

CHAPTER 10

Conclusion

Our study has been concerned with analyzing the social and economic forces that are at play in the context of globalization that help to define a foreigner's sense of identity, and how the traits regarding national and global belonging may affect their political inclinations on the cross-Strait situation. In doing so, we have first tried to assess how the cross-Strait situation has been constructed among the local population, and then we analyzed what factors are most useful in determining the political inclinations of foreigners. .

- We contended that although foreigners could possess and express many political dispositions regarding the cross-strait issue and we have shown how the dispositions vary widely according to personal circumstances, but globalization is helping to change their identities in fundamental ways, ushering new attachments and novel ways to interpret the situation.
- We contended that an understanding of these inclinations regarding allows us to observe the role played by globalization in cultural change, which is reflected in how they might think about the cross-Strait situation, and helps us come up develop globally acceptable and novel solutions . The assumption, of course, that like locals, may embody certain social characteristics that would affect their political inclinations.
- We contended that theories about how the cross-Strait relations has been continuously unfolding to Taiwanese nationals due to political, economic and

social changes, can offer valuable insights into political, economic and political pathways for foreigners to develop their political inclinations regarding the cross-strait situation.

- We contended that foreigner's political inclinations are but a mere product of globalization and their globalized narrative of unfolding, and understanding the basis for the inclinations allows us to better recognize alternative views on how to resolve the political impasse — a analytical basis that takes into account global concerns based on the intersection of national, economic, cultural and other ideational concerns, given the unfolding of the forces, which include economic integration and the connectivity as well as mobility through technological breakthroughs, coming at an age when global concerns are becoming increasingly salient.. Moreover, given the true sense of urgency that members of society on both sides of the Taiwan Strait have expressed in making a breakthrough in the impasse, thoughtful discussion that takes into account all viewpoints regarding the situation and why those viewpoints arise, is especially helpful in finding a sustainable solution that works to the interests of all parties concerned.

The results of our survey not only allowed us to get a better understanding of foreigners and their experiences but also a study into how Taiwan is perceived by the world. By analyzing foreigners' particular personal characteristics, we have discerned likely characteristics that may indicate their likelihood of favoring a policy option for Taiwan over another.

- 1) Our results suggest that by and large, foreigners tend to be either pro-independence, or they prefer to wait and decide on independence or unification at a later time.
- 2) Unification does not seem like an ideal option for most foreigners. For instance, we found that the most popular answer among the respondents in the aggregate is independence later with 24.0%, which was followed by status quo now, decide later 21.6%. The least popular answer was unification now with only 2.3%. Independence now, status quo forever both accounted for less than 10% of the respondent pool each.
- 3) In terms of national origin as a useful independent variable influencing political inclinations on the cross-strait relationship, we found that among the highest

- frequency countries, an overwhelming of those in USA and Canada favored independence later 40% and 48.1%, respectively, while the policy option was also popular for those from the UK with 28.5%.
- 4) Foreigners from the developed world tend to be more in support of independence than those from the underdeveloped world.
 - 5) However, we must emphasize again that one's political inclinations are not predetermined or primordial in any way. However, as foreigners in Taiwan, they are subject to the forces of socialization into Taiwanese society, and the integrating characteristics of the world system, which include their mobility and ease for communication, are also developing their views. However, one must not assume that their national allegiance acculturate in light of these developments. Moreover, one's individuality is at play in formulating the complex nexus of identities that have a critical role in determining one's political behavior and their viewpoints. But what my study has tried to demonstrate is that the political inclinations of foreigners do differ from locals in many ways; this we argue, is because of the unique circumstances that are related to Taiwan's development strategy, political situation and globalization, which further crystallize their distinctiveness. The emergence of globalizing institutions, nationalism, civic duty, mobility and persistence of cultural traditions plays a key role in engendering a contending voice, which helps to consolidate and diversify a new political voice to the locally debated issues regarding the cross-strait situation.
 - 6) Our study attests to the real social, economic and political differences that exist between the developed and underdeveloped world, which significantly affect their outlook on the world, and that reveal itself in regarding a solution to the cross-strait impasse. Attesting to these differences, one of our key finding suggests that those from Thailand and Indonesia tended to answer the question regarding cross-strait relationship least frequently with 41% and 34%, respectively — which compares to 0% for respondents from the UK, Canada and France while those from the UK only skipped the question 7.1% of the time. It also shows how individual countries like Canada or Thailand can differ remarkably on the issue.

- 7) Moreover, inclinations also vary among various social strata — whether that be in occupation, education, language abilities — all these differences are undoubtedly perpetuated by the international labor market and Taiwan's development strategy.
- 8) I also analyzed the effects of their social characteristics on their political inclinations regarding the cross-strait situation. A key finding is that as one attains more education, their inclinations toward the cross-strait issue might be less extreme in that those with higher education are less likely to support action towards independence or unification now. Those with an undergraduate degree or higher were almost twice as likely to support independence later than those with a high school degree or lower.
- 9) In terms of income, our main finding is that those with higher income tended to be more pro-independence later and almost ¼ of those making 60,001-80,000 support independence now. Those making 80,000 or over a month and those making less than 20,000 a month rated unification later higher compared to the other groups. In terms of occupation, our main finding is that teachers were most in favor of independence later with 41.4%. In contrast, caretakers and factory worker did not answer the question frequently with 27.2% and 35.4%, respectively.
- 10) We also delved into the respondents' relationship to China. Our findings suggest that 23.0% of those who have traveled to China 4 times or more are pro-unification — a rate that is much higher than the aggregate average of some 2.3% point in time if they had never visited mainland China compared to people who have visited mainland once. However, among those who have visited China three times or two times the corresponding rate is 0% and 0%. Those visiting China once and twice are at rates slightly higher at 1.6% and 4.3%, respectively. The people who have traveled to China 4 times or more are inclusive of those who have traveled to China many times. Therefore, our findings suggest that those who have visited China many times tend to be more pro-unification now than the other peer groups.
- 11) I delved deeper into the sociological underpinnings of foreigners' political inclinations by exploring various other aspects of socialization experiences in Taiwan that can be seen as receptors for their connectivity into Taiwanese society

- by looking at the foreigners' composition of friends, forms of communication used and the English newspaper they read.
- 12) One of our key findings is that foreigners with mostly foreigner friends or almost all foreign friends tend to be either more pro-independence later and also more likely support to wait and decide.
 - 13) Our findings also suggest that foreigners tended to be more pro-unification if they had a higher percentage of Taiwanese who they'd consider their "good" friends. The opposite is also true, as they tended to be more pro-independence if they tended to have "good friends" who are foreigners.
 - 14) Teachers were most in favor of independence later with 41.4%. In addition, caretakers and factory worker did not answer the question frequently with 27.2% and 35.4%, respectively, doing so..
 - 15) In each of the forms of communication, besides Internet usage, we did not find any strong correlation between the frequency use of the respective communication methods with their inclinations regarding the situation, however those who used internet more frequently tended to answer the question regarding their political disposition.
 - 16) Regarding the China Post, we found that those who read the newspaper 7 or more times per week to be more in support of unification and in less support of the independence compared to those who read the Taipei Times. Regarding the Taipei Times, we did not find a correlation between reading the newspaper and unification, but we found a positive correlation for pro-independence, particularly among those who read the paper 4 or more times per week and those who didn't read the Taipei Times.

One could speculate on the gamut of social and economic reasons for these results, but what I'm trying to suggest is that the political inclinations of foreigners regarding the cross-strait situation are not only distinctive from locals, but within the foreign community itself, there is a diversity of viewpoints that have been shaped by not only immigration policies but also various societal forces being shaped by the tensions between globalization, socialization and individual socioeconomic circumstance. In part due to the outcome of these factors, Taiwan is thus situated in a unique position, including the role it plays in the global labor supply and in its precarious relationship

with China. My hope is that scholars and policy makers, upon reading this essay, would recognize the importance of foreigners political inclinations regarding the cross-strait issue at a time when the world is becoming increasingly globalized.