Increasing economic engagement together with persistent political confrontation make today’s cross-Strait relations a very unique case in the study of international politics. Guided by the theory of integration, many scholars strive to figure out the political consequences of these economic transactions. However, the transactions themselves are not free flows of capital and resources: they have been strictly regulated by the government of Taiwan and those regulating policies have to be approved by the Taiwanese electorate in the end. What, then, are the factors shaping public opinion in Taiwan concerning whether the ban on cross-Strait exchanges should be lifted? In this paper, the authors will answer this question by testing three related hypotheses: one stresses the effects of material interests (the "sense" thesis), another political identity (the "sensitivity" thesis), and still another information and knowledge concerning the issues (the "sophistication" thesis). Employing logit models and grounded on the "2005 Survey on Cross-Strait Relations and Taiwan's National Security" (sponsored by the Center for Asian-Pacific Security of Duke University),...
The current phase of cross-Strait relations is fundamentally one of "political confrontation with economic integration." Because contemporary domestic public opinion in Taiwan is entrenched and the external environment is dominated by trilateral relations among the island, People's Republic of China (PRC), and the United States, most signs point to continued stability. Regardless of whether the Blue or Green camp is in power, the current political confrontation across the Taiwan Strait seems likely to continue for a long time. Hence any changes and the external environment is dominated by trilateral relations among the island, People's Republic of China (PRC), and the United States, most signs point to continued stability. Regardless of whether the Blue or Green camp is in power, the current political confrontation across the Taiwan Strait seems likely to continue for a long time.

The Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang or KMT, 台湾国民党) and the New Party (NP, 新党) generally favor greater interaction with the PRC and oppose Taiwan independence; they are frequently referred to collectively as the "pan-Blues" (泛蓝). The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP, 民主进步党) and the smaller Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU, 台湾团结联盟) generally oppose greater interaction with the PRC and tend to favor eventual independence; together they are known as the "pan-Greens" (泛绿). In addition to this usage, the terms "Blue" and "Green" are also regularly used to describe the political leanings of individual politicians, administrative regions, and media outlets, with the unification/independence issue serving as the primary cleavage.

Conventional wisdom suggests that economic interaction should eventually reach a level where it begins to "spill over" into the political arena. "Greening economic ties between the two sides, in this view, are likely to lead gradually toward political unification. In preparing for this..."
possibilities, governments on both sides of the Strait will continue to take measures to forestall political change and to actively promote their own goals through policies such as those advocating "patience over haste" (或急用忍, jieji yongren) or "fiscal sacrifice" (補貼讓利, butie rangli).³ No matter what the current policy is, however, the expansion of economic ties between the two sides appears to be inevitable,⁴ raising the question: Does economic integration imply eventual political unification?

Despite this question's importance, there is no convincing answer to this central issue in cross-Strait relations. Most of the current literature features analysis based on Western theories and makes unjustifiably bold predictions.⁵ A few scholars have attempted to draw lessons from examples that appear similar to the current cross-Strait situation, but overall, this research is comparatively weak, and there is no consensus among observers about the future of cross-Strait relations. Our own view is that the key to making progress on this problem is to relax the assumption that the state is a unitary actor. Previous research has tended to use dyadic models to analyze cross-Strait relations⁶ and as a consequence it inevitably neglects factors within or separate from "the state," such as trends in domestic public opinion, the internal policymaking process, or cross-border exchanges. Furthermore, this assumption leads cross-Strait research to focus on governmental policy and elite interaction, and "to focus only on contemporary, day-to-day developments instead of developing an interest and expertise in examining cross-Strait relations in depth and over the long term."⁷ As democratization and globalization sweep across the world, it is necessary to revisit old methods and assumptions. By providing a stronger theoretical foundation and by focusing on long-term trends on the two sides, we hope ultimately to offer a more general account of cross-Strait relations.

However one views the deepening and consolidation of Taiwan's democratic system, it is clear that "state" control and shaping of "society" has gradually become a thing of the past.¹² It appears that the "state" is no longer able to avoid relaxing its grip on cross-Strait exchanges; consequently, relations between Taiwan and the mainland are no longer best thought of as those between sovereign, antagonistic powers. Fresh consideration of this observation is critical to future dialogue about relations between the island and the mainland—research on cross-Strait issues needs to return to a practical focus on popular society.¹³ As the two sides march into the era of globalization, as individual identifications with the "ancestral homeland" weaken, and as social links increase rapidly across

11Wu, Kangsheng huo hucong, 2.
the Strait, individuals and non-governmental organizations are likely to become more able to influence cross-Strait relations.\textsuperscript{14} Taiwan has a choice between "balancing" (拮抗, \textit{kangheng}) and "bandwagoning" (跟從, \textit{hucong}) in its approach to relations with the mainland. Next to the gap in levels of economic development between the island and the mainland and the degree of support for Taiwan from the United States,\textsuperscript{15} Taiwan's domestic "public attitudes" are likely in the future to be the most important variable influencing which of these policies is favored, however. Cross-Strait interaction in the end will determine the future of cross-Strait relations, but governments' tightening or loosening of exchanges will still in fact be tied closely to public opinion—the authority of the Taiwan government ultimately rests on its selection through regular, democratic elections, and in suggesting and determining government policies, leaders of democratic countries must always ultimately accede to the wishes expressed by public opinion.

However, is the continued liberalization of cross-Strait trade and popular exchanges inevitable, and will it eventually build up to the point where it has unavoidable effects on domestic politics? Even if government interaction across the Strait is limited, non-governmental exchanges continue to expand, regularly disturbing the status quo. These kinds of exchanges, especially trade, although undertaken by non-governmental actors, are subject to limits on their scope and method imposed by the two governments. Of course, Taiwan's most important policies governing cross-Strait relations are still decided with an eye toward public opinion. However, where do people in Taiwan stand on cross-Strait issues, and what factors affect their views? Academics have not examined these questions systematically enough. The purpose of this essay is to remedy this short-

\textsuperscript{14}Shih Chih-yu, \textit{Liang'an guanxi quilian (An overview of cross-Strait relations)} (Taipei: Yangzhi, 1998); Shih Chih-yu, "Liang'an guanxi zhong de tuwei yishi" (Breakthrough consciousness in cross-Strait relations), in \textit{Jiaqiu zhi yuan–kaitan liang'an guanxi de mengdong jiyuan} (Between home and country—opportunities for change in cross-Strait relations), ed. Shah Chih-yu (Taipei: Xin Taiwanren wenjiao jijinhui, 2003), 3-9; and Shih Chih-yu, "Liang'an guanxi zhong de bentu shijian" (The practice of nativization in cross-Strait relations), ibid., 341-60.

\textsuperscript{15}Wu, \textit{Kangheng huo hucong}, 120.
ideological disputes. These in turn are driven by the underlying distribution of public opinion among the electorate, which raises the question: What determines this distribution? Does the expansion of trade and other forms of cross-Strait exchanges lead to adjustments in the "normal distribution" of opinion about whether "interests" or "identity" should decide the direction of cross-Strait policy? Those sections of the public that have interests in cross-Strait trade should be a growing voice in favor of unification, but in reality the current support for continued political separation will not be reduced any time soon—the strength of native Taiwanese identity continues to increase, and under the current mix of suspicions, resentments, and lack of national confidence, sober discussion of the benefits of cross-Strait relations is frequently drowned out by personal attacks on the national loyalty of the speaker.

We find this contradiction between the pull of "interests" on the one hand and "identity" on the other to be deeply interesting.

In particular, the purpose of this paper is to explore one key cross-Strait issue: Will individual "rational interests" eventually overwhelm the pull of "affective identity"? And with the continued expansion of cross-Strait exchanges, will first-hand experience of the mainland imperceptibly change the strength of these forces? Our own view is that behind Taiwanese views about whether to increase trade ties with the mainland lies a dichotomy between "rationality" and "affection": included in the former are ideas such as "competitiveness," "personal benefits," and "career benefits," and in the latter are ideas such as "provincial identity," "personal identity," and "political identity." Daily, up-close experience of cross-Strait interaction is bound to influence these perceptions.

Below, we first discuss cross-Strait trade relations and the contributions of the theoretical literature, describing the assumptions and data used in previous research. We then investigate the ties between the public's "sense," "sensitivity," and "sophistication" and attitudes toward cross-Strait trade, followed by a discussion of our conclusions. In brief, this essay attempts to move away from traditional cross-Strait research on states, parties, and factions and instead focuses on more fundamental categories, drawing on the views of the general public to identify the root factors shaping cross-Strait relations, and trying to create a more stable basis from which to describe what the future of cross-Strait relations may hold.

"Sense" and "Sensitivity"

In recent years, scholarly interest in rational interest and affective identity theories—which we term "sense" and "sensitivity" aspects, respectively—has formed two distinct theoretical research orientations. In both the conduct of their private lives and in their actions in the public sphere (especially political actions), individuals are motivated to act by a combination of material interests and various emotions, making it difficult to disentangle the causes of a particular action. The goal of this article is to understand how these two very different sources of motivation combine to affect the structure of Taiwan-mainland China relations.

Because Taiwan and the mainland are characterized by "political distance but economic integration" (政治疏離、經濟融合, zhengzhi shuli, jingji ronghe), economics is the key factor to understanding cross-Strait relations. Since Taiwan and the mainland have different resource bases and are at different levels of economic development, each side has a comparative economic advantage and can reap gains from trade. The pursuit

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19. See Wu Naiteh, "Mianbao yu aiqing: chutan Taiwan minzong minzu rentong de bian-dong" (Romance and bread: a preliminary study of the identity change in Taiwan), Taiwan zhengzhi xuekan (Taiwanese Political Science Review) 9, no. 2 (December 2005): 5-39; and Chien-min Chao, "Will Economic Integration between Mainland China and Taiwan Lead to a Congenial Political Culture?" Asian Survey 43, no. 2 (2003): 280-304.

20. Wu, Kangheng huo hucong, 123.

of rational interest, then, is bound to lead an increasing number of individuals to voice support for expanding cross-Strait interaction. However, growing trade ties also mean that Taiwan's economic reliance on the mainland increases day by day, which could eventually result in political unification—an outcome that the current authorities in Taiwan do not want. Consequently, a fear of economic dependency motivates policymakers to attempt to strengthen the island's ability to resist the mainland, and as Taiwan's economic dependency increases, the scope of these kinds of policies is also likely to expand. At the moment, the need to win support from an increasingly assertive public means that the incumbent government in Taiwan must heed popular opinion in deciding how loose or restrictive cross-Strait policies should be. If public opinion tends to favor economic interests, the government will find it more and more difficult to maintain restrictive policies, and the two sides could move gradually toward unification. On the other hand, the increasingly prevalent view that Taiwan should eliminate all things mainland ("Taiwanization") has become an important force constantly pushing the two sides further apart. The long-standing antagonism across the Strait, especially visible in their different governing systems and ideological attitudes, has produced something close to two separate countries and contrasting national identities. Although the two sides clearly depend on each other, this rising Taiwanese consciousness is gradually leading to greater and greater psychological distance. If personal identity dominates personal interest as the main determinant of public opinion, then major changes in cross-Strait relations will be extremely difficult to implement, and the situation for the foreseeable future is likely to appear much as it does today.

In contemporary Taiwanese society, the voices of both those avidly promoting Taiwanese consciousness and those seeking to speed liberalization of cross-Strait exchanges grow louder by the day. Declarations of a new national identity threaten the preservation of old ones, leading to near-universal political distrust and forming the underlying structure of Taiwan's current competitive party politics. Yet the increasingly tempting economic opportunities on the mainland may force Taiwanese to choose between "bread"—economic interests—and "love"—affective identity. The massive scale of cross-border interaction, increasingly common even among ordinary Taiwanese, and the rapid growth of cross-Strait contacts will eventually have a profound influence on the island's domestic affairs. Taiwanese with significant experience on the mainland might have a deeper understanding of cross-Strait affairs; they in turn may influence the direction of popular sentiment in Taiwan which ultimately determines the flow of capital and talent between the two sides. Thus, the views of these individuals may shed light on long-term trends in the movement of resources across the Strait. On the other hand, cross-Strait relations are still best characterized by the expression, "same culture, but politically antagonistic" (文化同源，政治對立，wenhua tongyuan, zhengzhi duilv). Will the experiences of those Taiwanese who travel freely and frequently between the mainland and the island give rise to mutual understanding, concern, and feeling, and eventually lead to a change in their identity, or will they instead maintain their "Taiwanese identity"?

26According to statistics from the Mainland Affairs Council's Office of Economics (大陸事務委員會經濟處), from 1987 to the end of February 2006, Taiwanese had made a total of 38,640,600 trips to the mainland, and the number of mainland visitors to Taiwan had reached 1,332,500.
this question will deeply affect the future of the two sides.

We argue that influences on future cross-Strait developments are rooted in the relative strengths of rational and affective considerations in Taiwanese public opinion. If rational considerations dominate public opinion where cross-Strait issues are concerned, then Taiwan and the mainland may eventually move toward integration; but if affective considerations take precedence, then Taiwan is likely to continue to insist on self-governance. In addition, those with cross-Strait contacts and experience are likely to hold different opinions on cross-Strait issues.

A review of research into attitudes toward public policy issues is divided into two competing theoretical traditions: rational choice theory and the symbolic politics thesis. Rational choice theory is, as its name suggests, based on the assumption of human rationality and it relies heavily on formal logic to analyze political phenomena. The key assumption in rational choice explanations of political behavior is that individuals consciously seek to maximize their self-interest. Put another way, rational choice theory holds that people participate in political activities to serve their own interests, and in each case choose the action which provides the greatest personal benefit. "Rationality" is reflected not only in the choice of action but also in the choice of tactics and time, and can be modified by changing assumptions about individual knowledge and information. According to the rational choice explanation, electors decide who to vote for by examining the stances of political parties or candidates in comparison to their own, and in the end supporting the platform that in aggregate maximizes their self-interest. Rational choice is most concerned with discussions of whether individuals support specific policies or take political actions out of self-interest. Following Anthony Downs, this view holds that individuals favor specific policies which are most beneficial to their personal interests and vote for the party or candidate who advocates views or policies closest to their own preferences.28

Rational choice theory stands in stark contrast to symbolic politics theory—as Sears and Funk have argued,29 self-interested behavior is a kind of goal-directed behavior, and as such several conditions must hold: benefits should be relatively short-term, material, and accrue directly to individuals. Rational accounting is a kind of benefit-maximization method; but while maximization of individual benefits induces rational behavior, it cannot affect common public attitudes. Rarely is it pointed out that individual knowledge about and personal experience in public affairs are not linked; therefore, people judge their individual situations and public affairs separately.

The first scholar to push the term "symbolic politics" to the forefront of research was Murray Edelman.30 He argued that most people perceive the environment they live in as complicated and threatening, and they feel powerless to change it. In response, people latch on to political myths, rituals, or other symbols popularized by political elites—these symbols help simplify a complex world and ease internal anxiety. Political elites play a key role in this process by designating political enemies, framing group identities, and building attachment to leaders, all of which helps reassure ordinary people and redirect their energies toward out-group violence or in-group obedience. The theorization of this so-called symbolic politics was later developed in greater detail by Sears et al.,31 who used it to explain voters' attitudes toward public policy as well as their political behavior. The symbolic politics defined by Sears et al. argues that symbolic and affective attitudes are formed through socialization during childhood and subsequently become rather impervious to change.32

32Sears, Hensler, and Speer, "Whites' Opposition to 'Busing.'"
individuals grow up and confront important public issues or initiate political action, they will raise these political symbols—examples of which include images from the struggle for American racial integration, or various meanings of the term "blacks." These kinds of deep-rooted, long-lasting symbols can trigger subconscious racial attitudes or similar predispositions, and frequent reactions. Thus, an individual's stance on and attitude toward a particular political issue is determined by political predispositions which are formed during one's adolescence.  

If an individual receives outside information which contains the same symbols, it will evoke and activate the same symbolic nodes in one's memory, generating a subconscious emotional reaction.

However, in discussing the relationship between rational choice and identity, Hardin adds a new twist by arguing that group identity is managed through coordination and determined by self-interest. A prerequisite for individuals to identify with a particular group or to donate services is that the harm to their self-interest caused by personal donations can be compensated for by group identity or some other benefits that in total outweigh the costs of participation. The incentive to identify with or commit to a particular group is to some degree motivated by self-interest. Individuals who identify with a group are not born with that identity, nor do they care more about group interests than individual interests—rather, identifying with a group itself is beneficial. In other words, one's choice of identity is made only after careful consideration, through a kind of purpose-driven action. When individuals sense that they will benefit from group life, they will form an identification with that group. In fact, identity is a collection of interests, and not preexisting or generated by common socialization under special historical circumstances.

Thus, symbolic politics draws heavily on theories of political socialization, which typically argue that a person's political preferences form during early adulthood and remain relatively stable thereafter—examples include political party identification or group attitudes. These attitudes later become major determinants of one's political attitudes. Symbolic politics also embraces cognitive consistency theories, in which an individual's adolescent attitudes are matched with his/her adult attitudes. Sears, Hensler, and Speer review previous analyses of self-interest and divide them into three kinds of research. The first takes as its unit of analysis aggregate-level data, and examines how changes in economic indicators and related kinds of data affect voting behavior in congressional and presidential elections. Examples include analyzing the relationship between the overall rate of economic growth and unemployment and the electoral performance of the ruling party. The second kind of research utilizes individual-level data to analyze the distribution of attitudes among members of different groups or communities of interest—for example, measuring women's attitudes toward policies that affect women.

The third kind focuses on issues that directly affect individual attitudes or behavior. For example, if the current government introduces a plan to increase or cut social welfare expenditure, this kind of research would measure changes in the attitudes and behavior of welfare recipients. However, these three research approaches do not deal with the effect of "self-interest" on political attitudes and behavior.

33In the United States, some political predispositions imply a political party identification, political ideology (liberalism or conservatism), racial prejudice, etc. See David O. Sears, "Symbolic Politics: A Socio-Psychological Theory," in Explorations in Political Psychology, ed. Shanto Iyengar and William McGuire (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1993), 120.


36ibid., 16, 41-42.

37Sears, Hensler, and Speer, "Whites' Opposition to 'Busing,'" 370.
Given the previous discussion, one interesting question is whether members of the public make similar cost-benefit assessments when deciding their attitudes toward public issues. As noted, symbolic politics theory claims that voters form attitudes about issues in response to symbolic stimulation. At the same time, symbols may be linked to prior political dispositions which are stable and not easily changed. As an illustration, suppose that Taiwanese respondents believe that "I am a Taiwanese, so Taiwan should come first," and "Taiwan's economic recession was caused by mainland China's economic attractiveness." This theory suggests that asking them about issues such as "Should Taiwan increase trade with the Chinese mainland?" unconsciously activates the link between "I am Taiwanese" and "Taiwan should come first," and triggers the latent political belief that "Taiwan's economic recession was caused by mainland China's economic attractiveness," with the result that their response to the issue of cross-Strait trade is likely to be a conservative one. Following arguments made by Sears and his colleagues, who used both self-interest theories and symbolic politics models to explain a number of issues in American politics and found the explanatory power of symbolic politics to be quite significant, we ask: How do these two factors play into Taiwanese views of cross-Strait issues?

Analyses of Taiwan's political competition find that "socioeconomic justice" and "national identity" are the two main cleavages around which party competition is organized. However, concern about the costs versus benefits of expanding cross-Strait trade is driving the emergence of this new political issue, leading to a moderate shake-up of political parties around the identity issues that are traditionally crucial to the outcomes of elections. In analyzing the political consequences of cross-Strait trade interaction, Keng Shu (耿曙) and Chen Lu-huei (陈陆辉) find that interaction does indeed affect the structure of Taiwanese public opinion, and they estimate that the regions which have largely benefited from cross-Strait trade (northern Taiwan) tend to prefer pan-Blue parties, while those regions which have seen a net outflow of trade and investment (southern Taiwan) identify more closely with the pan-Greens, and those regions that have experienced a mix of gains and losses, such as central and eastern Taiwan, express very complex and contradictory attitudes toward cross-Strait interaction, resulting in more evenly-divided support for the political parties.

These research findings—that economic costs and benefits have led to the rearranging of regional patterns of political representation—appear to conform to the expectations of rational choice models. These focus on "costs and benefits" explanations of political attitudes and rely heavily on the influence of socioeconomic justice concerns to explain political competition. However, they make little or no mention of identity aspects, and provide no way to handle the possible existence of identity "frames" that limit one's choice set.

For at least the last fifty years, Taiwanese society has been divided along ethnic and national identity lines. In the 1980s ethnic identity served to enhance the strength of democratic activists, and since democratization it has featured much more prominently than national identity in the island's political competition. Since there is no easy way to resolve Taiwan's status with regard to the mainland in the short term, however, national identity is still an important political issue. In discussing changes in Taiwanese ethnic identity, Wu Naiteh (吴乃德) notes that in the last ten years "Chinese" ethnic identification has steadily declined, and "Taiwanese" ethnic identification has just as steadily risen.

For example, busing policy, employment guarantees, national health insurance, social order, etc. See Sears and Allen, "The Trajectory of Local Desegregation Controversies"; Sears, Hendler, and Speer, "Whites' Opposition to 'Busing';" and Sears, Lau, Tyler, and Allen, "Self-Interest vs. Symbolic Politics."


Keng Shu and Chen Lu-huei, "Liang'an jingmao hudong yu Taiwan zhengzhi bantu; nanbei qukuai chayi de tuishou?" (Cross-Strait trade and Taiwanese political territory: driving north-south regional divergence?). *Wenti yu yanjiu* 42, no. 6 (2003): 1-27.


Wu, "Mianhao yu aiqing."
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the balance in the future, at present Taiwanese identity has become dominant. Yet pragmatic attitudes among people in Taiwan appear much stronger than "Taiwanese nationalism" or "Chinese nationalism." One reason may be that, in an increasingly globalized world, materialism and satisfaction with public institutions are more important than identity. Another possibility is that in the complicated cross-Strait environment, most Taiwanese for the time being are not willing to choose between two contrasting ethnic identities. One explanation is that new affective identities take a long time to develop—given Taiwan's unusual situation, the emergence of a new "Taiwanese" identity has not been able to keep pace with the rapid decline of the older Chinese ethnic identification. Our way of thinking about this problem is thus: political attitudes are deeply affected by both rational and affective factors. As Taiwan faces international competition and pressure to move manufacturing to the mainland, not only will the host country be a rising economic competitor, but at the same time the "dual identity" of industry could threaten national security. As the public in Taiwan faces the trade-off between material and emotional interests that cross-Strait exchange represents, will "rationality" or "affection" weigh more heavily?

Conceptualizing "Sense" and "Sensitivity"

The methodological discussion in the previous section has argued that, in the face of continuously increasing economic integration across the Taiwan Strait, ordinary Taiwanese draw on both rational interests (the "sense" aspect) and affective identity (the "sensitivity" aspect) to form opinions about cross-Strait interaction. On the one hand, members of the Taiwanese public make rational ("sense") calculations of the benefits, opportunities, and costs of trade exchanges; on the other, during Taiwan's democratic transition, cross-Strait issues were dragged into arguments for and against greater democracy, fundamentally shaping people's political orientations and making cross-Strait relations a highly sensitive political subject. Consequently, we think that people's positions on cross-Strait trade exchanges are developed from two separate dimensions—one located on a "rational forecasting" axis and the other on an "affective identification" axis. In contrast to Wu Yu-Shan,44 we believe that economic and security interests are not the only factors on which individuals base their judgments, because "security interests" include the additional factor of "affective identification."45 Considerations of security interests originate from an "us-versus-them" view: because the two sides have already been separated for more than fifty years, in international relations the island is caught in a zero-sum game, and the PRC's insistence on a "one China" policy, its constant efforts to isolate Taiwan in international affairs, and repeated threats to use military force to retake the island combine to create a strongly negative impression of the mainland among the public in Taiwan. Taiwan's pan-Green parties46 exploit this impression for propaganda purposes during election campaigns—in this way security concerns ultimately affect politics, society, and Taiwanese political orientations. In contrast, we believe that, on the rational interest dimension, individual views of cross-Strait relations are determined by a mixture of concerns about one's "competitiveness," "career benefits," and "personal benefits."

WU, "Taiwan de dalu jingmao zhengce."

Wu Yu-Shan does mention this point. He basically agrees that economic and security benefits may be similar, but hypothesizes that trade with the mainland will in practice definitely bring risks. In relation to mainland China, Taiwan will find it difficult to obtain both economic and security benefits simultaneously. Moreover, he argues that the view that the establishment of economic relations with the mainland will eventually harm Taiwan's security is nearly universal. See Wu, "Taiwan de dalu jingmao zhengce," 153-210.

See note 4 above.
Within rational interest, "educational attainment" and "age" both represent the strength of one's individual "competitiveness." In general, educational attainment is an index of personal socioeconomic status and also indicates an individual's political knowledge and ability to judge national affairs. In addition, in the knowledge economy, educational attainment has become the foundation of an individual's competitiveness—the more highly educated a person is, the better prepared he/she is to learn new tasks or tackle new challenges. In addition to education, an individual's age will also affect his/her energy level, memory, judgment, and other important abilities—in general, the older one is, the fewer job opportunities one will have, and the higher the cost of seeking alternative employment. Thus, educational attainment and age are key factors in competitiveness. If cross-Strait trade continues to expand, the effects will be felt very differently in different lines of work—hence, "career interests." The future benefits and costs of trade will be distributed unequally throughout the working population—expansion of ties will produce both "winners" and "losers." As a result, the long-term effect of "career interests" on attitudes toward cross-Strait interaction is an important factor to consider.

Since it was first broached openly in 1991, the "affective dimension" question of unification versus independence has been considered a major part of political identity in Taiwan, and stances on this issue had a major effect on the island's politics in the 1990s. At present, the unification/independence issue forms the major social cleavage in Taiwan. Some consider the issue to be the single most important factor determining attitudes toward cross-Strait interaction; other issues also affect these attitudes, but only indirectly through their relevance to the unification/independence question. Lin Pei-ting finds that among people who support unification, those who nevertheless identify with pan-Green political parties and as "Taiwanese" tend to want to reduce cross-Strait economic and trade relations, and among those who support independence, only those who identify as "Taiwanese" want to reduce economic and trade relations. In addition, among respondents who support the status quo, those who identify with pan-Blue parties tend to want to increase cross-Strait trade and economic interaction, and those who identify with pan-Green parties tend to want to decrease interaction. However, although this result is consistent with Wu Yu-Shan's 1999 analysis of identity in cross-Strait relations, Lin uses this unification/independence stance as an attitude toward an issue, and consequently combines "unification/independence" and "cross-Strait interaction issues" into a single topic, making it very difficult to differentiate the two. In contrast, when we reanalyzed the empirical data using "unification/independence stance" as a dependent variable, we found that it was only respondents' provincial background that was clearly related to their stance on the unification/independence question, and it was difficult or impossible to distinguish the causal direction of the relationship between other variables such as party identification. Therefore, in considering the issue of cross-Strait relations, one must use respondents' unification/independence stance, which is treated as political identification, as an independent variable, which improves our ability to avoid endogeneity problems. Thus, in the "affective identity" dimension, we focus our investigation on "provincial identity," "personal identity," and "political identity."
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Turning to affective identity, discussions of ethnic identification in Taiwan usually involve questions of "provincial identity," which itself is actually a form of "primordialism." Primordialism considers blood ties, language, or long-standing cultural traditions as forming "primordial ties" which feature strong and unbreakable affective bonds that knit together group members. Previous research has found that relative to "native" Taiwanese, or "Minnanren" (閩南人), "mainlanders" who arrived in or around 1949 have a distinct view of cross-Strait issues, and because they have a stronger group consciousness and distinct views about political affairs, their level of political participation is also higher. Differences in generation and provincial origin give rise to a combination of ties and emotions which subsequently affect views about the issue of cross-Strait exchange. In contrast to primordialism, "instrumentalism," which is often invoked in discussions of personal identity and corresponding ethnic identity, argues that a group of people in specific historical circumstances interacting through commonly-shared social processes aid the construction of social networks and group consciousness, which can in turn spur society to eliminate ethnic prejudice and encourage ethnic group consolidation. However, this interaction can also involve negative social processes that exacerbate initial differences and result in social conflicts. In the instrumentalist view, the cross-Strait dispute has gradually evolved from an institutional and ideological confrontation to one involving two separate countries and even two antagonistic ethnicities, and because personal identity has a major influence on individual views about cross-Strait exchanges, the character and evolution of identity in Taiwanese politics is a profoundly important issue. Finally, not only is the influence of personal identity on an individual's unification/independence stance important to discuss in the context of competitive party politics, it also no doubt has an even greater effect on the important variable of attitudes toward cross-Strait exchanges.

51Wang Fu-chang, "Zuqun yishi, minzu zhuyi yu zhengdang zhichi: 1990 niandai Taiwan de zuqun zhengzhhi" (Group consciousness, nationalism, and party support: Taiwanese group politics in the 1990s), Taiwan shehui xue yanjiu (Taiwan Sociological Review) 2 (1998): 1-45.

52Li Ying-ming, "Zixun shidai xia de Jiang'an guanxi: rentong he zhuquan wenti de taolun" (Cross-Strait relations in the information age: a discussion of identity and sovereignty issues), Zhongguo shiwu, no. 5 (2001): 68-83.
attitudes toward cross-Strait economic interaction.

On the basis of the above analysis, this paper makes use of the "sense" and "sensitivity" framework to come up with the following three core predictions:

1. Taiwanese public opinion toward cross-Strait trade is a key factor influencing cross-Strait policy, and the movement of public opinion determines the expansion or constriction of cross-Strait trade, while at the same time affecting the autonomy or unification of governments on the two sides.

2. Taiwanese attitudes toward cross-Strait trade are determined by the two aspects of "sense" (rationality) and "sensitivity" (affection). In other words, both "self-interest" and "symbolic politics" generally play an important role in the rise and fall of cross-Strait trade. In addition, "sophistication" (political knowledge) may also have an influence.

3. Rational "competitiveness," "professional benefits," and "personal benefits"; emotional "provincial identity," "personal identity," and "political identity"; and knowledge acquired through "mainland experience" are the important factors affecting Taiwanese views of cross-Strait trade.

From the previous three core predictions, we derive the following eight research hypotheses:

**H1:** Age competitiveness: the higher one's age, the more likely one is to favor reducing cross-Strait economic relations, and the lower one's age, the more likely one is to favor strengthening economic relations.

**H2:** Education competitiveness: the higher one's level of education, the more likely one is to favor increasing cross-Strait economic relations; the lower one's level of education, the more likely one is to favor reducing economic relations.

In the following section these hypotheses are analyzed by establishing a binary logit model. This research utilizes data collected from the "2005 Cross-Strait Relations and National Security Public Opinion Survey" directed by Emerson Niou (牛毓慈). The survey was administered

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53We use as our measure of the dependent variable responses to the following question: "Some people believe that Taiwan should enhance trade relations with the mainland, because this will help Taiwan's economy grow; other people believe that Taiwan should reduce trade relations with the mainland, or otherwise they will affect Taiwan's national security. Which view do you agree with more?" Respondents' answers were recoded into one of three categories: "enhance trade relations with the mainland," "reduce trade relations with the mainland," or "no response." For the distribution of this variable, see Appendix 1.
through telephone interviews by National Chengchi University's Election Study Center on May 27-31, 2005, with 1,221 valid adult respondents randomly drawn from throughout Taiwanese territories. Under 95 percent confidence level, the maximum sampling error is plus/minus 2.8 percent.

**Data Analysis and Discussion**

As mentioned in the previous section, we measure people's views about cross-Strait trade on a scale constructed so that the view "enhance cross-Strait trade relations" is at one extreme and the opposite view "reduce cross-Strait trade relations" is at the other, with non-responses treated as missing values. All respondents who voiced an opinion about cross-Strait trade are grouped into one of these two views. Respondents' answers could be assigned to the "no response" category for a wide variety of reasons, which are impossible to disentangle without additional data. Therefore, the following discussion is limited to respondents who chose either "enhance cross-Strait trade relations" or "reduce cross-Strait trade relations." Independent variables in this research include the sense measures of "age competitiveness," "educational competitiveness," "professional benefits," and "personal benefits"; the sensitivity measures of "provincial identity," "personal identity," and "political identity"; and the sophistication measure of "mainland experience." Table 1 shows estimations of coefficients in the logit model along with the odds ratio for the two separate positions on cross-Strait trade relations.

As can be seen in Table 1, the effect of the sensitivity factors is most noticeable. Among these, provincial identity, personal identity, and political identity all appear to be related to Taiwanese positions on cross-Strait trade. The provincial identity odds ratio for respondents born on the mainland is 2.348 times higher than that for respondents born in Taiwan—in other words, mainlanders are much more likely to favor enhancing trade relations than those born in Taiwan, as we predicted in Hypothesis 5.

One possible explanation for this result is that the "provincial identity"...
measure reflects mainlanders' greater cultural affinity with the PRC, which leads them to hold more liberal views about cross-Strait trade than do Min-nanren. In short, we find a significant relationship between the provincial identity of respondents and their orientation on cross-Strait issues.

The estimates of the effects of "personal identity" reveal that those respondents who considered themselves to be "Taiwanese" were less likely than those who considered themselves to be both "Taiwanese and Chinese" to favor enhancing trade with the mainland; however, while the estimate for those who considered themselves to be exclusively "Chinese" does not reach standard significance levels, its direction is still consistent with the prediction in Hypothesis 6. This result suggests that rising Taiwanese consciousness in cross-Strait trade may play a "gatekeeper" role—those who consider themselves to be "Taiwanese" may worry more than their "Chinese" compatriots about the political consequences of the course of cross-Strait trade. This result also serves to underline that those with "Taiwanese" consciousness tend to take a more conservative stance toward all manner of mainland policies.54

The estimates of the effects of "political identity" show that respondents who "favor unification," in comparison to those who "support the status quo," have a significantly higher odds ratio in favor of enhancing rather than reducing cross-Strait trade. Likewise, those who "favor independence," in comparison to those who "support the status quo," have a significantly lower odds ratio in favor of enhancing cross-Strait trade. In other words, there is a significant divergence in attitudes about cross-Strait trade between those favoring unification and those favoring independence—support for enhancing cross-Strait trade is greatest among those who favor unification, and least among those who favor independence, which conforms to the expectations expressed in Hypothesis 7. These results suggest that political identity can be regarded as the existence of a kind of symbolic politics—as we have seen, views about cross-Strait trade are rooted in prior attitudes symbolized in the expressions "unification" and "independence." Such are the views of those who favor unification relative to those who support the status quo; so too are the views of those who favor independence.

Among the different "sense" aspects, we find "competitiveness" to be entirely consistent with Hypotheses 1 and 2: "age competitiveness" clearly affects respondents' positions on cross-Strait trade. Of those respondents aged 50 and over, in contrast to those aged 20 to 34, the proportion favoring reduced cross-Strait trade relations was higher than the proportion favoring enhanced relations; the trend among those aged 35 to 49 is also in this direction, although the estimate does not reach statistical significance level. In addition, on "educational competitiveness," we can see that respondents whose educational attainment is at "university level or above" favor enhancing cross-Strait trade relations at a higher rate than those with a high school education. One possible reason is that individuals with at least a university education have a clearer understanding of how their personal interests are affected by cross-Strait trade. Given their superior competitiveness, they not only have nothing to fear from the effects of cross-Strait exchanges but also may benefit considerably from their continued development. Therefore, the more competitive individuals are, the more likely they are to favor enhancing cross-Strait trade relations.

The most unexpected result is that the model estimates of the effects of both "professional benefits" and "personal benefits" were not significant. Our theory predicted that "winners"—respondents whose households benefited overall from trade—would strive to consolidate or expand their superior position, and so would be more likely to favor enhancing economic relations with the mainland; in contrast, "losers" would rationally seek countermeasures or other ways to mitigate their losses, and would be more likely to take a conservative view or even oppose enhancing cross-Strait trade. However, our research on "self-benefit" motivations produced no clear results. We speculate that much of the administrative intervention in cross-Strait trade is interrelated—until now both sides have followed a non-confrontational cross-Strait trade policy, although the Taiwanese government's policies on trade with the mainland have taken on stronger

54 Wu, "Liang' an guanxi zhong de Zhongguo yishi yu Taiwan yishi."
defensive overtones. As a result, "inferior professions" do not perceive that they will suffer from cross-Strait trade yet, thus their positions on the trade may not reflect people's real interest calculations at this moment. However, given the Taiwanese government's gradual trend toward using market strength as a guide in its mainland trade policies, we will make the influence of "professional benefits" on cross-Strait trade stances a focus of future investigation.

Finally, considering the "sophistication" thesis, "mainland experience" does not appear to be related to the model of cross-Strait attitudes, the reason perhaps being that the interaction allowed by the authorities at present is still very restricted. Therefore, although unofficial contacts increase daily, those with much experience on the mainland are still a distinct minority among the population at large. Moreover, impressions gained through contact are both positive and negative—the aggregate nature of the data raises the possibility that above a certain level of experience, these impressions cancel each other out and lead in the end to an insignificant result. We believe that the solution to this problem lies in expanding the scope of micro-level observations and empirical data. Following cross-Strait liberalization, exchanges will not only occur among friends and relatives but also in the business and academic communities—if both sides of the Strait can freely interact, links between groups in Taiwan and on the mainland will increase. Whether increases in the level of cross-Strait "sophistication" correspond to changing views about exchanges with the mainland is a core question we would like to examine in the future.

In this paper, we find that, among those factors which affect Taiwanese attitudes toward the speed of the development of cross-Strait trade, the "sensitivity" factors are highly significant, while the only "sense" factor that appears to matter is "competitiveness." Mainlanders who favor unification and have at least a university education prefer enhancing cross-Strait relations at a faster rate; in contrast, Minnanren who are 50 or over prefer reducing trade relations with the mainland. This result indicates that "Minnanren versus mainlander," "Taiwanese versus Chinese," and "unification versus independence" are all long-standing political symbols, on the basis of which views on "arranging the prospects of cross-Strait exchanges" are expressed in typical reactions to the cross-Strait trade issue. Among the Taiwanese public, personal benefits do not appear to be as important in determining views on cross-Strait trade as are affective factors. In addition, we were unable to find any predictive effect of cross-Strait "sophistication." Our findings indicate that public opinion is much more influenced by individuals' positions along the affective dimension. Consequently, we predict that in the foreseeable future Taiwan will continue to insist on self-government without much prospect of change, and the status quo of "political distance but economic integration" across the Taiwan Strait is likely to continue.

Conclusion

As described in the introduction, the aim of this research is to ascertain whether rational interest ("sense") motivations overwhelm affective identity ("sensitivity") motivations in determining individual views on the issue of cross-Strait interaction, and whether as cross-Strait interaction continues to expand, those with experience on the mainland will eventually realize their potential influence. Our research findings include some unexpected results—in contrast to our initial expectations, we found that the "sensitivity" aspects played a far greater role in determining public opinion on cross-Strait issues than did the "sense" aspects, and respondents' first-hand knowledge had no obvious effects. The evidence we presented in this article suggests that affective identity overwhelsms rational interest as the primary determinant of individual views on cross-Strait issues. We
also found that an individual's "age competitiveness," "educational competitiveness," "provincial identity," "personal identity," and "political identity" all affected his/her stance on cross-Strait trade. Mainlanders who favor unification and have at least a university education are more likely to prefer enhancing trade relations with the mainland; in contrast, Minnanren who favor independence and are 50 or over are more likely to prefer reducing trade relations. In addition, "competitive" respondents tended to prefer enhancing cross-Strait trade while "uncompetitive" respondents tended to prefer reducing trade.

As the economic development gap across the Taiwan Strait narrows, the Taiwanese authorities will be forced to contend with the gradual loss of economic superiority. However, there is no reason at present to believe that gradual development will eventually make unification inevitable—as this article clearly shows, the chief reason for this unexpected result is the influence of affective factors. In addition, although we present no proof in this article, we believe that as the two sides gradually liberalize, cross-Strait trade interaction will have an impact on Taiwan's regional political divisions, and economic benefits and costs will become directly tied to political costs and benefits. Our findings suggest that, while economic liberals may strongly advocate the rapid liberalization of trade because of the mutual benefits it brings, behind protectionist policies lies the manipulation of the unconscious appeal of a whole host of potent, emotional political symbols such as "friends of China," "Taiwan-lovers," "Chinese," "Taiwanese," "unification," and "independence."

Finally, given the current situation, our findings suggest that Taiwanese public opinion on the cross-Strait trade issue does not seem to be entirely rational. Our findings suggest that the "symbolic politics" thesis plays a more important role in shaping people's attitudes on cross-Strait relations in Taiwan. Even though the enduring effect of the "sensitivity" factor prevails over the attractiveness of the "sense" factor, the effect of economic interactions on future political integration is unclear. In the foreseeable future, exchanges between the two sides will expand, and the effect of the "sense" factor on people's stances on cross-Strait issues will gradually crystallize. In this pilot study, we explore factors affecting people's views on cross-Strait relations in three different dimensions, and more survey data and research are needed for this important topic.

**Appendix 1**

**Distribution of Positions on Cross-Strait Trade Relations (2004 and 2005)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enhance trade relations with the mainland</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce trade relations with the mainland</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain the status quo</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response*</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1,484</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *The following responses were recoded and added to "No response": "Refused to answer," "Hard to say," "Don't know," and "No opinion."


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enhance trade relations with the mainland</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce trade relations with the mainland</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>295</td>
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<tr>
<td>No response*</td>
<td>32.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1,221</td>
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Note: *The following responses were recoded and added to "No response": "Refused to answer," "Hard to say," "Don't know," and "No opinion."

**Appendix 2**

**Relationship between Trade Stance Orientation and Affective and Rational Factors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row No.</th>
<th>Provincial Identity</th>
<th>Political Identity</th>
<th>Personal Identity</th>
<th>Age Competitiveness</th>
<th>Educational Competitiveness</th>
<th>Personal Benefits</th>
<th>Professional Benefits</th>
<th>Mainland Experience</th>
<th>Position on Cross-Strait Trade</th>
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Note: The probabilities in this table are calculated using estimated parameters in table 1.
### Appendix 3
Measurement and Organization of Research Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Survey Questions</th>
<th>Response Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provincial identity</strong></td>
<td>Is your father bensheng (Taiwanese) Hakka, bensheng (Taiwanese) Minnan, mainland, or aborigine?</td>
<td>Two categories: 1. Mainlander 2. Taiwanese (includes Hakka and Minnan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political identity</strong></td>
<td>The following opinions concern Taiwan-mainland relations: 1. Immediate unification 2. Immediate independence 3. Maintain status quo, move toward unification in the future 4. Maintain the status quo, move toward independence later 5. Maintain the status quo, decide later 6. Maintain the status quo forever Which view is closest to your own?</td>
<td>Three categories: 1. Pro-unification (immediate unification, maintain status quo and move forward reunification in the future) 2. Maintain status quo (maintain status quo, decide in the future, maintain status quo forever) 3. Pro-independence (immediate independence, maintain status quo and move toward independence in the future)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal identity</strong></td>
<td>In our society, some people call themselves “Taiwanese,” while other people call themselves “Chinese,” while still others call themselves both. Do you consider yourself to be “Taiwanese,” “Chinese,” or both?</td>
<td>Three categories: 1. Taiwanese 2. Chinese 3. Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age competitiveness</strong></td>
<td>What year were you born? (Year measured from the founding of ROC: 1912 = 1; 1949 = 38; 1978 = 67; etc.)</td>
<td>Age divided into three categories: 1. 20-34 2. 35-49 3. 50 or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational competitiveness</strong></td>
<td>What is your highest level of education?</td>
<td>Three categories: 1. Elementary school and below 2. Secondary school (includes middle, high, vocational school) 3. University or above (includes vocational college)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>Response Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personal benefits</strong></td>
<td>Have you or your family member(s) been or do you plan to go to the mainland to invest, do business, take up employment, live, or study?</td>
<td>Two categories: 1. Yes 2. No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional benefits</strong></td>
<td>What is your present occupation?</td>
<td>Three categories: 1. Neutral professions: public representative, government administrator, government research personnel, public or private medical unit personnel, public or private educator, religious worker, governmental unit or public enterprise department employee, student, military, police, or investigative personnel, homemaker (not self-employed), retired. 2. Superior professions: Public enterprise manager, private enterprise manager, private businessperson, private research personnel, accountant, artistic worker, writer/reporter, public or private enterprise engineer, professional athlete 3. Inferior professions: Private enterprise employee, salesperson, service/catering/tourism employee (vendor, private service, taxi driver), public/private enterprise professional laborer, farmer/fisherman/rancher, homemaker (work at home), unemployed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mainland experience</strong></td>
<td>Since 1987, when Taiwan liberalized travel to the mainland, how many times have you visited?</td>
<td>Three categories: 1. 0 (Have never visited) 2. 1-3 times 3. 4 or more times</td>
</tr>
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</table>
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