusion

The denial strategy may provide Taiwan with a niche in the cross-Strait arms dynamic, but its strategic effects would be uncertain. Since the denial-oriented strategy is to curb China's strategic goal of capturing Taiwan through an asymmetrical means, it would provide Taiwan with certain deterrence against the PLA. However, without proper funding and support from non-military sectors, Taiwan's denial strategy leaves a number of weaknesses for China to exploit. Furthermore, the economic and other forms of leverages acquired by Beijing as a result of Taipei's open policies would provide alternative options to the use of force. Whether using force or not, Taiwan would face further restriction on its freedom of decision making in negotiations with China due to its declining gambit of resisting the latter's economic and military measures.

#### Note

- \* Dr Shang-su Wu 吳尚書 is Research Fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He completed both undergraduate and M.A. programme at the Department of Political Science, National Taiwan University. He obtained his Ph.D. degree at the University of New South Wales. Dr Wu's research interests are Sino-Taiwan relations, defence policies of Taiwan, the Philippines, Singapore and other Southeast Asian countries. <Email: isswwu@ntu.edu.sg>

#### References

- American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) (1979), "Taiwan Relations Act, United States Code Title 22 Chapter 48, Section 3302" <<http://www.ait.org.tw/en/>>

- taiwan-relations-act.html*> (accessed 20th November 2013).
- AIT (2009), "Press Conference, Stephen M. Young Director, American Institute in Taiwan, American Culture Center Taipei, June 26, 2009" <<http://www.ait.org.tw/zh/officialtext-ot0913.html>> (accessed 23rd March 2011).
- Archick, Kristin, Richard F. Grimmett and Shirley Kan (2005), *European Union's Arms Embargo on China: Implications and Options for U.S. Policy*, Washington: Congressional Research Service.
- Barnouin, Barbara and Yu Changgen (2006), *Zhou Enlai: A Political Life*, Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.
- Branigan, Tania (2009), "Taiwan Cabinet Members Offer To Resign Over Typhoon Morakot Response", *The Guardian*, 19th August. <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/aug/19/typhoon-morakot-taiwan-resignations>>
- Bureau of Energy (2009), *Annual Report of Bureau of Energy, Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2008*, Taipei: Bureau of Energy, Ministry of Economic Affairs.
- Bureau of Trade (2014), "Monthly Reports", Bureau of Trade <<http://www.trade.gov.tw/english/Pages/List.aspx?nodeID=92>> (accessed 18th February 2014).
- Bussert, James C. and Bruce A. Elleman (2011), *People's Liberation Army Navy: Combat Systems Technology, 1949-2010*, Annapolis: Naval Institute Press.
- Buzan, Barry and Eric Herring (1998), *The Arms Dynamic in World Politics*, London: Boulder.
- Callick, Rowan (2011), "Taiwan General Lured by Spy", *The Australian*, 12th February. <<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/taiwan-general-lured-by-spy/story-e6frg6so-1226004631268>>
- Chang, Rich (2012), "Missile Units To Be Merged into One on Thursday: MND", *Taipei Times*, 14th February. <<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2012/02/14/2003525425>>
- Chase, Michael S. (2008), "Taiwan's Arms Procurement Debate and the Demise of the Special Budget Proposal: Domestic Politics in Command", *Asian Survey*, Vol. 48, No. 4, pp. 703-724.
- Chen, York W. and Martin Edmonds (2006), "The Domestic Context of Defence Reform", in Martin Edmonds and Michael M. (eds), *Taiwan's Defense Reform*, London: Routledge, pp. 63-78.
- "China, Taiwan Sign Service Trade Agreement", *The Economic Times*, 21st June 2013. <[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-06-21/news/40119578\\_1\\_economic-cooperation-framework-agreement-straits-](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-06-21/news/40119578_1_economic-cooperation-framework-agreement-straits-)

- exchange-foundation-china-and-taiwan>*
- Cho, Shih-Chao (2013), “Cross-Strait Agreement on Trade in Services”, the Mainland Affairs Council <<http://www.mac.gov.tw/public/Data/385943471.pdf>> (accessed 13th September 2013).
- Clough, Ralph N. (1978), *Island China*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Cole, Bernard D. (2001), *The Great Wall at Sea*, Annapolis: Naval Institute Press.
- Cole, Bernard D. (2006a), *Taiwan's Security: History and Prospects*, London: Routledge.
- Cole, Bernard D. (2006b), “Command of the Sea”, in Steve Tsang (ed.), *If China Attacks Taiwan: Military Strategy, Politics and Economics*, London: Routledge, pp. 122-145.
- Corbett, Julian S. (2004), *Principles of Maritime Strategy*, New York: Dover Publications.
- Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) (2013), “Major Arms Sales”, Defense Security Cooperation Agency <<http://www.dsca.mil/major-arms-sales>> (accessed 16th October 2013).
- Directorate-General of Budget (DGB) (2011), “Accounting and Statistics”, Executive Yuan, ROC (Taiwan) <<http://www.dgbas.gov.tw/np.asp?ctNode=41>> (accessed 23rd March 2011).
- Erickson, Andrew S. and Jingdong Yuan (2011), “Antiaircraft and China's Air-Launched Cruise Missiles”, in Andrew S. Erickson and Lyle J. Goldstein (eds), *Chinese Aerospace Power: Evolving Maritime Roles*, Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, pp. 275-286.
- Federation of American Scientists (FAS) (1999), “SS-N-2 Styx, HY-1 / SY-1, CSS-C-2 SILKWORM, FL-1 Flying Dragon, CSS-N-1 SCRUBBRUSH” <<http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/missile/row/hy-1.htm>> (accessed 11 September 2013).
- Freeman, Norman (1997), *The Naval Institute Guide to World Naval Weapons Systems, 1997-1998*, Annapolis: the US Naval Institute.
- Grove, Eric (1990), *The Future of Sea Power*, London: Routledge.
- Hagen, Jeff (2010), *Potential Effects of Chinese Aerospace Capabilities on U.S. Air Force Operations*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Hammond, Grant T. (1993), *Plowshares into Swords: Arms Races in International Politics, 1840-1991*, Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press.
- Ho, Szu-yin (1990), “The Republic of China's Policy Toward the United States, 1979-1989”, in Yu San Wang (ed.), *Foreign policy of the Republic of China*

- on Taiwan, New York: Praeger, pp. 29-44.
- Hsu, Brian (2001), "Army to Buy Launch Rocket System Built by Taiwan Supplier", *Taipei Times*, 6th November. <<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/local/archives/2001/11/06/0000110289>>
- Hsu, Brian (2013), "China's J-20 Fighter Might Need Russian Engines", *AINonline*, 8th March. <<http://www.ainonline.com/aviation-news/ain-defense-perspective/2013-03-07/chinas-j-20-fighter-might-need-russian-engines>>
- Hsu, Shao-hsuan (2007), "Hsiung-Feng II E Missiles Have Been Deployed: Sources", *Taipei Times*, 18th October. <<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2007/10/18/2003383640>>
- International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) (1973), *Military Balance 1973*, London: Routledge.
- IISS (1974), *Military Balance 1974*, London: Routledge.
- IISS (1975), *Military Balance 1975*, London: Routledge.
- IISS (2008), *Military Balance 2008*, London: Routledge.
- IISS (2010), *Military Balance 2010*, London: Routledge.
- IISS (2011), *Military Balance 2011*, London: Routledge.
- IISS (2012), *Military Balance 2012*, London: Routledge.
- IISS (2013), *Military Balance 2013*, London: Routledge.
- IISS (2014), *Military Balance 2014*, London: Routledge.
- Kagan, Richard C. (2007), *Taiwan's Statesman: Lee Teng-hui and Democracy in Asia*, Annapolis: Naval Institute Press
- Kallgren, Joyce (1963), "Nationalist China's Armed Force", *The China Quarterly*, Vol. 15, pp. 35-44.
- Kan, Shirley A. (2013), *Taiwan: Major U.S. Arms Sales since 1990*, Washington: Congress Report Service.
- Lin, April C.J. and Jerome F. Keating (2005), *Island in the Stream: A Quick Case Study of Taiwan's Complex History*, Taipei: SMC Publishing INC.
- Lin Gang (2013), "Beijing's Evolving Policy and Strategic Thinking on Taiwan", in Weixing Hu (ed.), *New Dynamics in Cross-Taiwan Strait Relations: How Far Can the Rapprochement Go?*, London: Routledge, pp. 63-77.
- Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) (2009), "Cross-Strait Economic Statistics Monthly, No. 188" <<http://www.mac.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=52986&ctNode=5934&mp=3>> (accessed 23rd March 2011).
- MAC (2013a), "Cross-Strait Economic Statistics Monthly, No. 244" <<http://www.mac.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=105865&ctNode=5934&mp=3>> (accessed 11th September 2013).



- MAC (2013b), "Enforcement Rules for the Act Governing Relations between Peoples of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area" <<http://www.mac.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=51178&ctNode=5914&mp=3>> (accessed 12th September 2013).
- Mearsheimer, John J. (1983), *Conventional Deterrence*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Ministry of National Defense (MND) (2013), *Quadrennial Defense Review: The Republic of China*, Taipei: the Ministry of National Defense.
- Minns, John (2006), *The Politics of Developmentalism: The Midas States of Mexico, South Korea and Taiwan*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mo, Yan-chih and Su Yung-yao (2011), "Ma calls for 'code of conduct' for retired generals", *Taipei Times*, 10th June. <<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/print/2011/06/10/2003505410>>
- Murray, Craig and Kyle Churchman (2013), *Taiwan's Declining Defense Spending Could Jeopardize Military Preparedness*, Washington: U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission.
- Murray, William S. (2008), "Revisiting Taiwan's Defense Strategy", *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 61, No. 3, pp. 13-38.
- Naval Command Headquarter (2009), "Guppy Class Submarine" <<http://navy.mnd.gov.tw/Publish.aspx?cnid=866&p=10159&Level=2>> (accessed 1st March 2009).
- Nelms, Douglas (2013), "Boeing Winds Down Production of Delta Apache", Rotor and Wing, 13th November. <[http://www.aviationtoday.com/rw/military/attack/Boeing-Winds-Down-Production-of-Delta-Apache\\_80633.html#.Uo21GdI71oM](http://www.aviationtoday.com/rw/military/attack/Boeing-Winds-Down-Production-of-Delta-Apache_80633.html#.Uo21GdI71oM)>
- Nolan, Janne E. (1986), *Military Industry in Taiwan and South Korea*, New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) (2008), *Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of People's Republic of China 2008*, Washington: Department of Defense.
- OSD (2013), *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Development Involving the People's Republic of China 2013*, Washington: Office of the Secretary of Defense.
- Pollack, Jonathan D. (2006), "Short-range Ballistic Missile Capabilities", in Steve Tsang (ed.), *If China Attacks Taiwan: Military Strategy, Politics and Economics*, London: Routledge, pp. 57-71.
- Raine, Sarah and Christian Le Miere (2013), *Regional Disorder The South China Sea Disputes*, London: Routledge.



- Ravenal, Earl C. (1971), "Approaching China, Defending Taiwan", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 50, No. 1, pp. 44-58.
- Rosoboron Export, Moscow (2005), *Aerospace Systems Export Catalogue*.
- Roy, Denny (2003), *Taiwan: A Political History*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Shambaugh, David (1996), "Taiwan's Security: Maintaining Deterrence amid Political Accountability", *The China Quarterly*, Vol. 148, pp. 1284-1318.
- Shen Pin-Luen (2012), "China's Aviation Industry: Past, Present, and Future", in Richard P. Hallion, Roger Cliff and Phillip C. Saunders (eds), *The Chinese Air Force: Evolving Concepts, Roles, and Capabilities*, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, pp. 257-270.
- Shlapak, David (2012), "Equipping the PLAAF: the Long March to Modernity", in Richard P. Hallion, Roger Cliff and Phillip C. Saunders (eds), *The Chinese Air Force: Evolving Concepts, Roles, and Capabilities*, Washington: National Defense University Press, pp. 191-212.
- SIPRI Arms Transfers Database <[http://www.sipri.org/contents/armstrad/at\\_data.html](http://www.sipri.org/contents/armstrad/at_data.html)> (accessed 28th October 2011).
- SIPRI Military Expenditure Data Base <[http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/milex\\_database](http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/milex_database)> (accessed 27th August 2013).
- Snow, Donald M. (2008), *National Security for a New Era: Globalization and Geopolitics after Iraq*, New York: Person Education Inc.
- Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, PRC (TAO) (2011), "The One-China Principle and the Taiwan Issue" <[http://www.gwytb.gov.cn/en/Special/WhitePapers/201103/t20110316\\_1789217.htm](http://www.gwytb.gov.cn/en/Special/WhitePapers/201103/t20110316_1789217.htm)> (accessed 10th September 2013).
- "Taiwan Delays until 2017 Plan To End Military Conscription", *Global Post*, 12th September 2013. <<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/kyodo-news-international/130912/taiwan-delays-until-2017-plan-end-military-conscriptio>>
- Tucker, Nancy Bernkopf (2009), *Strait Talk: United States-Taiwan Relations and the Crisis with China*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Ulman, Wayne A. (2011), "China's Military Aviation Forces", in Andrew S. Erickson and Lyle J. Goldstein (eds), *Chinese Aerospace Power: Evolving Maritime Roles*, Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, pp. 38-49.
- van Creveld, Martin (2008), *The Culture of War*, New York: Ballantine Books.
- Wang, Yu San (1990), "Foundation of the Republic of China's Foreign Policy", in Yu San Wang (ed.), *Foreign Policy of the Republic of China on Taiwan*, New York: Praeger, pp. 1-12.

- Waldron, Greg (2013), “Taiwan Makes Progress with F-CK-1 Avionics Upgrade”, *Flight International*, 16th July <<http://www.flightglobal.com/news/articles/taiwan-makes-progress-with-f-ck-1-avionics-upgrade-388322/>> (accessed 9th September 2013).
- World Trade Organisation (WTO) (2013), “Cross-Straits Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement”, the Regional Trade Agreements Information System, World Trade Organisation <<http://rtais.wto.org/rtadocs/713/TOA/English/Combined%20ECFA%20Text.pdf>> (accessed 12th September 2013).
- Zhang, Xiaoming (2003), “Air Combat for the People’s Republic: The People’s Liberation Army Air Force in Action, 1949-1969”, in Mark A. Ryan, David M. Finkelstein, and Michael A McDevitt (eds), *Chinese Warfighting: The PLA Experience since 1949*, London: M.E. Sharpe, pp. 270-300.





## **Cross-Strait Relations since 2008: Assessing Intra-position Politics**

**Hoo Tiang Boon\***

*Nanyang Technological University*

### **Abstract**

There has been a marked and significant upturn in relations between China and Taiwan since 2008. Indeed, one could describe the situation in the Taiwan Strait as an emerging rapprochement. The rapprochement has given rise to two suggestions: One, there has been a rare, tacit consensus among Taipei, Beijing and Washington on the priority of maintaining the cross-Strait status quo. And two, Taiwan has declined in importance as a security question. This article assesses these claims. Adopting a more nuanced, intra-position approach and relying on emerging new evidence and field data, the article will explore the politics of stances that have emerged in the cross-Strait theatre since 2008.

**Keywords:** *Taiwan, China, the United States, cross-Strait relations*

**JEL classification:** *F51, F59, H56, N45*

### **1. Introduction**

Relations between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Taiwan have improved markedly in recent times. There has been a resumption of institutionalized dialogue between Beijing and Taipei (including annual CCP-KMT talks). Direct shipping, air transport and postal exchanges



across the Taiwan Strait have restarted. Nineteen cross-Strait agreements have been inked, including the momentous 2010 Economic Co-operation Framework Agreement (ECFA), boosting the growing cross-Strait bilateral trade even further. Politically sensitive negotiations on the creation of representative offices on both sides of the Taiwan Strait have also begun. Given the acrimonious history between the PRC and Taiwan, these developments, among others, are undoubtedly significant. They indicate that since 2008, a rapprochement between the PRC and Taiwan has effectively begun and emerged.

The China-Taiwan rapprochement has given rise to suggestions of (i) the decreasing salience of the Taiwan Strait as a security question; and of (ii) a tacit convergence among the key protagonists – China, Taiwan and the US – on the near-term priority of maintaining the cross-Strait status quo. In this article, I will assess these claims. Relying on emerging new data and field evidence, I will examine what I note as the “position” politics that is being played out in the cross-Strait theatre since 2008.

## 2. China: A Return to Jiang’s “Impatient” Approach?

For Beijing, for the past decade, it has mainly honed in on the more exigent task of checking Taiwan’s *de jure* independence. In this regard, the Chinese government shares a similar, near-term priority with the Ma government: that is, to maintain the cross-Strait political status quo.

Nevertheless, Beijing’s fundamental and overriding objective is clear: to ultimately reunite Taiwan with mainland China. The Chinese perceive reunification as a *daye* 大业 (great cause), one that will contribute to the “great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation” and finally eradicate all traces of China’s “century of humiliation”. To be sure, the specific content of what exactly constitutes reunification is somewhat unclear and has never been explicitly delineated by China. And under former president Hu Jintao, China had given lesser attention to this objective, as opposed to the goal of preventing Taiwan’s independence. Yet, there can be no compromise on the reunification goal; a Chinese leader risks political oblivion and accusations of being a *hanjian* 汉奸

(traitor) if the leader is being seen as amenable to the idea of an independent Taiwan. In short, reunification is the justification for China's Taiwan policy, and the one consistent and immutable "core interest" of the PRC.<sup>1</sup>

To this end, China has pursued a multi-pronged approach comprising of economic, political, military and cultural strategies. Economically, it aims to broaden and deepen cross-Strait economic integration. Politically, its solution is to offer the "soft" formula of the "one country, two systems". Militarily, it has maintained a hedging and coercive strategy of not discounting of the use of force to prevent Taiwan independence. Culturally, it seeks to build a bridge of cultural and identity linkages with Taiwan. In recent times, it is evident that the PRC has focused on the economic pillar of its Taiwan policy. The belief and hope is that growing cross-Strait economic integration will connect the two sides close enough to convince the Taiwanese to eventually consider some form of a political union. Some scholars have held up the case of the European Union, which evolved from a primarily economic entity to a partially political one, as corroboration for the plausibility of the economic integration formula.<sup>2</sup>

Recent evidence has suggested that the new Xi regime will pursue a more ambitious approach that, while continuing to underscore the economic aspects of its Taiwan policy, will express greater urgency on the reunification issue. Thus, even as China's policy position in the near-term will be to try to accelerate and maintain the momentum of "peaceful development" of cross-Strait relations, there appears to be an increasing *within-position* tilt towards addressing the political questions of China-Taiwan relations.

A number of signals lend to this assessment. Around 2010, some Chinese officials began to express their frustration with what they regard as Taiwan's continued refusal to consider (let alone engage in) political dialogue despite the evident progress in economic relations. Questions were raised if Taiwan was covertly pursuing a policy of "peaceful separation".<sup>3</sup> At the 18th CCP party congress, Hu (just as the leadership transition was taking place) confirmed Beijing's increasing impatience with Taipei, publicly urging for "joint exploration" of political relations

between the two sides.<sup>4</sup>

Xi Jinping has continued where Hu has left off. In February 2013, Xi conveyed to a senior Taiwanese official that reunification was a sacrosanct “duty” for his government.<sup>5</sup> At the APEC leaders’ retreat in October 2013, this message was more explicit. Xi told former Taiwan vice-president Vincent Siew that the Taiwan “problem” should not be passed from “one generation to the next” and that eventually, the “longstanding cross-strait political differences” would have to “be resolved gradually”.<sup>6</sup> At this same APEC meeting, Zhang Zhijun, the head of China’s Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO), and Wang Yu-chi, the head of Taiwan’s Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), met each other in an unprecedented first for the ministers of both sides’ main government agencies in charge of cross-strait relations. A few days later, Zhang told audiences at a Shanghai cross-strait peace forum that “Taiwan and China cannot put off addressing their political differences for the long term” and that “sidestepping politics in favour of economic talks was unsustainable”. He also asserted that China’s “necessary” patience on reunification did not equate to “waiting passively without doing anything”.<sup>7</sup>

Why the Xi government would want to pay more attention on the political aspects of the cross-strait relationship is an interesting question. One factor could be related to Beijing’s positive assessment of the cross-strait strategic situation. It was noted that China-Taiwan relations had moved into a stage of “consolidation and deepening”, where China’s rising power gave it an increasing edge in dictating the terms of the cross-strait equilibrium and to “cope with foreign interference”.<sup>8</sup> Adding to this rising confidence was a growing realization among PRC officials and scholars that expanding cross-strait economic linkages were not giving rise to concomitant political progress, that enough “economic fruits” had been plucked already and that it was time to aim for the higher but juicier “political fruits”.<sup>9</sup> Another potential explanation could be related to leadership and political legitimacy factors in China. Based on early indications, Xi and Li appear keen to demonstrate that they are more prepared to make reformist or bold policy decisions as compared to the Hu-Wen duo. One criticism of the Hu regime had been that it was

too passive and unimaginative in terms of decision making, so the Xi regime could have felt the need to take a more inventive and bolder policy approach, which could have impacted policy thinking on Taiwan.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, the Taiwan question is “an issue of legitimacy and regime survival” for any Chinese leadership, so there could be some degree of eagerness on the part of the Xi leadership to build on existing progress in cross-Strait relations to produce results.

Of course, much is still unclear about the direction of China’s Taiwan policy under Xi. Chien-Kai Chen has contrasted Jiang’s “impatient” approach as compared to Hu’s “patient” cross-Strait style.<sup>11</sup> Drawing on this dichotomy, the early indications have been that the Xi and his colleagues will be less “patient” than the Hu regime and may potentially move towards Jiang’s more exigent approach towards reunification.

### 3. Taiwan: Playing a Delicate Balancing Game

An important factor explaining the emergence of the rapprochement has been KMT’s restoration to power in Taiwan since 2008. The KMT’s position is that a pro-independence policy is reckless and jeopardizes the security and economic interests of Taiwan. There is thus broad convergence on the near-term priority of preserving the status quo between the KMT and the CCP.

On the Ma administration’s longer term cross-Strait vision, however, this has been left deliberately ambivalent, encompassing what some Taiwanese officials describe as a “shield” of strategic ambiguity.<sup>12</sup> Taipei has taken actions and expressed signals that appear just enough to satisfy the mainland, giving the latter enough hope of a long-term political solution. Ma has claimed that Taiwan “will never ask the Americans to fight for [it].”<sup>13</sup> He has spoken about how China-Taiwan relations are not “state-to-state” relations.<sup>14</sup> More recently, in a message to Xi, Ma stated that “both sides of the Taiwan strait reached a consensus in 1992 to express each other’s insistence on the ‘one-China’ principle.” The Taiwanese government’s usual rhetoric on the consensus was “one China with different interpretations (一中各表)”, as opposed to Bei-



jing's "respective expressions on the One China principle (各表一中)", so Ma's message raised eyebrows because it deviated from the norm and excluded the "different interpretations" parlance.<sup>15</sup> Then, at the double ten 2013 national day address, building on his earlier "not state-to-state" rhetoric, Ma asserted that cross-Straits relations are not "international relations".<sup>16</sup>

Such statements should be music to Beijing's ears, and in some respects, are a reflection of the extant state of progressing relations between China and Taiwan. Nevertheless, the Ma government has tried to balance these apparently pro-China signals with caveats and clarifications. Ma has stated that reunification is unlikely to happen in his lifetime.<sup>17</sup> He has pushed back Chinese pressure on a cross-Straits peace accord, and suggested that this issue should be put to a national referendum first, claiming that the Taiwanese people feared that peace accord talks would end up being a pseudo-discussion on reunification.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, the Ma government see little need for a formal peace pact, arguing that all 19 cross-Straits agreements signed already represent "some form of a peace agreement" between the two sides.<sup>19</sup> This line of argument is also used to refute accusations from the mainland that Taipei is deliberately stalling political discussions, with the Ma government stressing that several of the 19 cross-Straits agreements entail political implications. Similarly, Taipei has been cool on Beijing's suggestions of mutual military confidence-building measures.<sup>20</sup> Lastly, while Ma has stated that the state-to-state framework cannot apply to cross-Straits ties, he has also qualified that this relationship cannot be considered as "entirely domestic either."<sup>21</sup>

Taiwan's "strategic ambiguity" approach also encompasses a strong American dimension. The Ma government has been keen to sustain and enhance Taipei's relationship with Washington. Noting that Taiwan-US relations had been "damaged" during the previous Chen regime, the Ma government has sought to reassure Washington with its stated policy of "no surprises" and "low-profile" pragmatism.<sup>22</sup> It has continued to purchase or request advanced weaponry from the US, which in the past 5 years has totalled a value of some US\$18.3 billion, the highest in twenty years.<sup>23</sup> Economic relations between Taipei and Washington have also

strengthened and there is now talk of Taiwan's potential inclusion in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement. Most significantly, the Ma government has expressed support for the US rebalance to Asia. Ma noted that Taiwan plays a "very important role" in this rebalance while Taiwan foreign minister David Lin has suggested that Taiwan "welcomes" the US rebalance to Asia.<sup>24</sup>

One could analogize Taiwan's cross-Strait approach to that of "cooking a curry that appeals to both eastern and western tastes", i.e., it seeks a pragmatic approach of "currying favour" with both US and China. Taiwan's representative to the US and important aide to Ma, Jin Pucong, explains this approach clearly: "We need strong support from the US, but we also have to deal cautiously with mainland China because they are now the number one partner of Taiwan."<sup>25</sup>

#### **4. The United States: Affirming the Salience of Taiwan**

The basis for the US official position on Taiwan is essentially the three US-PRC Joint Communiqués of 1972, 1979 and 1982, the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), and the so-called "Six Assurances" of 1982. A number of key ideas define and delimit this position. For a start, America "acknowledges" the idea of "one China." Hence, Taiwan is not regarded as a sovereign country and its status is deemed as "unsettled" by the US. Second, the resolution of Taiwan's status is a question that is best left to peoples of both sides of the Taiwan Strait to decide, without an expressed determining role for Washington. Accordingly, and thirdly, any cross-Strait resolution should be mutually agreed and peaceful. No side should unilaterally impose its own solution while Washington will regard any use of force in the Taiwan Strait as a "grave concern" and a "threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific." This obliges the US to maintain the capacity to "resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion" that threatens or imperils the security of Taiwan. Thus, even as the US acknowledges the idea of one China, it retains the right to sell arms to Taiwan – i.e. "to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character".<sup>26</sup>

The aforementioned principles sound straightforward but in reality obfuscate the fact that American position on Taiwan encompasses a number of ambiguous elements. For instance, while it is reasonably clear that Washington opposes any unilateral steps to amend the cross-Straits political status quo, it has not explicitly endorsed the idea of unification between Taiwan and China. Here, US policy statements reveal a preference for the terms “settlement” or “resolution” instead of the more politically loaded nomenclature of “unification” or “reunification”.<sup>27</sup> Meanwhile, the usage of a particular important phrasing – that the US “acknowledges” (instead of “recognizes”) the idea of “one China” – suggests only awareness, but not necessarily agreement, with the Chinese position.<sup>28</sup>

The American position is also ambivalent on the questions of whether the US will actually intervene in the event of a military conflict between Taiwan and China, the specific conditions for this intervention, and the extent of an assumed intervention. A commitment by the United States to maintain the capacity to resist aggression or coercion in the Taiwan Strait is not the same as a commitment that it *will* resist aggression or coercion. In 2001, George Bush did say that the US will do “whatever it [takes] to help Taiwan defend herself.” But in that same statement, Bush also clarified (which drew less attention) that “a declaration of independence is not the one China policy, and we will work with Taiwan to make sure that that does not happen.” By 2005, Bush would simply state that the US will respond according to the “spirit of the Taiwan Relations Act”, giving little away in addressing the question of America’s role in a cross-Straits conflict.<sup>29</sup>

It would certainly be in Washington’s interests to have a less than straight forward cross-Straits policy. For one, positional ambiguity means that the US need not be committed to, and restrained by, stances that may well lead to politically and materially costly policy responses. Given that the US has to balance its relations with both China and Taiwan, positional ambivalence (in some ways similar to Taipei) lends Washington a certain amount of manoeuvring space and leverage in navigating the politics of the Taiwan Strait. This ambivalence also serves Washington well in making it appear neutral in cross-Straits affairs; after

all, the American position neither explicitly supports independence nor reunification. Of course, there are those who see US cross-Strait policy as less a product of clever, strategic thinking and more a consequence of political contestation and compromise in Washington. Nevertheless, one broad observation seems evident: the American position is less fixated on “specific outcomes” as opposed to “the *process* of the resolution of the Taiwan question”.<sup>30</sup>

By the time of the second half of the Bush administration tenure, it was suggested that Taiwanese president Chen Shui-bian had been regarded as a “persona non grata” in Washington. This is probably an overstatement but what is true though is that Washington “had been concerned, and exasperated, by the efforts of the former DPP [Democratic Progressive Party] regime to steer Taiwan towards de jure independence.” It is evident that the perceived unilateral antics of the then DPP government had risked alienating Washington. Not surprisingly thus, when Ma won the Taiwanese presidential elections in 2008 and a cross-Strait rapprochement subsequently developed, these developments were viewed positively in Washington.<sup>31</sup> It welcomed the change in government in Taiwan as a “fresh opportunity for both sides to reach out and engage one another in peacefully resolving their differences”, praised the re-establishment of the “three links” between the PRC and Taiwan, and hailed cross-Strait relations as developing “in the right direction”.<sup>32</sup>

By the first term of the Obama administration, the China-Taiwan rapprochement was progressing rapidly as talk of a formal cross-Strait peace agreement emanated from both sides of the Strait. It would seem that Taiwan had become less critical as an issue of security concern for the United States and as an instability factor in the Asia-Pacific. This assessment would appear corroborated by evidence from a Congressional Research Service (CRS) study on the evolution of major statements (from Washington, Beijing and Taipei) on the “one China” policy. The CRS report detailed four key US statements on the “one China” framework during the Obama administration, as opposed to seventeen statements during the Bush administration and fifteen statements during the Clinton administration.<sup>33</sup>

Alongside this supposed growing desecuritization of the Taiwan issue was an emerging view that the Obama government, not unlike other administrations, was not averse to ignoring Taiwan's interests in its pursuit of better relations with Beijing. Indeed, there were some signals alluding to Washington's apparent willingness, in one analyst's words, to "downgrade" relations with Taiwan. For example, the Obama administration had offered to host cross-Straits military talks, a move which according to some, goes against the spirit of the 1982 "Six Assurances" that specifies, among others, that the US "will not exert pressure on Taiwan to negotiate with the PRC."<sup>34</sup> There was also the 2009 US-China Joint Statement, which pronounced that both China and the United States "agreed to respect each other's core interests"; it was suggested that this implied US acknowledgement and acquiescence to the non-negotiable nature of China's interest on Taiwan.<sup>35</sup> In 2010, Defence Secretary Robert Gates noted that the United States was only obliged to supply "minimal levels of defensive capability" to Taipei. He also reiterated Washington's fundamental "opposition" to Taiwan's independence, a noteworthy comment in part because the term "opposition" deviated from the traditionally milder parlance that the US "does not support" Taiwanese independence.<sup>36</sup>

These official statements coincided with a rising advocacy among some American commentators and former policy makers that, in the wake of the rapprochement, it was perhaps time for Washington to re-think its policy towards Taiwan (including the issue of arms sales) so that a more stable and cooperative relationship with China could be forged. Zbigniew Brzezinski, the former US national security adviser, argued that "it is doubtful that Taiwan can indefinitely avoid a more formal connection with China", and that "any long-term US-Chinese accommodation will have to address the fact that a separate Taiwan, protected indefinitely by US arms sales, will provoke intensifying Chinese hostility."<sup>37</sup> Another proponent was Rear Admiral Bill Owen, a former vice-chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff under the Obama government. Suggesting in the *Financial Times* that arms sales to Taiwan were no longer in America's "best interest", Owen argued that the "outdated" TRA was in need of a "thoughtful review". Owen was of the

opinion that Beijing would see such a move “as a genuine attempt to set a new course for [the US-China] relationship...”<sup>38</sup>

Unsurprisingly, such calls were critically received by those in the US who thought that their adherents were “guilty of seeking to abandon Taiwan.”<sup>39</sup> Critics argue that cross-Strait policy shifts tilted towards China would not be in American interests as, fundamentally, a reunification scenario would be (i) politically unpalatable domestically, as it means backing “the idea of a democratic Taiwan in an undemocratic China”; (ii) would mean the loss of operational and intelligence linkages with Taiwan; (iii) would mean the loss of Taiwan as a strategic buffer to the American West coast as well as a strategic “leverage” to the US-China bargaining table; and (iv) would imply the gratuitous and unwise appeasement of a growing peer power.<sup>40</sup>

By the time of the second half of the Obama administration, earlier assessments about a more pro-China US cross-Strait policy would appear misguided. Inevitably, the US strategic “pivot” to Asia raised questions on how Taiwan’s role squares with America’s overall strategy vis-à-vis China. This issue was unequivocally addressed by Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell in a significant 2011 testimony to the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Underlining that “Taiwan matters”, Campbell stated that “a critical part of [the US rebalance] is [about] building a comprehensive, durable, and unofficial relationship between the United States and Taiwan” and that “the bedrock of that relationship is the [US-Taiwan] security relationship”. Some have noted that Secretary of State Hilary Clinton’s 2011 *Foreign Policy* article on “America’s Pacific Century”, which many considered the first public affirmation and outline of the US pivot, did not address the issue of Taiwan. But in a key speech on the same topic the following month in Honolulu, Clinton conspicuously mentioned Taiwan and stressed that it was an “important security and economic partner” of the US.<sup>41</sup>

Washington followed up its rhetoric with discernable actions to improve its relationship with Taiwan, or at least not let this relationship regress. In 2012, the American move to grant Taiwanese nationals visa-free entry to the United States (for ninety days) became effective. The following year, US legislation was passed to support Taiwan’s



involvement in the International Civil Aviation Organisation (although some would point out that Beijing did not particularly oppose this participation as well). Meanwhile, talk of Taiwan's potential inclusion in the TPP framework also emerged, and the US representative in Taiwan Ray Burghardt has suggested that Washington "would oppose any efforts to exclude Taiwan from [the] TPP."<sup>42</sup> In the 2013 Obama-Xi Summit, president Obama did not shy away from reiterating American commitments towards Taiwan even as he discussed a "new model of cooperation" between the US and China with his Chinese counterpart. More importantly, Obama affirmed the US commitment to continue to sell arms to Taipei.<sup>43</sup> Taken together, these signals suggest that the US pivot to Asia has squared with an apparent re-evaluation of the significance of Taiwan to US strategic interests and an enhancement of US-Taiwan relations.<sup>44</sup>

## 5. Concluding Remarks

It appears that the current trend of warming cross-Straits relations will continue and that this relationship will remain relatively stable for the foreseeable future. Indeed, all three actors (China, Taiwan and the United States) concur on the near-term position of maintaining the cross-Straits status quo, i.e. no Taiwan independence. However, this broad consensus should not be seen as static and monolithic. Within this broad consensus, as this paper has shown, there have been intra-position shifts and developments that merit further attention. Based on recent evidence, Beijing may well start to pursue an increasingly "impatient" cross-Straits approach that will shift the focus from checking Taiwan independence to one which is more reunification-centric. Nevertheless, the mainland will be mindful of appearing to exert too much pressure on the Ma regime, which could backfire. The Chinese leadership is not unaware of domestic political constraints in Taiwan and will be careful not to destabilize the current equilibrium.

Taiwan will continue to pursue its bi-directional policy of enhancing relations with both China and the US, as this approach clearly allows the maximization of Taiwanese interests. But this approach will contain





necessarily ambiguous elements because Taipei does not want to be perceived as drifting too close to either side. In that sense, Taipei's position is not just about preserving the status quo; it is also about *perpetuating* the status quo. The question of course is how long will Beijing be able to accept this situation.

Finally, the US will look to shore up its “unofficial” relationship with Taiwan. On the one hand, the US encourages Taiwan to have cordial relations with China, but on the other hand, it does not want this embrace to “go too far”.<sup>45</sup> While the US will be less able to leverage the Taiwan card on China after the cross-Strait rapprochement, Taiwan is a nontrivial component in the US rebalance strategy to Asia, so Washington will be keen to take US-Taiwan ties to a higher level.

## Notes

- \* Dr Hoo Tiang Boon 符祥文 is Research Fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He holds a Ph.D. in International Relations from the University of Oxford. His research interests include China's foreign and security policy, cross-Strait relations, Chinese identity politics, and US-China relations. He is the lecturer of the Masters course *Chinese security and foreign policy*, as well as the deputy coordinator of the M.Sc. (Asian Studies) programme at RSIS. He is the author of several publications on China, cross-Strait relations and US-China relations, and is currently completing a book manuscript on China's proclaimed identity as a responsible great power. He has reviewed for the publications *Global Governance*, the *Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) Journal* and the *Journal of Asian Politics and History*. He has been involved in Track Two diplomatic initiatives, such as the Korea-Singapore Forum as well as the Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions. Dr Hoo was formerly a visiting scholar at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences and a visiting researcher at the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies. In 2014, he will be a visiting fellow at the China Foreign Affairs University in Beijing. <Email: istbhoo@ntu.edu.sg>
1. Hoo Tiang Boon, “Reassessing the Taiwan-China Rapprochement: A Constrained Romance of the Two Kingdoms”, *St Antony's International Review*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 2012, pp. 164-181.



2. Chien-min Chao, "Will Economic Integration between Mainland China and Taiwan lead to a Congenial Political Culture?", *Asian Survey*, Vol. 43, No. 2, 2003, pp. 280-304.
3. Chien-kai Chen, "Comparing Jiang Zemin's Impatience with Hu Jintao's Patience Regarding the Taiwan Issue, 1989-2012", *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 21, No. 78, 2012, pp. 955-972.
4. Alan Romberg, "Striving for New Equilibria", *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 41, 2013, pp. 1-30.
5. James Areddy and Jenny Hsu, "China Seeks 'Equal Consultations' with Taiwan", *Wall Street Journal*, 7th October 2013.
6. Lee Seok Hwai and Kor Kian Beng, "Xi Wants to Speed Up Cross-Strait Talks", *The Straits Times*, 10th October 2013,
7. "Political Talks Cannot be Put Off Indefinitely, TAO says", *Taipei Times*, 13th October 2013.
8. "鄭立中：大陸將更多的掌控兩岸關係發展主動權" [Zheng Lizhong: the mainland will seize more initiative in developing cross-strait relations], *China Review News*, 8th March 2013.
9. Interview in Taipei, November 2013.
10. Interview in Taipei, November 2013.
11. Chen, "Comparing Jiang Zemin's Impatience with Hu Jintao's Patience Regarding the Taiwan Issue, 1989-2012".
12. "Taiwan's Envoy to US Defends 'Shield' of Strategic Ambiguity", *South China Morning Post*, 6th February 2013.
13. President Ma's interview with CNN, 1st May 2010.
14. Adam Tyrsett Kuo, "Cross-Strait Ties Are Not State-to-State, nor Purely Domestic Ties Either: Ma", *The China Post*, 12th November 2013.
15. Chris Wang, "Ma Tilts to China's Consensus: DPP", *Taipei Times*, 23rd July 2013.
16. Chris Wang and Mo Yan-chih, "Su Slams Ma's Definition of Cross-Strait Ties", *Taipei Times*, 12th October 2013.
17. "马英九：统一我们这一生不会发生" [Ma Yingjeou: reunification will not happen in our lifetime], *Lianhe Zaobao* 联合早报, 16th May 2008.
18. "Interview with Taiwanese President Ma Yingjeou", *Washington Post*, 25th October 2013.
19. Interview in Taipei, November 2013.
20. "Interview with Taiwanese President Ma Yingjeou".
21. Kuo, "Cross-Strait Ties Are Not State-to-State, nor Purely Domestic Ties Either: Ma".
22. "Taiwan's Envoy to US Defends 'Shield' of Strategic Ambiguity".

23. "Interview with Taiwanese President Ma Yingjeou".
24. *Ibid.*; Interview in Taipei, November 2013.
25. "Taiwan's Envoy to US Defends 'Shield' of Strategic Ambiguity".
26. Shirley Kan, "China/Taiwan: Evolution of the 'One China' Policy – Key Statements from Washington, Beijing and Taipei", *Congressional Research Service Report*, 26th August 2013; Shirley Kan and Wayne Morrison, "US-Taiwan Relationship: Overview of Policy Issues", *Congressional Research Service Report*, 11th September 2013.
27. *Ibid.*
28. John Tkacik, "Taiwan's Unsettled Status: Preserving US Options in the Pacific", *The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder*, No. 2146, 2008, pp. 1-15.
29. Kan, "China/Taiwan: Evolution of the 'One China' Policy".
30. Kan and Morrison, "US-Taiwan Relationship".
31. Hoo, "Reassessing the Taiwan-China Rapprochement".
32. "Bush Urges Hu to Reach Out to Taiwan", *Taipei Times*, 28th March 2008; "US Official Praises Cross-Strait Policy", *Taipei Times*, 2nd June 2008.
33. To be sure, this observation is qualified by the fact that the second term of the Obama administration still has around another three years to complete. See Kan, "China/Taiwan: Evolution of the 'One China' Policy".
34. John Copper, "Obama Turns toward Taiwan", *The National Interest*, 12th September 2013.
35. *Transcript of US-China Joint Statement*, Beijing, China, 17th November 2009.
36. *Remarks by Secretary Gates at the Shangri-La Dialogue*, International Institute for Strategic Studies, Singapore, 4th June 2010.
37. William Lowther, "Brzezinski Mulls Taiwan's Future", *Taipei Times*, 17th December 2011.
38. Bill Owens, "America Must Start Treating China as a Friend", *Financial Times*, 17th November 2009.
39. "China-Taiwan Tensions Could Loom over US Pivot to Asia: View", *Bloomberg*, 26th February 2012.
40. Hoo, "Reassessing the Taiwan-China Rapprochement".
41. Kan, "China/Taiwan: Evolution of the 'One China' Policy".
42. Copper, "Obama Turns toward Taiwan".
43. Isaac Stone Fish, "Realpolitik and Spinning the US-China Summit", *The New York Times*, 12th June 2013.
44. Copper, "Obama Turns toward Taiwan".
45. "Taiwan's Envoy to US Defends 'Shield' of Strategic Ambiguity".





## **Scarborough Shoal Dispute, China's Assertiveness, and Taiwan's South China Sea Policy**

Shawn Shaw-fawn **Kao**\*  
*Tunghai University*

### **Abstract**

With the emergence of China's rapid economic and military power, broad discussions of China and East Asia's political relationship surfaced. Although China's attitude towards neighbouring countries has been continuously amiable, conflictual incidents were occasionally reported. Among them, the South China Sea with overlapping sovereignty claim by many countries is an area that is prone to constant conflicts for China and its neighbour countries. In April, 2012, although the confrontation between China and the Philippines in the Scarborough Shoal was eventually resolved without leading to any direct conflicts, China's strong message claiming sovereignty right in the significant dispute nevertheless indicates China's growing assertiveness in South China Sea.

This study provides an analytical review on two interrelated issues. First, it attempts to review and analyze the Scarborough Shoal dispute and its impact on China's South China Sea Policy. This paper argues that China's assertive approach toward South China Sea will be a non-military proactive effort in the near future, although Beijing's attitude and actions has been stronger and military forces have become an option.

Second, the paper reviews China's assertiveness in South China Sea, and its implication for Taiwan's South China Sea Policy. Taiwan's South





China Sea Policy approach has been more restrained comparatively than other claimants in the area. It calls for an open, regional or multilateral approach toward cooperation, and has until now maintained a cautious approaches toward cooperation with China, exclusively on territorial sovereignty contentions or joint development in the disputed islands, particularly the Spratlys. And thus, the policy will largely remain subtle and ambiguous in the years ahead, as Taiwan does not want to provoke either China or the ASEAN claimants in the South China Sea.

**Keywords:** *South China Sea, ASEAN, China Rise, Taiwan*

**JEL classification:** *F51, F52, F59, H56*

## 1. China's Evolving Position in South China Sea

With the rising of China's power, discussion around the world on China and East Asia's political relationship surfaced. Although China's attitude towards neighbouring countries has been continuing amiable, conflictual incidents were occasionally reported. Among them, the South China Sea (SCS) with overlapping sovereignty claims by many countries in an area that is prone to constant conflict for China and its neighbour countries. The flare-up between China and the Philippines over Scarborough Shoal (Huangyan Island, 黃岩島) in April 2012 was a typical case in this particular regard. Although the confrontation between China and the Philippines in the Scarborough Shoal was eventually resolved without leading to any direct conflicts, China's strong message claiming sovereignty right in the significant dispute nevertheless indicate China's growing assertive attitude, and even a more proactive efforts than ever in its South China Sea policy.

China's growing assertive behaviour in the South China Sea has been examined and reviewed in recent discussion and publication in the academic circle.<sup>1</sup> Media across the regions have also focused on China's possible motivations. And the publications of an article in the *Global Times*, op-ed on September 29th, 2011 with the title "Time to teach those around the South China Sea a lesson", was picked up in particular by



numerous news outlets in both China and around the world.

Since the beginning of the Post-Cold War era, China's strategy of self-constraint has been based on Deng Xiaoping's "24-Characters guidance" of "observe calmly; secure own position on; cope with affairs calmly; hide our capacities and bide our time; be good at maintaining a low profile; and never claim leadership".<sup>2</sup> China's peaceful rise narrative was meant to keep a low profile and to reassure neighbours and the world of peaceful intentions. The narrative now is that the more power China gets, the more challenges it encounters. As China's status on the international stage increases, it brings more attention and has made China more suspicious of the outside world. The central theme of the low profile strategy was never to take a global lead as it was actually more disadvantages in terms of trouble and cost than being the world's leader would provide.<sup>3</sup>

The *Global Times* op-ed, going further by saying "A good time to take military action in the South China Sea", seems to break with Deng Xiaoping's strategic guidance. The op-ed was penned by Long Tao 龍韜, a pseudonym that means "wave of the dragon". He wrote, "Do not worry about small-scale wars; it is the best way to release the potential of war. Play a few small battles and big battles can be avoided." Long added further that military action should be focused on striking the Philippines and Vietnam, "the two noisiest troublemakers to achieve the effect of killing one chicken to scare the monkeys." Through military action, he went on, China could transform the South China Sea into "a sea of fire", an act made possible by the fact that "of the more than 1,000 oilrigs and four airfield on the Spratly Islands, none belongs to China."<sup>4</sup> Long asked in his writing, "Who'll suffer most when Western oil giants withdraw?" Such sabre-rattling would seem unwise and counter-productive from a strategic and military point of view, as it is likely to push Vietnam and the Philippines towards the US, as well as towards India or Japan, to form a coalition against China. But the op-ed may have the one more immediate goal: to scare Western oil companies always from Vietnam and the Philippines and to deter them from concluding deals with them.

A new cache of US diplomatic cables released by Wikileaks on September 1, 2011, highlighted efforts going back to at least 2006, to pressure oil companies such as Exxon Mobil, BP, Chevron and Petronas after they cut deals with Hanoi. US and other international companies with interests in China were convinced to leave. The world's largest oil firm, Exxon Mobil, was threatened repeatedly by Chinese diplomats to end activities in Vietnam but still went forward with their joint-ventures projects in Vietnam.

However, according to one of Beijing's think tanks, China Institute of International Studies (CIIS), China's image has been distorted concerning the South China Sea issue. As Su Xiaohui (Deputy Director of the Department for International and Strategic Studies, CIIS) claims, the way that China has been becoming more assertive in dealing with disputes with weak neighbours has been distorted.<sup>5</sup> In fact, Su Xiaohui asserts, China's policies concerning the South China Sea are consistent. China is seeking a balance between defending national interests and maintaining an agreeable regional environment.<sup>6</sup> Based on such rationale, China is firm in defending territorial sovereignty and legitimate rights, and at the same time, persists in peaceful development and is willing to solve the disputes with concerned parties through bilateral dialogue and negotiation. China will continue to manage good-neighbour relationships and partnerships, as she put it.<sup>7</sup>

In any case, Li Mingjiang, a long-time observer on South China Sea issues from S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University of Singapore, suggests that the high tensions and conflicts in the South China Sea have sparked a serious policy debate in China ever since, with a diverse and wide range of views and policy proposals being put forward by Chinese analysts.<sup>8</sup> Li contends that the majority of Chinese analysts seem to share the consensus that the conflicts in the South China Sea should be blamed on regional states for failing to respect Chinese interests and for colluding with external powers. He said, "this is perhaps an indication that China is unlikely to make significant amendments to its policy on the South China Sea. The logic behind this is that a major policy overhaul is not necessary if there is nothing seriously wrong with Chinese behavior."

However, as Li continues, the pressure for a tougher policy does not come from the mainstream scholarly community, but from the popular nationalists. New developments in China, including the growth of nationalism, the growth of China's comprehensive capabilities, and the compartmentalization of administrative duties among different agencies, will very likely prompt China to speed up its efforts to further consolidate its economic and military presence in the South China Sea. In this regard, Beijing is unlikely to reduce its current level of law enforcement activities in the South China Sea. Moreover, it is becoming more difficult to coordinate the actions of the different Chinese agencies that are involved in maritime affairs.

While facing with the development in the South China Sea and the compartmentalization of administrative duties among different agencies, China adjusted existing administration policies and strengthened its maritime management for the sake of cooperating with China's good-neighbour diplomacy toward its neighbouring countries. For example, in June 2013, China's State Council approved the establishment of Sansha 三沙, a city to administer the Xisha 西沙, Zhongsha 中沙 and Nansha 南沙 islands and their surrounding waters. In July of the same year, the Central Military Commission authorized the Guangzhou Military Command to form a garrison command in the Sansha City. In November, a map of Sansha city was issued. And China's Hainan Province passed a regulation related to ocean security underlining China's determination to preserve its maritime security. Under this regulation, several measures can be taken against foreign ships that illegally enter China's territory.

In addition, China also strengthens the surveillance in related waters. According to China's State Oceanic Administration, Chinese marine surveillance ships carried out 58 patrol missions in the South China Sea in 2012. In early 2013, a China marine surveillance detachment accomplished an airborne and seaborne patrol of the Xisha Islands in the South China Sea.<sup>9</sup> As Li Mingjiang contends, while Beijing would propose much tougher policies to better protect its interests on the one hand, China's concerns about its relations with Southeast Asia, its strategic rivalry with the United State, and its priority





for domestic economic development, on the other hand, are likely to constrain Beijing from becoming openly confrontational vis-à-vis the neighbouring states. These concerns will serve as significant constraints to China's maritime law enforcement, and even the use of the military forces to solve the conflicts. Against such backdrop, Beijing is likely to practise, as Li asserts, a non-confrontational assertiveness in the South China Sea dispute in the near future.<sup>10</sup>

## **2. The Scarborough Shoal Dispute and Its Implications**

The flare-up between China and the Philippines over the cluster of rock formations in South China Sea known as "Scarborough Shoal" in April 2012 has tested the region's tenuous calm. The Scarborough Shoal is marked by a triangular-shaped chain of reefs and rocks, enclosing an area of the lagoon with 150 square kilometers width in its nature. The tallest of the rocks projects 3 meters above water at high tide. The surrounding water is rich in fisheries and marine life which have been exploited by fishing vessels from China and the Philippines for decades. Scarborough Shoal is located 124 nautical miles (nm) from Zambalies province in the Philippines and 472 nm from the coast of China. It is within the 200 nm exclusive economic zone (EEZ) claimed by the Philippines from its main archipelago. However, the fact that the Shoal is within the EEZ of the Philippines does not give the Philippines sovereignty over it or make it part of its territory. How the dispute is resolved holds broader implication for the region wary of a rising China.

The standoff began April 8 of 2012 when a Philippine reconnaissance aircraft spotted 5 Chinese fishing vessels in the lagoon. The Philippine navy dispatched a frigate CBRP (Gregorio del Pilar, the largest ship of Philippine Naval Forces), to investigate the Chinese vessels, and two days later, two China Marine surveillance ships soon arrived, interposing themselves between the frigate and the fishing vessels. China and the Philippines formally protested against the other's actions. To lower tensions, the Philippines withdrew the navy frigate, replacing it with a Coast Guard Cutter. And China reinforced its presence by dispatching its newest Fishery Law Enforcement Command



Ship, Yuzheng 310. The standoff went on more than a month ever since.

Under the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), an island is defined as a naturally formed feature that can support human habitation or has an economic function, and entitled to a 200nm EEZ. If a feature does not meet these criteria, it's classified as a rock, entitled to 12 nm of territorial waters, but not an EEZ. Because five or so rocks on the shoal and reportedly above water at high tide, it meets the definition of an "island" under the UNCLOS. Therefore, it is subject to a claim of sovereignty in its own right and is entitled to a 12nm territorial sea of its own. Scarborough Shoal is a classic case of a territorial sovereignty dispute. And UNCLOS, however, lacks authority to decide on sovereignty disputes over land features such as islands and rocks. The law applies only in cases of disputes arising from maritime jurisdiction.

Both China and the Philippines claim that Scarborough Shoal is an integral part of their national territory. The Philippines, referring to Scarborough Shoal as Panatag Shoal, asserts that it has exercised effective occupation and effective jurisdiction over the Shoal since independence in 1946. To reinforce this claim it points out that it built a light house on the Shoal in 1965 and that it has conducted surveys and research in the waters surrounding the Shoal. Manila also argues that the Shoal falls within its 200 nm EEZ.

China, referring to Scarborough Shoal as Huangyan Island, asserts that Scarborough Shoal and its adjacent waters have been Chinese territory for generations and that it discovered the Shoal, incorporated it with its territory and exercised jurisdiction over it. Further, the Shoal is included in the Zhongsha islands (中沙群島, also known as Macclesfield Bank), one of the four archipelagoes inside China's infamous nine-dashed line map to which it has historic claims to sovereignty. China also argues that the Philippines never disputed Chinese jurisdiction until 1979.

The dispute continued for more than a month. Both sides used political posturing to accompany bilateral diplomacy to advance their claims. The Philippines has adopted a three-pronged strategy – legal, political and diplomatic – threatening to take the dispute unilaterally to the international tribunal; seeking support from fellow members of the

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the international community, and in the meantime continuing negotiations with China.

China, on the other hand, has resorted to a variety of measures to pressure the Philippines: such as issuing a travel advisory that led to the cancellation of 80 scheduled Chinese tour group and chartered flights to the Philippines; temporarily halting imports of Filipino bananas to China and orchestrating a hostile press campaign. In 2011, the Philippines exported \$60 million worth of bananas to China, its 3rd largest banana exports market. Losses of banana inputs in May of that year were estimated at round \$34 million. China is also the source of the 4th largest number tourists to the Philippines. In May, 1,500 Chinese tourists' cancellation of their trips to the Philippines resulted in a loss of nearly \$1 million to the Philippines tourist industry.

However, just as relations between the Philippines and China were becoming increasingly intense, both sides made concessions. On May 13, almost after a month of the standoff, China announced imposition of a unilateral fishery ban for two and a half months in the South China Sea covering the area that includes the Shoal, warning that action would be taken against foreign fishing vessels that violate the ban.

By the same token, on May 16th, the Philippines also issued its own fishing ban around the shoal. The announcement of the fishing ban by both sides was definitely offering a way to alleviate the tension of the conflict over the shoal. Although the reciprocal fishing bans did offer a way to de-escalation, these expectations were short-lived. In late May, China dispatched three additional marine surveillance ships to Scarborough Shoal accompanied by 10 Chinese fishing boats according to Philippines sources. China admitted that 20 fishing boats were at the shoal, and the Chinese civilian authorities took no steps to prevent these craft from fishing while China's ban remained in force.

The significance of the Scarborough Shoal dispute presented clear evidence on China's assertive conduct in South China Sea. Furthermore, the standoff served to further highlight the shifting, to some extent, of China's policy of "shelving dispute and seeking joint development" toward a more pro-active behaviour in the South China Sea compared to the past. In short, this study observes that China's attitude and actions,

including its diplomatic position, has been stronger, and more proactive, and military force has become an option while economic power has been utilized.

### 3. Taiwan's South China Sea Policy Dilemma in the Post-Cold War Era

While the Republic of China on Taiwan (ROC) claims sovereignty over all the islands within the South China Sea as China does, it only has effective control over the entire area within the U-shaped line to be its historical waters in which it has preferential rights but this boundary line has been challenged by other ASEAN claimants. Taiwan has built an airstrip on the Pratas Island (Tungsha Dao 東沙島) and maintains a garrison of marines. So far, it has not been seriously challenged by either the PRC or any ASEAN states. The ROC on Taiwan was also the first claimant to occupy Taiping 太平 (Itu Aba) Island in the Spratlys with troops. The island has a garrison of marines (approximately 112 troops), a radar station, a meteorological centre, a power plant, and a strip.<sup>11</sup>

Although the Spratly Islands are traditional fishing grounds for small Taiwan vessels and are potentially rich in oil and gas deposits, they are some 800 nautical miles southwest of Taiwan and beyond Taipei's power projection. Nevertheless, Taipei has given the South China Sea issue quite high priority in the Post-Cold War era. In 1990 Taipei government approved the placing of the Paratas Island and Taiping Island under the temporary jurisdiction of the municipal government of Kaohsiung, Taiwan's southernmost city. In 1992 an interministerial South China Sea Task Force was established to review and revise the ROC's South China Sea policy. In 1993 the ROC government further adopted a South China Sea Policy Guideline (hereafter the Policy Guideline) whose goals were to: (1) safeguard ROC sovereignty over the island in the South China Sea, (2) strengthen development and management of the South China Sea, (3) promote cooperation among the littoral states of the South China Sea, (4) resolve disputes peacefully, and (5) protect the area's ecological environment.<sup>12</sup> Obviously Taipei's policy is to seek peaceful resolution of territorial disputes in the South

China Sea, particularly in the Spratly Islands. As the policy guideline indicates, Taiwan is willing to cooperate with other claimants in technical areas such as navigation safety, pollution control disaster relief, seaborne rescue, oceanographic research, and ecological conservation. Such a position follows the principle contained in the 1992 ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea, which called on all claimants to settle disputes by peaceful means and resolved to “explore the possibility of cooperation in the South China Sea relating to the safety of maritime navigation and communication, protection against pollution of the marine environment coordination of search and rescue operation, efforts towards combating piracy and armed robbery as well as collaboration in the campaign against illicit trafficking in drugs.”<sup>13</sup>

After the Mischief Reef incident between the PRC and the Philippines, Taipei echoed the call of ASEAN to refrain from taking action that might destabilize the South China Sea and endanger the peaceful settlement of the Spratly dispute. Taipei also reiterated its own five principles regarding the South China Sea which was mentioned earlier. However due to the absence of diplomatic relations with any of the region’s countries, Taiwan has found it difficult to conduct any kind of negotiation on the disputed islands. Taiwan’s ambiguous international status further weakens its bargaining position. One Malaysian scholar has ever argued that Taiwan has “no juridical standing to make any claim to any territory.”<sup>14</sup> Taiwan also stands alone in its military posture vis-à-vis other claimants in the South China Sea, having neither a bilateral security pact nor a multilateral mechanism through which it can obtain outside assistance. Furthermore, under pressure from Beijing, the ASEAN states have excluded Taiwan from the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Although Taiwan’s scholars have been invited to participate in the working group meeting of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) since April 1996, Taiwan is not a member of CSCAP and is not allowed to raise the issue of cross-Straits relations in this track-two regional security forum.

With the exception of the Workshop on Managing Potential Conflict in the South China Sea (hereafter, the South China Sea workshop series), Taiwan has no access to any multilateral forum in which the Spratly

Islands dispute could be resolved. Even though, Taiwan's participation in the South China Sea workshop series has been far from smooth. For one thing its delegation has been variously designated "Taiwan, China" and "Taipei, China". In addition to the main workshop, Taiwan has actively participated in five offshoot technical working group meetings on legal matters, marine scientific research, the marine environmental protection, resource assessment and ways of development, and safety of navigation, shipping, and communication. According to Taipei's policy guideline, Taiwan also intends to seek opportunities to host international conferences on the South China Sea issue. However, under pressure from Beijing, Taiwan has been prevented from sponsoring the technical working group meeting on safety of navigation, shipping, and communication. Since 1993, Foreign Minister Ali Alatas of Indonesia has urged that the workshop would be upgraded to a more formal government-to-government dialogue. Taipei prefers the existing informal setup, as it fears that it would be excluded from any formal talks, but if its participation could be guaranteed, it would have no objection to upgrading.

Although the ROC government was the first claimant to send troops to the Spratly Islands, it took no action when other claimants occupied other islets in the region. After the Mischief Reef incident, the Philippines and Vietnam began to reinforce their garrisons on the disputed islands, but Defense Minister Chiang Chung-lin of the ROC has stated that Taiwan has no plan to send more troops to the Spratly.<sup>15</sup> Vietnam and the Philippines also plan to build more lighthouses on the islands they occupy in order to strengthen their sovereignty claims but Taiwan has refrained from taking similar action. It is clear that Taipei has adopted a policy of self-restraint with regard to the South China Sea, and its historical claim. For Taipei policy makers, the real security is in the Taiwan Strait, and Taiwan's ability to project and sustain military force declines with the distance of the Spratly Islands relative to the constant military threat from the PRC.

Confrontations among Taiwan's political parties over China reunification and Taiwan independence have weakened Taipei's united stand on policy toward the South China Sea issues as well. Whether

Taipei should cooperate with Beijing in these territorial claims is a constant point of dispute inside Taiwan. Those who regard China as real threat say Taiwan should not cooperate with the PRC because such action could put Taiwan into a subordinate role and justify other claimants' rejection of negotiating directly with Taipei. The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), Taiwan's main opposing party, rejected the idea of cooperation with Beijing in the South China Sea, preferring that Taiwan have room to maneuver between the PRC and other claimant. However, former Interior Minister Huang Kun-Huei argued that the lack of diplomatic tie make it impossible for Taiwan to establish a military alliance with other claimants to counter the PRC's military presence.<sup>16</sup> Any collaboration between Taiwan and the Southeast Asian countries would certainly be regarded by China as a betrayal of Chinese national interests and therefore invite harsh criticism.

Those who deem a better cross-Straits relationship a prerequisite for Taiwan's security say Taipei should cooperate with Beijing in the South China Sea as a way to build confidence in the Taiwan Strait. For nationalistic reason, some people in Taiwan would rather see the Spratlys occupied by the PRC than by members of ASEAN. Political figures of the New Party, for example, are inclined to urge the government to form an alliance with the PRC to counterbalance other claimants. These people also believe talks with China on the development of resources in the area could strengthen Taiwan claims to sovereignty and improve mutual trust between Taipei and Beijing. While Taiwan and China are rivals in other areas, in the South China Sea, they have neither challenged each other's claims nor been involved in any military conflict with each other. Taiwan has adopted a broadly neutral but more pro-China inclination in the China-Vietnam military clashes in 1988 and the China-Philippines conflict in 1995, and one scholar has argued that "should mainland China and Taiwan stand shoulder-to-shoulder in the negotiation process, they will make a stronger case vis-à-vis other claimants."<sup>17</sup> Taipei would invite a backlash from several quarters if it chose to collaborate with Beijing in the South China Sea. First, such a move might damage Taiwan's policy of encouraging stronger economic ties with Southeast Asia. Furthermore, it could



jeopardize Taiwan's status as an independent political entity, as "big brother" China would always have the final say in any solution of the Spratly Island disputes.

Others in the government would prefer cooperation with the PRC to take place within a multilateral context. Former Foreign Minister Fredrick Chien, for instance, hinted in 1993 that it was a least likely prospect for Taipei and Beijing officially to conduct joint development of natural resources in the South China Sea, and that Taipei might actually side with other Asia-Pacific countries to counterbalance the PRC's assertive in the region.<sup>18</sup> Even though President Lee Teng-Hui of the ROC seems to prefer maintain the status quo over an apparent tilt either toward or away from Beijing, he has suggested that Japan and the U.S. could help in stabilizing the South China Sea.<sup>19</sup> It is obvious that Taiwan itself is divided as to the strategy it should adopt on the South China Sea. The policy, however, will largely remain subtle and ambiguous in the years ahead, as Taiwan does not want to provoke either China or the ASEAN claimants in the South China Sea because it is trying to improve its relations with both.

#### **4. President Ma and Cross-Strait Relations in Taiwan's South China Sea Policy**

When the KMT returned to power in Taiwan, there was scarcely any coordination between Taiwan and China in their South China Sea policy. While tensions over the region have grown steadily since 2009, after China, Vietnam and Malaysia submitted their respective claims under the UNCLOS, relations across the Taiwan Strait were moving into a more cooperative rather than confrontation, direction after President Ma Ying-jeou took the office in May 2008. On the basis of the so-called "1992 Consensus", Taipei and Beijing revived institutional dialogue through the official designated Strait Exchange Foundation (Taiwan) and Association for Relations across the Taiwan Strait (China). This provides a new impetus for cross-Strait cooperation in the South China Sea. Several senior members of China's PLA-Navy began to call for joint defense of sovereignty or joint patrol of law enforcement between the



two sides in the South China Sea. It was suggested cross-Strait military confidence-building could start by defending China's sovereignty together in the South China Sea. For example, Taiwan that controls the Taiping Island – the largest island with fresh water in the Spratlys – could provide logistic supply to China in case of a conflict. Should China and Taiwan cooperate in this way, China's leverage in the Spratly Islands will increase significantly. Within Taiwan, the idea of joint defense seems to be welcomed by some Veterans and re-unification advocates. It has been suggested that Taiwan could probably take advantage of the similar claims made by China as a tactic to express its own legal stance over the disputed islands and waters to highlight Taiwan, as one of the claimants and to refute all the other claims. However, Taipei's position in this regard appears to be more cautious instead.

Taiwan's position on the South China Sea under President Ma's administration has been clearly expressed in a press statement issued by the Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In short, it reaffirms Republic of China or Taiwan has the sovereign right over all of islands and their surrounding waters, and reiterates that it upholds the basic principles of "safeguarding sovereignty, shelving disputes, peace and reciprocity and joint exploration". Furthermore, Taiwan supports for an open, regional, or multilateral approach toward cooperation in this area.<sup>20</sup>

Ma's government has been steadfastly reiterating Taiwan's territorial claims toward South China Sea islands, and has tried to demonstrate the determination in defending them through a combination of hard and soft power approaches. For example, on February 2, 2009, Taiwan protested against the Philippines regarding the latter's enactment to incorporate the Scarborough Shoal in the Macclesfield Bank, and part of the Spratly Islands into Philippines territory.<sup>21</sup> Also in May 2009, Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs published statements opposing the submission by Vietnam: as well as that submitted by Vietnam and Malaysia jointly to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, extending the outer limits of their respective continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles beyond their baselines.<sup>22</sup> In addition to taking diplomatic stances, President Ma visited the Pratas Islands on September

10, 2008, where he stressed that Taiwan should continue to strengthen its defense capability, so that Taiwan could conduct negotiation with China from a position of strength.<sup>23</sup>

In April 2011, the government announced that the coastguard personnel stationed on the Taiping Island would be trained by the country's Marine Corps to carry out sea combat, giving Taiwan combat-ready troops in the region for the first time since 2000.<sup>24</sup> As to the cross-strait cooperation, President Ma has made cross-strait energy cooperation a priority. Cross-strait cooperation in the development of offshore hydrocarbon resources had begun in 1993, but was suspended in 2004 as a result of serious political stalemate in cross-strait relations. As soon as President Ma took office, he instructed the administration to study how Taiwan and China could resume cooperation. In December 2008, Taiwan's China Petroleum Corporation (CPC Taiwan) and the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) signed four agreements, whereby the two companies will conduct joint exploration in the Taiwan Strait and off the southern Guangdong coast of China in undisputed areas within northern South China Sea.<sup>25</sup> The business model created by the two companies for hydrocarbon joint development might be applied in the future to joint hydrocarbon exploratory efforts in the Spratlys under appropriate conditions resume cooperation.

Moreover, since mid-2008, Taiwan and China have negotiated and concluded 16 agreements. Some of those agreements, including the Cross-strait Sea Transportation agreement, Agreement on Cooperation in respect in Joint Crime Fighting and Judicial Mutual Assistance, and Cross-strait Agreement on Cooperation in respect of Fishing Crew Affairs, offer possible legal foundation for future cross-strait cooperation in the South China Sea on humanitarian assistance, anti-piracy, combating illegal trafficking, and other related areas. In November 2009, the two sides also successfully initiated a joint project entitled "Southeast Asia Network for Education and Training" at the 19th Indonesian Workshops on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea. This was the first cross-strait joint initiative since the inception of the workshop in 1990.<sup>26</sup> And in July 2011, experts from Taiwan and China jointly published a very first report on South China

Sea. The report assessed the situation in South China Sea throughout 2010 and provided a comprehensive review of the increasing complexity of the regional situation. It was worth-nothing that the final chapter, entitled “Prospects of Cooperation in the South China Sea”, calls for the creation of cross-Strait mechanisms to deal with South China Sea issues together. In particular, it suggests that a cross-Strait military coordinator mechanism be established to defend their territorial claims together, and if necessary, the two sides should create positive conditions for joint patrol of the South China Sea. The report received mixed reactions within Taiwan as well as abroad, and Taiwan officials have reacted by dismissing the possibility of cooperation in this particular regard.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, the report still represented a serious effort by academics and policy thinkers across the Taiwan Strait in helping build cross-Strait confidence.

With the progresses of functional cooperation in certain aspects across the Strait, one could find that Beijing seems do not mind, perhaps even welcomes, Taiwan’s claims to the South China Sea. That is because both Taipei and Beijing have re-embraced the so-called “1992 Consensus” since May 2008, when President Ma came to office. President Ma accepts that there is only one China and cross-Strait relations are not state-to-state relations, but rather “special relations”, even though he maintains that “One China” is “the Republic of China”.

Since Taiwan is basically excluded from all of the multilateral mechanisms such as the ASEAN Regional Forum and ASEAN-Plus where the South China Sea disputes could be discussed officially, China remains the one that dictates the interpretation of “One China”, the Chinese position, and influences the relevant agenda in those forums.

Furthermore, China and Taiwan have both used the so-called U-shaped line to claim a substantial portion of the South China Sea. And that would to some extent give China an advantage, in that Taiwan’s territorial claims, as well as its uninterrupted occupation of Pratas or Taiping islands since 1956, form an indispensable component of the Chinese claims.

From Beijing’s perspective, as long as Taiwan continues to be an integral part of the state of China, Beijing will have a stronger legal

ground to assert and enforce its own claims, and Taiwan's sovereignty claims toward the South China Sea may well be tolerated as a concerted effort in defending the Chinese position against others.

All this suggest a strong linkage between Beijing's insistence on the "One China" principle in cross-Straits relations and the South China Sea dispute, and under such circumstances Taiwan's sovereignty claims toward South China Sea could be served as a linchpin to China's expanding national interests as a maritime power and PLA-N's defensive missions. Moreover, because of such a linkage, Taiwan has much to consider when evaluating its cooperation with China in the South China Sea. First, cross-Straits relations remain a highly sensitive and divisive issue in Taiwan's domestic politics. The two main political parties – the National Party KMT and the DPP disagree on their cross-Straits policies. For example, former DPP chairperson and candidate for the 2012 presidential election – Tsai Ing-wen accused the incumbent Ma of undermining Taiwan's political and economic independence by conducting negotiation and cooperation with China on the basis of "One China", even though Ma's definition for "One China" is different from that of Beijing's. It is to say that in a vibrant democracy like Taiwan, no political leader can freely conduct its relations with China without some forms of scrutiny from the people. Secondly, Taiwan and China continue to face the challenge in building more mutual trust. China's missile deployment toward Taiwan and its refusal to renounce the possibility of using force against Taiwan makes China the primary threat to Taiwan's national security. In addition, Taipei and Beijing still have to overcome considerable political differences to enable Taiwan to deepen and widen its international space in its own right. In July 20, 2011, immediately after ASEAN and China had agreed on the Guidelines for Implementing the 2002 Declaration of Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (The Guideline), Taiwan has formally expressed its discontent and reiterated its basic South China Sea principles of "safeguarding sovereignty, shelving disputes, promoting peace and reciprocity, and encouraging joint exploration". At the same time, it stressed that: "As the government should be included in the dispute dialogue mechanism, it will not recognize any resolution reached without its participation."<sup>28</sup>



Thirdly, Taiwan's military cooperation with China in the South China Sea could also touch US nerves. The US has become more actively involved in the disputes since 2010, and has been in loggerheads with China over issues of freedom of navigation, the appropriate legal bases for territorial and maritime claims, as well as approach for resolving disputes. Although the US has long claimed to maintain a neutral position on the competing territorial claims,<sup>29</sup> the Obama administration clearly disagrees with China's legal claims, particularly the nine-dotted line. Moreover, the US joint military exercises with Vietnam and the Philippines are perceived as attempt to balance PRC's growing over in the region. The concern over a potential conflict between PRC and US in the South China Sea region presents a strategic dilemma for China. If Taiwan allies itself closely with PRC in the South China Sea territorial disputes, the US might face more domestic calls for re-considering its role in defending Taiwan against a PRC use of force.<sup>30</sup> However, if Taiwan openly supports an increased US presence in the South China Sea, it could rekindle Beijing's suspicion toward Taiwan's intentions and possibly lead to setback in the furtherance of cross-Strait economic and functional cooperation.

In addition, military cooperation with China in the South China Sea risks Taiwan from Southeast Asian claimants' perspective. Some Southeast Asian countries have pointed out that, while Taiwan has been objecting to the Southeast Asian countries unilateral acts during recent controversies, it has made no challenge towards PRC's claims. This, together with an identical legal claim, has been interpreted as a sign that Taiwan has decided to side with Beijing and the two has at least reached a tacit understanding toward a "common Chinese front".

## 5. Conclusion

China's assertiveness in South China Sea, particularly its approach toward the Scarborough Shoal dispute has significant implications and impact on Taiwan's South China Sea policy. First, the significance of the standoff represent a clear evidence on a shifting, to some extent, of China's policy of "shelving dispute and seeking joint development"



toward a more pro-active behaviour in the South China Sea, and yet a non-military one in its nature. Moreover, it is more likely that this has become a type of pattern and approach for handling the maritime and territorial disputes in the South China Sea in the near future. However, such act and approach certainly does not apply to territorial disputes with other conflicts over sovereignty that may occur in other places, such as the East Sea. In addition, after the standoff, the status quo of entire South China Sea remains intact. Neither has there been any change in ASEAN's approach toward the South China Sea, nor has it any tilting to a closer relations with the US for its implicit, if not explicit, counter-balance of China's power expansion.

Meanwhile, although China shifts its low-profile policy to a more pro-active one in South China Sea, it, however, still expressed a wish to come up with the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) as a platform to solve the problems with the concerned parties in South China Sea, and even did not rule out a possibility of working toward a establishment of the Code of Conduct (COC) in the near future. Assertions such as this perhaps also represent a shifting by China towards the use of multilateral mechanisms to solve sovereignty disputes in the South China Sea. Meanwhile, the adoption of a multilateral approach by China is, at least in the short term, a form of hedging policy in its nature, in that it plays a balancing role in response to America's global and regional dominance and political wrangling among the ASEAN nations.

Against such circumstances, Taiwan's policy toward the South China Sea dispute since the beginning of the Post-Cold War era and early 21st century has been more restrained than other claimants particularly China, Vietnam and the Philippines. And it has until now maintained a cautious approach toward cooperating with China exclusively on territorial sovereignty contentions or joint development in the disputed islands particularly the Spratlys, and appears to support the principle of freedom of navigation advocated by the US.<sup>31</sup> More significantly, Taiwan has consistently been calling for "putting aside disputes" for joint cooperation and development in the South China Sea. Specifically, the parties concerned should shelve their different claims



and cooperate in the research, development and management of marine resources. This direction should be pursued with a view to promote peace and sustainable development of the region, without prejudice to their respective claims and the eventual solution to disputes. The various proposals expounded by Taiwan's top leaders show Taiwan's support for an open, regional, and multilateral approach toward cooperation.

However, when counting on the domestic politics, it is obvious that Taiwan itself is divided as to the strategy it should adopt on the South China Sea. The policy, in any case, will largely remain subtle and ambiguous in the years ahead, as Taiwan does not want to provoke either China or the ASEAN claimants in the South China Sea because it is trying to improve its relations with both. And more importantly, Taiwan's South China Sea policy, to a large extent, serves as a pivotal part of the US grand strategy toward Asia-Pacific.

## Notes

- \* Dr Shawn Shaw-fawn Kao 高少凡 (Ph.D. in International Relations, University of Virginia) is Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science, and Dean of OIEP (Office of International Education & Programs), Tunghai University (THU), Taiwan, Republic of China. He has been working in various capacities, such as Dean of International College, Director of Graduate School of International Affairs, Director of Research and Development, Dean of Student Affairs, Director of International Education and Exchanges at Ming Chuan University; Deputy Secretary General, People-to-People International (PTPI/ROC, 中華民國國民外交協會); Senior Staff Officer, Taipei Office on Education Forum, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC); editing board for the *Academic Journal of Politics and Policies*, Vice-president of International Trade and Marketing, Soletek Inc. (U.S.A.). His research and study interests include China's Southeast Asia policy, Southeast Asia regional studies, international relations and East Asia regional security, and theories of international politics. His current research papers and publications include: "China Rise and The Myth of ASEAN/East Asian Regional Integration" (2010); Shawn S.F Kao (co-author), "Governing a Globalizing World: Using Military Adversary Regime and Non-military Adversary Regimes as a Tool" (2010); "Taiwan: A Key to China's Peaceful Rise"(2010); "China





- Rise and Its Impact on the Changing of East Asian International System”(2011); Shawn S.F. Kao (co-author), “Marketing X as a University of Governance: A One-dot Theory and Modified SWOT Model Application” (2011); “China Rise and Its Impact on ASEAN’s Community Building” (2012); Shawn S.F. Kao (co-author), “Taipei’s Strategy: Seeking More Diplomatic Ties or Involving in More International Regimes?” (2012). <Email: shawn.k1311@msa.hinet.net>
1. For example, Carlyle A. Thayer, “China-ASEAN and the South China Sea: Chinese Assertiveness and Southeast Asian Responses”, conference paper, Academia Sinica, October 2011; Michael Swaine and Taylov Fravel, “China’s Assertive Behavior, Part Two: The Maritime Periphery”, *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 35, Summer <<http://www.hoover.org/publications/China-leadership-monitor>>.
  2. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deng-Xiaoping>
  3. Theresa Fallon, “Jockeying for Position in the South China Sea: Cooperation Strategy or Managed Conflict Morning”, conference paper, Academia Sinica, Taipei, October 2011. Also please see Jonathan Pearlman, “The Time for waiting is Over: China Has Taken Its Great Political Leap Forward”, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2009/9/23. <<http://www.smh.com.au/world/the-time-for-waiting-is-over-china-has-taken-its-great-political-leap-forforw-20091221-la21.html>>.
  4. For original article in Chinese, <http://mil.huanqiu.com/Observation/2011-09/2038709.html> This article was also linked to the homepage of *People’s Daily*.
  5. Su Xiaohui, “China’s Vision in Resolving South China Sea Dispute and Energy Sharing Mechanism among Claimant States”, International Conference on ASEAN Unity and Maritime Challenges in SCS & Asia-Pacific, Center for Asian Strategic Studies – India, Bangkok, Thailand, June 20, 2013.
  6. *Ibid.*
  7. *Ibid.*
  8. Li Mingjiang, “China Debates South China Sea Policy: Implications for Future Developments of the Dispute”, Workshop on the South China Sea Dispute: Political and Security Implications for the Region’s Future, Center for Asia-Pacific Area Studies, RCHSS, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan, January 12-13, 2012.
  9. *Ibid.*
  10. *Ibid.*



11. Ministry of National Defense (Republic of China), *1996 National Defense Report, The Republic of China*, Taipei; Li Ming Co., 1996.
12. Kuan-Ming Sun, "Policy of the Republic of China towards the South China Sea", *Marine Policy*, Vol. 18, No. 5, 1995, p. 402.
13. Supplementary ed., *ASEAN Document Series 1992-1994*, Jakarta: The Secretariat, 1994, p. 90.
14. *The Star* (Kuala Lumpur), January 21, 1992, p. 1.
15. *China News*, April 11, 1995, p. 1.
16. *China News*, May 18, 1995, p. 1.
17. Zhiguo Gao, "The South China Sea Disputes: From Conflict to Cooperation?", *Ocean Development and International Law*, Vol. 25, No. 3, July-September 1994, p. 354.
18. *Zhouguo Shibao (China Times)*, December 9, 1993, p. 6.
19. Tenghui Lee, "Asian-Pacific and American", *Sino-American Relations* (Taipei), Vol. 19, No. 3, Autumn 1993, p. 12.
20. Press Release No. 143, 29 July, 2011, English Version. <<http://www.mofa.gov.tw/webapp/ct.asp?xItem=45948&ctNode=1903&mp=6>>
21. "Solemn Declaration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China Concerning the Philippines Senate Bill 2699 and House Bill 3216", statement, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China (Taiwan), 2009/2/6. <<http://www.mofa.gov.tw/webapp/ct.asp?xItem=36914&ctNode=1902&mp=6>>.
22. Statement No. 002, May 11, 2009. <<http://www.mofa.gov.tw/webaps/ct.asp?xItem=38046&ctNode=15088mp=1>>.
23. Office of the President, Republic of China (Taiwan), News Release, 2008/9/10. <<http://www.presidentnt.gov.tw/Default.aspx?tabid=131&itemid=1418&rmid=514&word1>>
24. Cindy Sui, "Taiwan to Boost Forces in Disputed Spratly Islands", BBC, 2011/4/12. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-13130208>>
25. Yuanming Alvin Yao, "Energy Cooperation Beyond the Taiwan Strait", 2009/5/12. <<http://www.mac.gov.tw/public/Attachment/04115571725.pdf>>
26. Yann-Hui Song, "The South China Sea Workshop Process and Taiwan's Participation", *Ocean Development and International Law*, Vol. 41, 2010, pp. 260-263.
27. "Assessment Report of the South China Sea Regional Situation in 2010", Taipei: Institute of International Relations and National Institute for South China Sea Studies, 2011, pp 101-102; Shih Hsuchuan, "Academics Suggest Cross-Strait Effort on Sea Dispute", *Taipei Times*, 2011/8/6. <<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/print/2011/08/06/2003510050>>

28. MOFA Press Release No. 232 of July 20, 2011, English translation. <<http://www.boca.gov.tw/content.asp?cultem=4736&mp=1>>.
29. Yann-huei Song, *United States and Territorial Disputes in the South China Sea: A Study of Ocean Law and Politics*, Baltimore: School of Law, University of Maryland, 2002.
30. A summary of various arguments for why the US should abandon its defense commitment for Taiwan can be viewed in Shelley Rigger, "Why Giving Up Taiwan Will Not Help Us with China", Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, November 29, 2011. <<http://www.aei.org/outlook/foreign-and-defense-policy/regional/asia/why-giving-up-taiwan-will-not-help-us-with-china/>>
31. Press Release No. 186, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 6, 2011. <<http://www.mofa.gov.tw/webapp/ct.asp?xItem=52800&ctNode=1547&mp=1>>

## References

- ASEAN Document Series 1992-1994*, supplementary ed., Jakarta: The ASEAN Secretariat, 1994.
- "Assessment Report of the South China Sea Regional Situation in 2010", Taipei: Institute of International Relations and National Institute for South China Sea Studies, 2011.
- Chang, Kai Sheng (2012), "Armed Police Detachment in Sansha to Deter the Neighboring Nations", *Want Daily*, 2012/7/24. <<http://www.want-daily.com/portal.php?mod=view&aid=34618>>
- Chang, Wei Bin (2010), "The Dispute over South China Sea Ocean Delimitation under the Vision of Constructing East Asia Community", *Academic Forum*, Vol. 229, pp. 69-71.
- Chen, Hung Yu (2011), "The Power Wrestling of The United States, China, and ASEAN in South China Sea", *Prospect Quarterly*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 43-80.
- "Chinese Media Continue Issuing War Threats to the Philippines", BBC Chinese, 2012/5/10. <[http://www.bbc.co.uk/zhongwen/trad/chinese\\_news/2012/05/120510\\_philippines\\_china\\_press.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/zhongwen/trad/chinese_news/2012/05/120510_philippines_china_press.shtml)>
- Fallon, Theresa (2011), "Jockeying for Position in the South China Sea: Cooperation Strategy or Managed Conflict Morning", conference paper, Academia Sinica, Taipei, October.
- Gao, Zhiguo (1994), "The South China Sea Disputes: From Conflict to Cooperation?", *Ocean Development and International Law*, Vol. 25, No. 3, July-September, pp. 345-359.



- Hu, Ling and Ming Liang Zhong (2012), "Exclusive: Guang Lie Liang as a Military Top Manager First Time Expresses Standpoint on Huangyan Island Dispute", Phoenix Television, 2012/4/25. <[http://big5.ifeng.com/gate/big5/news.ifeng.com/mil/2/detail\\_2012\\_04/25/14145024\\_0.shtml](http://big5.ifeng.com/gate/big5/news.ifeng.com/mil/2/detail_2012_04/25/14145024_0.shtml)>
- "Jie Chi Yang: Sustaining Peace Every Nation's Duty: China Is Willing to Mitigate the South China Sea Discrepancy of ASEAN", *Sinchew Daily*, 2012/8/11. <<http://www.sinchew.com.my/node/257402?tid=2>>
- "Jin Tao Hu Makes a Move, Hillary Returns with Nothing", *United Daily News*, 2012/9/5. <<http://udn.com/NEWS/WORLD/WOR3/7342869.shtml>>
- Lee, Tenghui (1993), "Asian-Pacific and American", *Sino-American Relations* (Taipei), Vol. 19, No. 3, Autumn.
- Li Mingjiang (2012), "China Debates South China Sea Policy: Implications for Future Developments of the Dispute", Workshop on the South China Sea Dispute: Political and Security Implications for the Region's Future, Center for Asia-Pacific Area Studies, RCHSS, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan, January 12-13.
- Lian, Juan Wei (2012), "Investigate Strictly Philippine Fruit: Economic Sanctions?", *China Times*, 2012/5/10. <<http://news.chinatimes.com/mainland/17180502/112012051000190.html>>
- Lu, Jiong Chang (2012), "China Cares for South China Sea Situation: Criticizing American and Philippine Military Drill as Dishonest", *Now News*, 2012/4/18. <<http://www.nownews.com/2012/04/18/91-2805680.htm>>
- Lu, Ye Zhong (2002), "On Neoliberal Institutionalism of International Relations Theory", *Issues and Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 2, pp. 3-67.
- Ministry of National Defense (Republic of China), *1996 National Defense Report, The Republic of China*, Taipei: Li Ming Co., 1996.
- Office of the President, Republic of China (Taiwan), News Release, 2008/9/10. <<http://www.president.gov.tw/Default.aspx?tabid=131&itemid=1418&rmid=514&word1>>
- Pearlman, Jonathan (2009), "The Time for Waiting is Over: China Has Taken Its Great Political Leap Forward", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2009/9/23. <<http://www.smh.com.au/world/the-time-for-waiting-is-over-china-has-taken-its-great-political-leap-forforw-20091221-la21.html>>
- "Philippine Minister of Foreign Affairs Triggers the Dispute over the Unfounded South China Sea Authority", *Oriental Daily*, 2012/4/23. <[http://orientaldaily.on.cc/cnt/china\\_world/20120423/00178\\_004.html](http://orientaldaily.on.cc/cnt/china_world/20120423/00178_004.html)>
- Qi, Le Yi (2010), "The Issues on Diaoyutai Islands: Wrestling Power between Chinese and Japanese Diplomacy", *China Times*, 2010/10/4. <<http://news>>



- chinatimes.com/world/11050404/112012042100109.html*>
- Qi, Le Yi (2012), "Confrontation Between China and the Philippines Again: China Nuclear Submarines Head for South China Sea", *China Times*, 2012/4/21. <<http://news.chinatimes.com/world/11050404/112012042100109.html>>
- Qi, Rui, Xue Ge Zhang and Jin Liang Zi (2011), "How to Solve the Embarrassment of Maintaining South China Sea Power: China 'Hard to Get Involved' Vietnam 'Work Hard'", *South Weekend*, 2011/8/26. <<http://www.infzm.com/content/62539>>
- Shelley Rigger (2011), "Why Giving Up Taiwan Will Not Help Us with China", Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, November 29. <<http://www.aei.org/outlook/foreign-and-defense-policy/regional/asia/why-giving-up-taiwan-will-not-help-us-with-china/>>
- Shi, Hua Yuan and Yao Pu (2010), "The South China Sea Dispute and China's Response", *Future and Development*, Vol. 9, pp. 31-34.
- Shih, Hsuehuan (2011), "Academics Suggest Cross-Strait Effort on Sea Dispute", *Taipei Times*, 2011/8/6. <<http://www.taipetimes.com/News/frontprint/2011/08/06/2003510050>>
- "Solemn Declaration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China Concerning the Philippines Senate Bill 2699 and House Bill 3216", statement, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China (Taiwan), 2009/2/6. <<http://www.mofa.gov.tw/webapp/ct.asp?xItem=36914&ctNode=1902&mp06>>
- Song, Yann-huei (2002), *United States and Territorial Disputes in the South China Sea: A Study of Ocean Law and Politics*, Baltimore: School of Law, University of Maryland.
- Song, Yann-Hui (2010), "The South China Sea Workshop Process and Taiwan's Participation", *Ocean Development and International Law*, Vol. 41, pp. 260-263.
- Su, Xiaohui (2013), "China's Vision in Resolving South China Sea Dispute and Energy Sharing Mechanism among Claimant States", International Conference on ASEAN Unity and Maritime Challenges in SCS & Asia-Pacific (Centre for Asian Strategic Studies – India), Bangkok, Thailand, June 20.
- Sui, Cindy (2011), "Taiwan to Boost Forces in Disputed Spratly Islands", BBC, 2011/4/12. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-13130208>>
- Sun, Kuan-Ming (1995), "Policy of the Republic of China towards the South China Sea", *Marine Policy*, Vol. 18, No. 5, pp. 401-409.



- Sung, Zhan Zhao (2011), "The Rise of The South China Sea Issue: Full of Treachery and Opposition", *Strait Review*, Vol. 248, pp. 24-29.
- Swaine, Michael and Taylov Fravel (2011), "China's Assertive Behavior, Part Two: The Maritime Periphery", *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 35, Summer. <<http://www.hoover.org/publications/China-leadership-monitor>>
- Tang, Ming (2012), "The Philippines Agree to China's Fishing Ban: The Huangyan Island Tension is Relieved", *Epoch Times*, 2012/5/15. <<http://www.epochtimes.com/b5/12/5/15/n3589104.htm%e8%8f%b2%e9%a0%86%e6%87%89%e4%b8%ad%e6%96%b9%e3%80%8c%e4%bc%91%e6%bc%81%e4%bb%a4%e3%80%8d-%e9%bb%83%e5%b7%96%e5%b3%b6%e7%b7%8a%e5%bc%b5%e6%b0%a3%e6%b0%9b%e7%b7%a9%e5%92%8c>>
- "Tao Long: Now It's a Good Time to Launch a War in South China Sea", *People's Daily Online*, 2011/9/27. <<http://world.people.com.cn/BIG5/14549/15762373.html>>
- Thayer, Carlyle A. (2011), "China-ASEAN and the South China Sea: Chinese Assertiveness and Southeast Asian Responses", conference paper, Academic Sinica, October.
- "The Situation of Huangyan Island Not Optimistic: China Has Made Full Preparations", *China Review News*, 2012/5/9. <<http://www.chinareviewnews.com/doc/1021/0/1/8/102101849.html?coluid=7&kindid=0&docid=102101849&mdate=0509083747>>
- Wang, Jian Ming (2012), "Discussion on the South China Sea Policy Claim and Cooperation Across the Strait", *China Review News*, 2012/8/5. <<http://www.chinareviewnews.com/crn-webapp/search/siteDetail.jsp?id=102183862&sw=%E4%B8%AD%E5%9B%BD%E5%8D%97%E6%B5%B7%E7%A0%94%E7%A9%B6%E9%99%A2>>
- Wang, Xuan (2009), "The Analysis of What China Should Do or Not Do on the South China Sea Dispute", *Yinshan Academic Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 6, pp. 106-111.
- Wang, Xiao Bo (2010), "Comment on the Issues of Contemporary Chinese Diplomatic History Periodization", *Journal of Yanbian University*, Vol. 43, No. 6, pp. 69-74.
- Yao, Yuanming Alvin (2009), "Energy Cooperation Beyond the Taiwan Strait", 2009/5/12. <<http://www.mac.gov.tw/public/Attachment/04115571725.pdf>>





## **Chinese/Taiwanese Nationalism, Cross-Strait Relations and an Inevitable War? – A Review of Dong-ching Day's *Inevitable War?! (2012)***

Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh\*  
*University of Malaya*

### **Abstract**

This article reviews Dong-ching Day's 2012 book *Inevitable War?! by* scrutinizing a series of central arguments Day makes in the book in the context of the prevailing understanding of cross-Strait relations and international strategic relations. The peculiar characteristics of the present dilemma facing Taiwan as a *de facto* independent nation-state in the shadow of a mainland China fast rising to be the world's new superpower and the concomitant pressing issues of nationalism on both sides make various key questions recurrent in the literature now highlighted in the book germane and thought-provoking.

**Keywords:** *Taiwan, China, cross-Strait relations, nationalism, war*

**JEL classification:** *F51, F52, F55, F59*

Dong-ching Day's 2012 book 《兩岸終究難免一戰?!》 (literally meaning "Cross-Strait war eventually inevitable?!")<sup>1</sup> by Associate Professor Dong-ching Day 戴東清 from the Department of International and China Studies, Nanhua University, Taiwan, is an unusual piece of work. It is unusual in various aspects. First is the length of time spent on



composing these 148 pages that we now see in print. Writing began in 2006, according to the author in the book's preface, i.e. six years before the book was finally published. Second is the presently rather unfashionable view expressed in the book – that war could be inevitable – in this era of cosier relationship between the Republic of China (ROC, 中華民國) government under the Ma Ying-jeou 馬英九 administration on the island and the People's Republic of China (PRC, 中华人民共和国) government on the mainland. Third is the consecutive use of a question mark and an exclamation mark in the book's title. Regarding the first, the author did give various factors to explain the delay in completion. With writing duration spanning both the confrontational period of the Chen Shui-bian 陳水扁 administration and the subsequent détente under the Ma presidency, the book admittedly has benefited from a more balanced scope of view of the longer-term progress of cross-Straits relations. While as the author himself observes, during the tumultuous period of cross-Straits relations under the Chen presidency readers at large could probably be more receptive to his view that war would eventually be inevitable between Taiwan and mainland China compared to today's age of the ECFA, the shadow of war has never left this one of the most dangerous flashpoints of East Asia, once seen as one of the world's three hottest potential war zones. The two consecutive punctuation marks show a sigh reflecting the helplessness and futility of war if it really erupts with a caveat that even if the risk of a war could be overwhelming the future is not written and it all could very much depend on the choices made by the parties involved.

Day divides his book into six chapters. The first, introductory chapter discusses the background, the past cross-Straits war forecasts and interpretation and preliminary analysis of the possibility for war. Citing Kenneth N. Waltz's arguments in his book *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis*<sup>2</sup> regarding the roles of human behavioural factor, internal national instability and lack of legal constraints in precipitating war, Day emphasizes the critical role of rising nationalism on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, mainland China's problem of maintaining domestic stability (e.g. that resulted in Deng Xiaoping's launching of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese war) and the conflict between mainland China's "core



interest” and America’s major interest concerning Taiwan. Adding to Waltz’s three factors, Day raises the possibility of accidental triggering of crisis, citing the assassination of Austrian crown prince Franz Ferdinand in 1914 as pointed out by Joseph S. Nye, Jr. in his book *Understanding International Conflicts: An introduction to Theory and History*<sup>3</sup> and the earlier-than-expected breaking-out of the Hsin-hai (Xinhai) Revolution (辛亥革命).

Day’s second chapter discusses the interesting issue of the formation of a “Taiwanese identity” and the debate between a school that traces the germination of “Taiwanese nationalism” back to the ceding of Taiwan to Japan in 1895 and its proper formation triggered by the 228 massacre in 1947 and brutal repression by the Kuomintang 國民黨<sup>4</sup>; in other words, a Taiwanese identity was born directly as a counteraction to Japanese colonial rule and the Kuomintang repression which shared similarity in combining political repression and cultural assimilation. Contrary to this view of attributing the birth of a Taiwanese identity to the two “foreign” political administrations, there is another school that traces the formation of this identity only back to the 1895 cession but not to the 228 massacre. Such divergence is in fact rather political, as it all boils down to one’s perspective on whether a so-called “Taiwanese identity” is part and parcel of a wider Chinese identity for in this context recognizing the 228 massacre as a milestone is tantamount to saying that the Taiwanese had finally turned their back on the Han Chinese after the turning point of the 228 massacre. Across the Taiwan Strait, Day notes the rediscovery by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)<sup>5</sup> of the usefulness of nationalism in strengthening citizens’ loyalty to the ruling Party and the country in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War and the demise of communist party rule in most other parts of the world, leading to its embrace both by the intellectuals who have produced countless books and essays in rousing ovation for such nationalism and the wider masses who made books with titles like “China Can Say No”<sup>6</sup> instant best sellers in the country, accompanied by the inexplicable reemergence of Mao-latry – the veneration, the hero worship of the one person in recent Chinese history who caused such unparalleled level of human misery through murderous purges, crime against humanity via mindless



grassroots political persecution, man-made famine through whimsical economic policies that led even to widespread cannibalism.

In contrast to the rising Chinese nationalism in the early 20th Century whose main contents – like those reemerged in the Tiananmen student movement in 1989 – circled around the resentment against government corruption and the aspiration for a clean and able government, today's new government-promoted nationalism in mainland China is in support of and serving to strengthen the governing legitimacy of the present unelected ruling party and the authority of the present political institution that outlaws any attempt in electoral challenge to the CCP, while abiding by CCP's rhetoric in emphasizing the importance of political stability rather than political change. In other words, as Day observes, with State and society in a way exist in separation, democracy followed the development of nationalism, leading to the establishment of Asia's first republic from the ruins of the Manchu monarchy in the early 20th Century. On the contrary, denying a separate existence of society from the political State run in monopoly by today's catch-all Communist Party, the present wave of State-promoted, mass-inciting nationalism has not only been contributing nothing to democratic reform, but instead has been intensifying bitter xenophobic behaviour in the realm of foreign affairs, especially in the form of hate-filled anti-Japanese and anti-American nationalistic sentiments. Day gives the textbook example of the aftermath of the (allegedly accidental) bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade by American bombers. Day cites Japanese China expert Miyazaki Masahiro 宫崎正弘 commenting on the extreme anti-American actions by demonstrators in China that amidst such an atmosphere of incited fanatic nationalistic outburst, anyone who are trying to constrain or neutralize the situation would themselves become victims of attack by those around them. As Deng Xiaoping told visiting former US president Richard Nixon just after the June Fourth 1989 Beijing massacre while calls for sanction was brewing, "Please tell President Bush ... even if it takes a hundred years, the Chinese people will never beg to have the sanctions lifted. If China would not respect itself, China can't stand firm and there won't be national dignity. It's a very big issue, and any Chinese leader who commits error on this issue

would definitely fall from power. The Chinese people will not forgive him. I'm telling the truth."<sup>7</sup> Here goes the war cry of the new nationalists: "Don't think that Chinese youths will thank America for imposing sanction on China. You can't separate the individual from the nation. When you hurt the Chinese government, you hurt the Chinese people."<sup>8</sup> In the befuddled realm of the CCP State = China = Chinese people cognition, questioning the CCP State's policy actions is logically equated to insulting the Chinese people and hurting Chinese nationalistic feeling. Nationalism in such context represents a "single-edged venomous sword", in the opinion of the presently incarcerated Nobel Peace Prize laureate Liu Xiaobo 刘晓波.

Especially in the post-colonial, post-Cold War era, the roar of nationalism tends to become the last refuge for authoritarian regimes against the global march of human rights-, political choice-respecting liberal democracy, a rediscovered ideological instrument to crush any challenge to the ruling party's political monopoly.<sup>9</sup> Increasingly adept in handling such nationalistic sentiments, observes Day, the CCP State is able to summon them up whenever they should be useful for dealing with foreign relations while avoiding them from turning into a threat to the regime itself. Day gives the examples, among others, of the incidents following respectively the mid-air collision between a United States Navy EP-3E ARIES II signals intelligence aircraft and a People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) J-8II interceptor fighter jet near the Chinese island province of Hainan in 2001, and the Chinese actress Zhao Wei 赵薇's photo shoot, also in 2001, for a fashion magazine wearing a dress featuring the Japanese "rising sun" military flag. It is within such context that Day raises the concern for a potential clash between mainland Chinese nationalism and the newer Taiwanese nationalism. While Taipei has been reformatting the unfinished Chinese Civil War into an international conflict in order to force Beijing's hand to reach a certain form of compromise that would pave the way to Taiwan's political independence and nation-state recognition, similarly the CCP regime will never tolerate Taiwan's gaining her nation-state status not just because of the righteous question of national sovereignty but more importantly for the regime's own political survival. While the masses on

the mainland might not really care as much about the issue of Taiwan independence as about their own economic wellbeing, nationalism, probably just next to improving people's standard of living, is always the trump card in the CCP's quest to perpetuate its rule. Citing Susan Shirk, Day points out that in the reasoning that CCP is presently the great torchbearer of Chinese nationalism, having proving itself to be the best hope of China to finally be a strong and unified nation, to eventually cleanse itself completely from the shame of the "hundred years of national humiliation" (*bainian guochi* 百年国耻), the Taiwan issue is no longer simply an issue of territory, but of national pride and dignity. Juxtaposing such outlook among the mainlanders, who increasingly look ever ready to rally around the red flag of the CCP in the event of the outbreak of a cross-Straits war, with the empirical evidence from opinion polls that today's younger generation in the *de facto* independent island state is fast diminishing in their identification with China and probably there would be none so identifying themselves in the next generation, Day grimly points towards the looming shadow of a coming war as a most probable outcome of the clash of two nationalisms.

On the premise of such eventual clash of two nationalisms, Day in his third chapter of the book discusses lessons learned from the wars of unification and wars of separation in Chinese history. Recalling the wars of unification in Chinese history including that launched by the Ch'in (Qin) state to take over the other six states during 236-221 B.C., that unified the Three Kingdoms under Chin (Jin) during A.D. 263-280, the North and South Dynasties under Sui during 581-589, the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms under Sung (Song) during 962-979, by the Mongol Yüan Dynasty to take over Southern Sung (Song) during 1235-1279, and that by the Manchurian Ch'ing (Qing) Dynasty to take over Southern Ming and Taiwan during 1645-1683, Day asks: Is there reason to predict a war, say around 2020, launched by China to conquer Taiwan? Similarly, recalling the wars of separation in Chinese history including the Battle of Ch'ih-pi (Chibi) in A.D. 207 that established the tripartite existence of the Three Kingdoms which lasted for 73 years, the failed Northern Expedition in 354 during the Eastern Chin (Jin) Dynasty that ended up in the second Three Kingdom period that lasted 16 years,

the Battle of Feishui in 383 that resulted in the Eastern Chin (Jin) and the Former Ch'in (Qin) standing in mutual north-south confrontation for 20 years, the unconcluded war of Liu's Sung (Song) against the Northern Wei in 430 that resulted in a stalemate that lasted 49 years, the unconcluded Battle of Kao-p'ing (Gaoping) between Later Chou (Zhou) and Northern Han and war waged by Northern Chou (Zhou) against Southern T'ang (Tang) during 954-957 that resulted in a division that lasted 22 years, the failure of the Manchurian Ch'ing (Qing)'s attack on Taiwan in 1664 that resulted in mutual confrontation between Koxinga (Cheng Ch'eng-kung)'s Ming remnant government on Taiwan and the Ch'ing (Qing) court on the mainland for 19 years, and the failure of the new People's Republic's attack on Kinmen in 1949 that left a cross-strait confrontation till the present, Day asks: Is there reason to predict a failed war effort, say around 2020, by the People's Republic against Taiwan resulting in a new round of cross-strait confrontation?

From the lists of wars of unification and separation in Chinese history, Day arrives at several deductions. First, both unification and separation require undergoing the trial of war. The way that PRC's Anti-Secession Law (*fan fenlie guojia fa* 反分裂国家法)<sup>10</sup> was written shows that, Day observes, it is difficult for the mainland to achieve unification with Taiwan without resorting to war. On the part of Taiwan, despite the continuous effort of part of the society to pull Taiwan out of China's historical framework, its possibility of success is never something that Taiwan can alone determine; instead, mainland China's stance on that is unfortunately of paramount importance and even decisive, unless Taiwan is really prepared to go to war with the mainland. Lastly, Day brings up the human factor as a recurring element in the history of war of unification and separation – strong leaders who could hold dear to a principle to the end *vs.* those who would go for compromise and trade political sovereignty for economic gains. With this, the author has apparently crossed into the domain of Taiwan's long-running partisan political fault line. After all, with two thirds of China's past eras experiencing territorial political unity and one third in division, the pressure of nationalistic "historical responsibility" could be forcing the CCP's hand to eventually launch an inevitable war of unification, for

regime survival, to claim Taiwan.

From the clash of conventional mainland Chinese and emerging Taiwanese nationalism, Day moves on in Chapter 4 to placing the conflict in the wider context of the Sino-US clash of interest – a favourite topic for writers of international relations and strategic studies on which innumerable papers have long been churned out year after year in recent decades. Of particular interest here is that, as Day argues, amidst all the rhetoric of mainland political leaders and scholars emphasizing China's "peaceful rise" or "peaceful development", the alarming, disproportionate growth in Chinese military expenditure, her self-justified aggressive assertion of sovereignty over almost all of South China Sea, her untiring reiteration of past national humiliation, her exploitation of the society's age-old hatred for Japan and her arrogant refusal to abrogate the possibility of the use of force towards Taiwan to the extent of writing the non-peaceful solution into her Anti-Secession Law definitely do not help to placate her neighbours and the US and dispel their worries of a "China threat". The centrality of Taiwan in the Sino-US rivalry for Asia-Pacific hegemony, given the undisputed geopolitical strategic importance of the island state for America, has made increasing Taiwanese economic dependence on China a real worry for America, according to Day, citing a Rand Corporation project for the US Defense Department, "Chinese Economic Coercion against Taiwan: A Tricky Weapon to Use"<sup>11</sup>. The research pointed to the possibility that as the Taiwanese economy is getting increasingly dependent on China, there could be pressure on Taiwan at some point in time to make a reckless move to declare independence to avoid Chinese economic oppression getting out of control as time might not be on Taiwan's side. Alternatively, being unable to effectively achieve her political objectives via economic means for too long, China might yet resort to military means to force unification with Taiwan, amidst a feeling of defeat from the failure of playing her economic trump card and the concomitant increasing anxiety over Taiwan's eventually declaring independence – witness the sudden "Sunflower Movement" that is sweeping Taipei through March-April 2014 right at this very moment of writing, led by hundreds of thousands of student protesters enraged by President Ma

Ying-jeou's "Politburo-esque maneuver"<sup>12</sup> to enact a trade pact with China to open up the island state's service industries without fulfilling the promise to allow a clause-by-clause review before implementation. The ultimate source of the protest movement is the increasing wariness felt by Taiwan's younger generation of, besides and more than the economic impacts of effectively merging the two economies through the trade pact, the foreboding sense of China's incremental political control over Taiwan and the Hongkongization of Taiwan's hard-won democracy.

On the other hand, Day also points out the prevalent argument by mainland scholars that eventual unification is of paramount importance for China for the fact that territorial unity represents the road to prosperity while disunity tends to lead to disaster and agony. Day argues that such thinking is the result of Chinese traditional mainstream thought of grand unity and sovereignty. While the worries for a possible domino effect affecting China's frontier regions may not be unfounded, Day contends that the real disaster and agony stem not from separation – as in the "velvet divorce" of the Czech Republic and Slovakia – but from the unwillingness of the stronger side to let go of the weaker leading to the use of devastating military campaign to halt the latter's move towards independence, as in the case of Russia and Chechnya, or formerly Indonesia and Timor-Leste and Serbia and Kosovo, when the maintenance of social stability and welfare and protection of human rights as the fundamental value of national existence give way to vehement sovereign sentiment and ultra-nationalistic ideology. Anyway, it all boils down to a matter of policy priority. China's leaders, from Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao to Xi Jinping have been vehemently against adopting Western liberal democracy for China, both for the fear that the Communist Party will lose its political dominance or China might disintegrate like the former Soviet Union.

The possibility of China's disintegration is indeed not just a figment of the nightmare of CCP's leaders, but a favourite prognostication among Western and Japanese scholars too. For instance, Ian Cook and Geoffrey Murray gave a scenario in which "the erosion of sovereignty via such combined pressures as globalization, new regionalism (based partly on newly emerging elite groups) and ethnic dissent, would lead to



China fragmenting”<sup>13</sup>, in a scenario wherein “[r]ich regions like Guangdong and Fujian might attempt to break away from the centre to form a South China state with Hong Kong and Taiwan in order to maintain their economic prosperity, while poor regions would become poorer with the possibility of social unrest and even civil war.”<sup>14</sup>

Cook and Murray added to this scenario the possible secession of Tibet and Xinjiang (Eastern Turkestan), resulting in the China proper shrinking to a rump centred on the Huang He 黄河 (Yellow River) and Yangzi Jiang (Chang Jiang) 扬子江 / 长江 deltas (Cook and Murray, 2001: 93).<sup>15</sup>

Farfetched it might seem to be, such “China deconstructs” nightmare scenario does underline the long-term worries of China’s rulers over the impacts of decentralization since Dengist reforms began. The disintegration of the Soviet Union in December 1991 serves further as a premonition of the bad days to come. After all, China is the world’s only former empire that has not disintegrated as have, all in the 20th century, the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, the Western maritime empires, and the Russia empire (later, the Soviet Union). The only ethnic region that managed to break away from China is Outer Mongolia that formed the independent Mongolian People’s Republic in 1924, with Russian support, though not recognized by China until 1946.<sup>16</sup>

Unity has been the greatest concern of the generation that holds dear to the conviction that China’s shameful defeat at the hands of Western and Japanese colonizers would never be allowed to be repeated, and that, though not often explicitly stated, high degree of regional autonomy especially in the non-Han regions like Tibet and Xinjiang could be the prelude to separatism and pave the way to China’s disintegration, as the cases of the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia have amply attested to. When the former Taiwanese (Republic of China) president Lee Teng-hui 李登輝 came up with his theory of “China in seven blocks” (中國七塊論), he was widely vilified not only in mainland China, but also among the Chinese community leaders overseas.

Lee’s idea was proposed in a book 《台灣的主張》 (“Taiwan’s Viewpoint”)<sup>17</sup> he published in May 1999 towards the end of his presidency. Lee wrote that the ideal situation is when China is finally

able to throw off the yoke of Great Sinism (大中華主義) and allow comprehensive autonomy for regions with diverse cultures and differing degrees of development. Lee believed that competition among these seven regions for progress and prosperity would auger well for a more stable Asia. The proposed regions include Taiwan, Tibet, Xinjiang (Eastern Turkestan), Mongolia (Inner Mongolia), the Northeast – as stated in Lee's book – and two more regions understood to be Jiangbei (north of the Yangzi River) and Jiangnan (south of the Yangzi River).

Lee's proposal instantly caused uproars both in China and among the overseas Chinese communities. His detractors wasted no time to show their disgust at his audacity to so explicitly propose the splitting up of China. He was crowned with the unenviable title of a stooge of the Western and Japanese anti-China forces. The fact that Lee said before twenty-two years old he had considered himself a Japanese and the media published his photograph wearing a kimono did not help, given the painful memory both in China and in the overseas Chinese communities of the unspeakable inhumanity the Japanese military committed against the Chinese populace during its 1937-1945 invasion and occupation of China and Southeast Asia. On the other hand, those who came to Lee's defense stressed that Lee, as the first popularly elected president of the first human rights-respecting liberal democracy in the five millennia of Chinese history and the first native Taiwanese Chinese to become Taiwan's head of state – “who successfully guided the Taiwanese people into full democracy through an election-led, gradual and peaceful process that some international observers have praised as a ‘quiet revolution’”<sup>18</sup> – was not proposing China's disintegration, but administrative decentralization through conferring regional autonomy for economic development.

Lee's proposal might have had its origin in an earlier book *《和平七雄論》* (“A Theory of the Peaceful Seven Powers”) by Wang Wen-shan<sup>19</sup>. Wang advocated breaking up China into seven parts – not seven regions, but seven independent countries. Wang's rationale is that a China with 1.3 billion people could never become a democratic country. The best way to avoid the resurrection of the ancient Chinese empire was to let China disintegrate into several smaller Chinas peacefully,



voluntarily and rationally, stated Wang. It has been said that Lee was deeply impressed by Wang's book and recommended it to many people including his officials in charge of cross-Straits relations. He also showed the book to the Japanese writer Fukada Yusuke 深田佑介 during the latter's visit to Taiwan and suggested a Japanese translation. Fukada brought it back to Japan and got a Japanese version out in 1997 called, more provocatively, "Seven Chinas", published by the *Bungeishunju* 文藝春秋. This was not the first time the breaking up of China was suggested in Japan in recent years. Taking France as having the optimal country size, Japan's China expert Nakashima Mineo 中(島)嶺雄 had earlier suggested dismantling China into twelve blocks, viz. Tibet, Mongolia, Xinjiang, Manchuria, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, eastern China, southern China, western China, northern China and central China. Another Japanese China expert Miyazaki Masahiro 宮崎正弘 whom Day cited with regard to Chinese citizens' anti-American nationalistic outburst, as noted earlier in this review article, also asserted in 1995 that the post-Deng China would split into 16 small states forming a federal system.

The nightmarish scenario of China's disintegration and the most likely prospect of losing Xinjiang, Tibet, Inner Mongolia, probably also Qinghai and Ningxia, and of course Taiwan, and having China shrunk by half alone is enough for the Communist Party leaders to convince many, not least among the overseas Chinese community leaders, to shun the idea of democratization and regional political autonomy. The death of the Soviet Union hangs like the sword of Damocles to remind people that "[... when] Mikhail Gorbachev launched his radical political reform and initiated the process of political democratization in the former Soviet Union, scholars in the West argued that Gorbachev must be 'right' and China's Deng Xiaoping must be 'wrong.' [...]" However, when Gorbachev's reforms eventually led to the collapse of the Soviet Union, Deng Xiaoping was proven 'right.'"<sup>20</sup> The prevalence of such views that have fed into the collective fear somehow serves well in justifying the stance of China's current regime despite the value-loaded nature of judging right and wrong in this case. Soviet Union's disintegration is definitely wrong in the context of the preference for stability and

territorial unity, but this is highly judgmental. Firstly, as pointed out earlier, that a “nation” divided is destined to herald misery for the people might not be borne out by modern empirical evidence – the outstanding record of economic prosperity, political stability and human welfare of the many successor states of the former Austro-Hungarian empire, the Kalmar Union (the Danish empire) and, of course, the success of Taiwan. To be fair, to generalize such successes could be as empirically unsound as to be consumed by the combination of ethno-national pride and the morbid fear of losing territorial domination, but sometimes, as the proverb goes, the best things might just come in small parcels. E.F. Schumacher in his now classic *Small Is Beautiful* (1973) proposed the idea of “smallness within bigness” – a form of decentralization whereby for a large organization to work it must behave like a related group of small organizations.<sup>21</sup> “Man is small, and, therefore, small is beautiful”, Schumacher might just have a point. Secondly, the aspiration for a unified nation under the Han Chinese domination from the point of view of the Han Chinese should be indisputable, but whether this is true from the perspective of other non-Han Chinese people – “Chinese” as defined as “China’s citizens” – especially those who are ethnoterritorial should, to be fair, be properly seen from these ethnic minorities’ point of view, taking seriously into consideration their civil liberties and political rights as well as the right of ethnic self-determination.

Finally, Day asks, since during the three decades of open-door policy and reform which brought mainland China astonishing economic achievements Taiwan was in fact not a part of the People’s Republic of China and her absence in the PRC did not affect in any way the rise of mainland China, there is absolutely no reason to believe that Taiwan’s continued absence in the PRC would constitute a hindrance in any way to the continuing rise of mainland China into a world power. So why is this inexorability of making Taiwan a part of the PRC? – a *sine qua non* for achieving a world superpower status? If Taiwan is simply a military-strategic pawn in Sino-US rivalry, would the Finlandization of Taiwan, as suggested by Bruce Gilley<sup>22</sup>, following increasing cross-Strait economic and trade relations truly help, Day asks, to reduce Sino-US tension? What would US’s other allies in the Asia-Pacific think if US

were to so easily surrender Taiwan to the PRC?

Day concludes his book with the final two chapters discussing about his core argument of the possible inevitability of a cross-Straits war. The severe inadequacy of political trust causes difficulties in any meaningful progress in truly ending mutual enmity and building in turn military mutual trust, making the rather pragmatic calls of former PRC president Hu Jintao 胡锦涛's 31st December 2008 "Gao Taiwan Tongbao Shu 告台湾同胞书" ("Letter to Our Compatriots in Taiwan") hollow and futile. With no progress in sight in ending cross-Straits enmity and the state of war since 1949, with PRC's eventual true or erroneous understanding that Taiwan is forever only willing to go for economic but never political integration with the mainland and with China's ultimate objective of persuading Taiwan for unification forever remains in vain, one of the three alternative conditions for resorting to non-peaceful means in the Anti-Secession Law, "a complete disappearance of the possibility of peaceful unification", would assert itself. In such a situation, war is not just an alarmist talk – here Day strikes home with the basic message of his book – whether from the perspective of international power rivalry, the mainland regime's domestic pressures or the mainland leaders' power contests and consolidation, even if the Taiwanese government were to hold dear to its present "three no's" policy: "no unification; no independence; no use of force"<sup>23</sup>. All in all, the fact is that: the first two on the part of Taiwan do not guarantee the third by the mainland regime, if the PRC eventually makes good on a jilted lover's "marry me or I'll kill you" pledge.

## Notes

- \* Dr Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh 楊國慶 is Associate Professor at the Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia. He has a Ph.D. on ethnopolitics in socioeconomic development from the University of Bradford, West Yorkshire, England (1998), was the director of the Institute of China Studies from 13th March 2008 to 1st January 2014 and is currently on sabbatical leave. His works have been published in journals and occasional paper series such as *The Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies*, *GeoJournal: An International Journal on Human Geography and*

*Environmental Sciences, Journal of Asian Public Policy, International Journal of Business Anthropology, Malaysian Journal of Economic Studies* and the *Copenhagen Discussion Paper* series. He is the editor of the *International Journal of China Studies* and *China-ASEAN Perspective Forum*, and a member of the international editorial committee of the *México y la Cuenca del Pacífico*. His recent books, as both editor and contributor, include *China and Malaysia in a Globalizing World* (2006); *Global Impacts and Domestic Challenges of China's Economic Reform* (2007); *Facets of a Transforming China* (2008); *China in the World* (2008); CJAS Special Issue – *Transforming China* (2008); *Regional Political Economy of China Ascendant* (2009); *China-ASEAN Relations* (2009); *Towards Pax Sinica?* (2009); *East Asian Regional Integration* (2010); IJCS Special Issues – *China in Transition: Social Change in the Age of Reform* (2010), *Reform, Governance and Equity: Exploring the Sociopolitical Implications of Contemporary China's Transformation* (2011), *State, Governance and Civil Societal Response in Contemporary China: Critical Issues in the 21st Century* (2012); and *China: Developmental Model, State-Civil Societal Interplay and Foreign Relations* (2013). His most recent book chapters also include “Evolving Agencies amid Rapid Social Change: Political Leadership and State-Civil Society Relations in China” in *Culture and Gender in Leadership: Perspectives from the Middle East and Asia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) and “Poverty Reduction, Welfare Provision and Social Security Challenges in China in the Context of Fiscal Reform and the 12th Five-Year Plan” in *Managing Social Change and Social Policy in Greater China: Welfare Regimes in Transition* (Routledge, 2014, printed October 2013). <Email: yeohkk@um.edu.my, emileyeo@gmail.com>

1. 戴東清 (Dong-ching Day), 《兩岸終究難免一戰?!》 (*Inevitable War?!*), Taipei: 秀威資訊科技股份有限公司 (Showwe Information Co., Ltd), 2012, 148 pp. + vi.
2. Kenneth N. Waltz (2001), *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis*, New York: Columbia University Press.
3. Joseph S. Nye, Jr. (1997), *Understanding International Conflicts: An introduction to Theory and History*, 2nd edition, New York: Longman.
4. Or officially the “Kuomintang of China” (中國國民黨).
5. Or officially the “Communist Party of China” (CPC, 中国共产党).
6. Song Qiang 宋强 *et al.*, *Zhongguo Keyi Shuo Bu* 中国可以说 no [China can say “No”], Beijing: Zhonghua Gongshang Lianhe Chubanshe 中华工商联合出版社, 1996.

7. Cited in Song Xinwei 宋新伟, *Minzuzhuyi zai Zhongguo de Shanbian* 民族主义在中国的嬗变 [The evolution of nationalism in China], Beijing: Shehuikexue Wenxian Chubanshe 社会科学文献出版社 (Social Sciences Academic Press), 2010, p. 264, from *Deng Xiaoping Wenxuan* 邓小平文选 [Selected works of Deng Xiaoping], Volume 3, Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe 人民出版社, 1993, pp. 331-332.
8. Cited in Song Xinwei (*op. cit.*: 264) from Song Qiang 宋强 *et al.*, *Zhongguo Haishi Neng Shuo Bu* 中国还是能说不 [China can still say "No"], Beijing: Zhongguo Wenlian Chuban Gongsi 中国文联出版公司, 1996, p. 405.
9. Liu Xiaobo 劉曉波 (2006), *Dan Ren Du Jian – Zhongguo Minzuzhuyi Pipan* 單刃毒劍——中國民族主義批判 [Single-edged venomous sword: a critique of Chinese nationalism], New York and Taipei: Broad Press International Co., Ltd (博大國際文化有限公司) (republished 2010).
10. Passed by the third conference of the 10th National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China and ratified on 14th March 2005.
11. Murray Scot Tanner, *Chinese Economic Coercion against Taiwan: A Tricky Weapon to Use*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2007.
12. "Ma seems to have forgotten he's running a democracy, not a Communist Party precinct", commented William Pesek in "Is China Losing Taiwan?", *BloombergView*, 1st April 2014 <<http://www.bloombergview.com/articles/2014-03-31/is-china-losing-taiwan>>.
13. Ian G. Cook and Geoffrey Murray, *China's Third Revolution: Tensions in the Transition towards a Post-Communist China*, Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2001 (quote from page 90).
14. Ian G. Cook and Rex Li (1996), "The Rise of Regionalism and the Future of China", in Ian G. Cook, M. Doel and Rex Li (eds), *Fragmented Asia: Regional integration and National Disintegration in Pacific Asia*, Aldershot, England: Avebury (quote from page 213).
15. Cook and Murray (*op. cit.*: 93).
16. The Uyghurs in fact established, with Russian help, a short-lived East Turkestan Republic in 1944, but it collapsed after the 1949 Communist victory in China's civil war, and the region was reincorporated into China as the Xinjiang Uygur Zizhiqu ("autonomous region") in 1955. Like the *de facto* independent Taiwan since 1949, with the collapse of the Ch'ing (Qing) Dynasty that led to the repatriation of the imperial troops from the region, Tibet (today China's Xizang Zizhiqu) was in every respect virtually on her own from 1911 to 1950.

17. Lee Teng-hui 李登輝 (1999), 《台灣的主張》, Taipei: Yuan-Liou 遠流. Though usually translated as “Taiwan’s Viewpoint”, the title of the book literally means “Taiwan’s Proposition”.
18. Mashiro Wakabayashi, “Taiwan de zhuzhang (Taiwan’s Viewpoint), by Lee Teng-hui” (book review), *China Perspectives*, n°25, September-October 1999 (quote from page 91). <[http://www.cefc.com.hk/uk/pc/articles/art\\_ligne.php?num\\_art\\_ligne=2509](http://www.cefc.com.hk/uk/pc/articles/art_ligne.php?num_art_ligne=2509)>
19. “Wang Wen-shan” 王文山 was the pen-name of Wang Shih-jung 王世榕, a former associate professor at Taiwan’s Chinese Culture University 中國文化大學. The Chinese version of his book 《和平七雄論》 was published in December 1996.
20. Zheng Yongnian and Lye Liang Fook (2004), “Reform, Leadership Change and Institutional Building in Contemporary China”, paper presented at the conference “Emerging China: Implications and Challenges for Southeast Asia”, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 22nd-23rd July.
21. E.F. Schumacher (1973), *Small Is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered*, New York: Harper and Row.
22. Bruce Gilley, “Not So Dire Straits”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 89, No. 1, January/February 2010, pp. 44-60.
23. President Ma Ying-jeou proclaimed the “three no’s” policy – no negotiations for unification; no pursuit of *de jure* independence; no use of force by either side of the Taiwan Strait – in outlining his planned approach to cross-Strait relations prior to the 22nd March 2008’s Taiwan presidential election, seemingly as antitheses to the PRC’s long-standing “three no’s” – no Taiwan independence; no “two Chinas” or “one China, one Taiwan”; and no Taiwan membership in organizations where statehood is required.

