

**JOURNALISTS, MEDIA DIPLOMACY AND MEDIA-BROKER  
DIPLOMACY IN RELATIONS BETWEEN MAINLAND CHINA AND  
TAIWAN FROM 1987-2009**

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This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



To Eugenia, my wife,  
who has been supporting me on my way  
from China to Australia, to Canada.

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## **Abstract**

The focus of this thesis is the role of journalists, members of cultural and intellectual elites in their own societies, in the expansion of cross-strait relations between mainland China and Taiwan and the sociopolitical transformations that envelope these relations. Since 1949, the knotty relations between these two societies have been characterised by long-standing political and military confrontation, diplomatic competition and more recently, economic cooperation.

The thesis aims at analysing the role of journalists on both sides in brokering, from 1987, friendlier relations between mainland China and Taiwan, through what has been characterised in the literature as media-broker diplomacy and media diplomacy, diplomacy being a process of negotiation that can contribute to conflict resolution or advancement of cooperation in social contexts at all levels. This thesis proposes that cross-strait relations are a process of communication within which the media acts as the indicator of the political climate and journalists in particular have been important actors in constructing a peaceful climate. Historically journalists have been instrumental in improving cross-strait relations at times and at other times media has ratcheted up animosity. However, their role as mediators has been achieved at the cost of journalistic independence and neutrality.

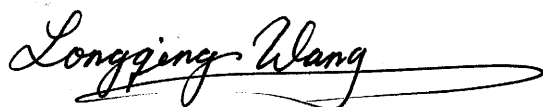
To explore this research proposition, this thesis employs case studies and intensive interviews as two key research methods. From an historical perspective, this thesis delineates the trajectories of media-broker diplomacy and media diplomacy in the cross-strait setting (1987-2009). From an international communication perspective, however, it proceeds with a theoretical investigation of journalists' concerns about mediating at the crossroads of media and politics, journalistic independence and political participation, professionalism and nationalism.

The significance of this thesis is that it will provide an objective assessment of media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy in one of the most difficult flash points in the world, providing as an outcome a detailed reconstruction and analysis of the process of media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy in this context, which would be available as a model for consideration in other contexts.

## Statement

I hereby certify that the work included in this thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution. The sources of information used and the extent to which the work of others has been utilised have been indicated in the thesis.

Ethics Committee approval has been obtained. Reference Number: HE29MAY2009-D06567

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Longqing Wang". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Longqing Wang

19 October 2010

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Sydney, Australia  
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## Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFP	L'Agence France-Presse
AIT	American Institute in Taiwan
AP	Associated Press
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARATS	Association for Relations across the Taiwan Strait
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BCC	Broadcasting Corporation of China
CAL	China Airlines
CASS	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
CBS	Central Broadcasting System
CCK	Chiang Ching-kuo
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CCTV	China Central Television
CLGTA	Central Leading Group for Taiwan Affairs
CMC	Central Military Commission
CNA	Central News Agency
CPBS	Central People's Broadcasting Station
CPPCC	Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
CTS	Chinese Television System

CTV	China Television Company
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party
ECFA	Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement
FTV	Formosa Television Corporation
GIO	Government Information Office
GPD	General Political Department
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDE	International Demonstration Effect
IOC	International Olympic Committee
IPC	International Political Communication
JAL	Japan Airlines
JIC	The Journal of International Communication
KMT	Chinese Kuomintang Party, Chinese Nationalist Party
MAC	Mainland Affairs Council
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
NCC	National Communications Commission
NCCU	National Chengchi University
NP	New Party
NPC	National People's Congress
NTU	National Taiwan University
NUC	National Unification Council
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
PFP	People First Party
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PR	Public Relations

PRC	People's Republic of China
PRSA	Public Relations Society of America
RCSC	Red Cross Society of China
ROC	Republic of China (Taiwan)
RSF	Reporters Without Borders (French name: Reporters sans frontières)
SAR	Special Administration Region (Hong Kong, Macau)
SEF	Straits Exchange Foundation
SETV	Fujian Southeast Satellite TV
TAO	Taiwan Affairs Office
TRA	Taiwan Relations Act
TSU	Taiwan Solidarity Union
TTV	Taiwan Television Corporation
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPI	United Press International
VOA	Voice of America
VOS	Voice of the Strait Radio Station
WTO	World Trade Organization

## Map of the Taiwan Strait

Taiwan Strait Area



802566 (R01492) 8-98

Source: [www.taiwandocuments.org/papers.htm](http://www.taiwandocuments.org/papers.htm) (Accessed on 09 October 2010)



## Chapter I A Point of Departure: Multiple Interpretations of Cross-Strait Relations

The assumption that men will settle their differences by fighting reacts powerfully upon the identifications, demands, and expectations of human beings, and leads to many overt changes in the material environment (Lasswell 1965b:40).

The ROC-PRC rapprochement is another case in international relations proving how non-governmental interactions can build bridges and initiate détente between hostile governments (Shambaugh 1995:5).

### Introduction

Widely acknowledged as one of the world's flash points, the Taiwan Strait has also been an exceptional site of communication which deserves serious attention. On New Year's Eve of 2009, the Chinese President and Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) General Secretary Hu Jintao (胡锦涛)<sup>1</sup> unveiled a six-point proposal on cross-strait relations in Beijing, commemorating the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary

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<sup>1</sup> Since mainland China and Taiwan adopt different systems to Romanise Chinese individual and geographical names, in this thesis an eclectic approach will be adopted for the convenience of research. The Chinese official phonetic *Pinyin* system will be employed with respect to names associated with the mainland, e.g. "Hu Jintao" and "Beijing". The older Wade-Giles system, which has been long used in Taiwan and in most academic works published in the West, will be applied to those tied to Taiwan, e.g. "Ma Ying-jeou" and "Taipei". Additionally, for some exceptional individual names, albeit originating from the mainland, the most familiar form to the English language reader will be followed, e.g. "Sun Yatsen", "Chiang Kai-shek", and "Chiang Ching-kuo". In general, all Chinese surnames precede their given names. In Taiwan's case in particular, individual names are hyphenated if there are two given names. Also, to assist the reader in reading the romanised Chinese names, Chinese characters are provided in parentheses when a particular individual or geographical name (in some other cases, an institutional title) appears for the first time in the thesis. Considering the consistency of Chinese characters, simplified Chinese is employed herein.

of China's "A Message to Compatriots on Taiwan".<sup>2</sup> Entitled *Jointly Promoting Peaceful Development of Cross-Strait Relations and Fulfilling the Great Renaissance of the Chinese Nation*, the speech kept firmly to the so-called one-China principle. Hu declared that:

[a]lthough the two sides of the Taiwan Strait have been separated since 1949, it does not mean a division of Chinese territory and sovereignty, but the ensuing political confrontation caused by the 1940s Civil War, which has not changed the fact that the two sides belong to one China. The reunification of mainland China and Taiwan is not to rebuild territory and sovereignty, but to terminate the political confrontation (Hu 31 December 2008).

Disseminated with full text by *Xinhua News Agency* (新华社) and reported by the journalists across the strait, Hu's "important speech" was not only tailored to commemorate CCP's historic message, but more importantly was intended as a formal response to the policy statement made earlier by Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou (马英九) of the Kuomintang Party (KMT, also referred to as the Chinese Nationalist Party). In his inaugural speech titled *Taiwan's Renaissance* on 20 May 2008, Ma set forth his "core values" vision in Taipei:

In resolving cross-strait issues, what matters is not sovereignty but core values and way of life. We care about the welfare of the 1.3 billion people of mainland China, and hope that mainland China will continue to move toward freedom, democracy and prosperity for all the people. This would pave the way for the long-term peaceful development of cross-strait relations (Ma 20 May 2008).

Despite the seemingly warmer ties after the KMT's return to power, the conflicting statements from the two sides illuminated "the fragile common understanding that forms the basis for interaction" (*Taipei Times* 06 January 2009). Typical of their long-standing disputes, these statements also serve to reveal the underlying indispensability of media and communication in one of the most dangerous international flash points. Although the two regimes keep on refusing to acknowledge and speak to each other, high-level interactions in the top leadership can still be achieved through such kinds of "word-of-mouth exchange across the strait". With the news media mirroring and mediating their interactions, the so-called cross-strait relations actually demonstrate a sort of cross-strait communication, an appealing phenomenon which enlivens this thesis.

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<sup>2</sup> Being "sent" by the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, this public letter signifies the CCP's landmark policy change directed at Taiwan. See Chapter II for more.

This thesis addresses one simple core research question: What is the role of the mass media, notably journalists, on both sides, in brokering friendlier relations between mainland China and Taiwan?<sup>3</sup> The proposition that is made at the outset is that cross-strait relations are a process of communication and the media is a weather buoy for reading the China-Taiwan climate at any moment. The media is, of course, more than a weather buoy, it can throw oil on trouble waters or add fuel to fire. A further proposition is that by slipping into the role of mediators, journalists must compromise their journalistic independence and neutrality.

Theoretically informed by theories of international communication, a field that Chitty has argued can usefully apply not merely to issues of East-West and North-South communication, but also to East-West and North-South communication within countries such as China and India (2010:181-196), this thesis proposes to employ what has been characterised in the literature (see Chapter III) as media-broker diplomacy and media diplomacy (Gilboa 2000; Gilboa 2005b), diplomacy being a process of negotiation that can contribute to conflict resolution or advancement of cooperation in social contexts at all levels, including the interpersonal level of gender relations, e.g. diplomacy within a marriage. As this investigation is confined primarily to cross-strait relations, multiple interpretations of the subject could serve as a point of departure, through which a better understanding may be achieved concerning the basic background of this thesis.

## **Cross-Strait Relations: Historical and Political Interpretations**

Cross-strait relations, referring to the relationship and interactions between mainland China and Taiwan across the Taiwan Strait, have always been complicated, confusing, volatile and sensitive. In a Chinese metaphorical sense, they seem to be a “knot”, which is hard to “untie” (Bush 2005). To draw on a Greek myth, they are no less than a Pandora’s box, which augurs ill for anyone who opens it. The relationship has been blighted historically by animosity and affliction. It now poses politically an “odd mix of cooperation and contention” (Clough 1994:215). Such defining attributes qualify the relationship to seem to be both a monster to the political elite and a puzzle to the rank and file.

From a Chinese perspective, all of these troubles began with the upheaval in 1949 when the vanquished KMT government took refuge in Taipei, Taiwan, where it established a new base for the dislocated “Republic of China” (ROC). At the same time the new People’s Republic of China (PRC) was created by the CCP in Beijing. Over the past six decades, the two sides have come to realise that

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<sup>3</sup> “Mainland China” and “China” will be used interchangeably in this thesis. However, according to the CCP’s political and linguistic logic, there should be a huge difference between these two terms vis-à-vis Taiwan: “mainland China” implies that Taiwan, a province of China, is one part of the motherland whereas “China” may be indicative of two equal political entities and undesirably boost the status of Taiwan.

neither can they join together easily nor can they separate from each other completely. Thus cross-strait relations have been caught in the crosscurrents characterised by long-standing political and military confrontation, diplomatic competition and more recently, economic cooperation and civil exchanges.

Regarding their intractable relationship, different interpretations remain between Beijing and Taipei. On mainland China, the CCP government perceives cross-strait relations as the “Taiwan question” (Taiwan Affairs Office 01 September 1993) and a “security problem” (Sutter 2008:201), for which its immediate concern is to prevent this disobedient “province” from moving towards permanent separation from China. Characterised by a “one country, two systems” formula, since 1979, proposals made by Deng Xiaoping (邓小平) and Jiang Zemin (江泽民) and other CCP leaders have always been centred on the ultimate objective of unification, which has been morally and legally justified by the CCP’s ambition to rejuvenate the great Chinese nation and the Anti-Secession Law of 2005. On the island of Taiwan, however, cross-strait relations entail sustainable coexistence with a giant neighbour, which reserves the right to use force to prevent Taiwan from moving from its current unresolved position to secession from China. Over the years, different official visions emanated from the island. From the 1950s to the 1970s, the KMT’s Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek (蒋介石) vowed to “recover the mainland”. In the 1980s, his reform-minded son Chiang Ching-kuo (蒋经国) adhered to a “Three Noes” policy — no contact, no negotiations, and no compromises, as his counterattack to the CCP’s unification rhetoric. Initiating the post-Chiang era in 1990s, Lee Teng-hui (李登辉), as the first president of Taiwanese origin, defined cross-strait relations as actually a “special state-to-state relationship”, which provoked strong reactions from Beijing and consequently solidified his reputation as a “troublemaker” (Sutter 2008:196). Being the first president belonging to the independence-minded Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), Chen Shui-bian (陈水扁) formulated, in the new millennium, a vision of “one country on each side of the strait”, and thus was eventually labelled by Beijing as an “evil” secessionist. Taken as a whole, whatever the case may be, all of these different and evolutionary interpretations may be distinctly condensed by Lasswellian world politics utterances: The demands for supremacy versus the demands for equality (1965b:89, 72).

Nevertheless, from a Taiwanese perspective, the historical and political complexity of cross-strait relations can never be oversimplified. Any tendency which boils them down to a matter between the CCP and KMT may be viewed as an ensnarement into Chinese self-absorption. “Never reduce the parties in human conflicts to two,” as Tehranian cautions (2004:241), “Remember that when two elephants fight, the grass gets hurt.” Obviously, cross-strait relations have always been intertwined with the peculiarity of Taiwanese identity and history, which may tentatively be traced back to two dates. The first was 17 April 1895 when Taiwan was ceded to Japan in the “Treaty of Shimonoseki” after China’s late Qing dynasty lost the Sino-Japanese War. The second was 28 February 1947, “a defining moment in Taiwan history” (Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001:32), when thousands of

Taiwanese were killed in the bloody crackdown by the newly arrived KMT administration after the end of the WWII. Creating the legacy of a colonial, subordinate and suppressive experience, these historical events have also produced a far-reaching impact on the delicate relations between the so-called “Mainlanders” and “Taiwanese”. More recently, “Taiwan’s economic and other achievements created a sense among its people that they are entitled to greater dignity and status in the international system” (Lampton 2001:3).

From an international perspective, it would also be an oversimplification if cross-strait relations were confined to the bilateral ties between the PRC and ROC. Rather, in a world of interdependence, their respective relations with other countries have also been implicated in this “knot” (Yu 1996:249). Consequently, cross-strait relations have been extended into the international arena, characterised by what Sutter calls “unremitting Chinese efforts to isolate Taiwan internationally” (2008:189) and what Lampton terms “Taiwan’s drive for more international breathing space, identity, dignity, and autonomy” (1994:267). As the only political-military superpower in the world, the United States, “on whom Taiwan’s future largely depends” (Copper 1988:25), has a considerable stake in this trouble spot. During the Cold War, Taiwan used to serve as an “unsinkable aircraft carrier” in the American global strategy of containing communist expansion in the Asia-Pacific (Rawnsley 2000b:86). Because of its strategic interests, ideological acceptance and traditional alignment with Taiwan, for more than two decades, the US had been “in the lead” in supporting the position of the ROC as the sole legitimate government of China and the holder of the China seat at the UN Security Council (Sutter 1994:3). Although it shifted its diplomatic recognition from the ROC to PRC in 1979, the US still maintains substantive relations with Taiwan through the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) and its congressional Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), which legalises the US security commitment to defending Taiwan. While remaining a somewhat dominating force in resolving the “Taiwan question”, even the US cannot adopt policies aimed at one portion of “Greater China” without considering the effects on the other parts (Lampton 1994:266). With respect to other countries, including Japan which colonized Taiwan for 50 years (1895-1945), they have to consider the “risk (of) incurring sanctions from the PRC if they deal with Taiwan in sensitive ways” (Gold 1994:192). However, inasmuch as Taiwan is positioned in a “gray area” of international relations, “no firmly established rules exist as to how to treat a government in the ROC’s position” (Clough 1994:226). Without any general guide on how to act, it is no surprise that a diplomatic game of balancing the costs and benefits has been “played” all the time in every way. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of his popular treatise entitled *Taiwan: Nation-State or Province?*, John F. Copper comments that “the question of whether Taiwan is a nation-state or a province of China is a more salient problem than ever. It not only affects the 21 million inhabitants of the island and the small islands that Taipei rules but many other nations of the world” (1996: xii).

## Cross-Strait Relations: Cultural and Sociological Interpretations

The politics of cross-strait relations, in Hans Morgenthau's realist interpretation, "like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature" (1985:4). Indeed, cross-strait relations are intricately knitted with a human texture, either by way of personal traits of political elites or of grass roots nationalistic sentiments. Putting a human face on the relationship, we may frame it variously as: individual tragedy; family reunion; fortune hunting; cultural renaissance; and survival of the fittest (social selection) as well.

Following the KMT's chaotic retreat from the mainland to Taiwan in 1949 were some two million mainlanders. Most of these exiles left behind parents, children, brothers, sisters, wives or husbands and subsequently the separation of these family-oriented Chinese from their close relatives was "a bitter experience" (Clough 1993:21). This family tragedy continued for almost three decades until the elimination of martial law in Taiwan on 15 July 1987. During those gloomy years, the feelings of the brokenhearted towards a 100-miles-wide strait were perhaps best captured in the words of Yu Kuang-chung (余光中), a renowned Taiwan poet and literary scholar:

*"Homesickness is caused by a shallow bay of the Straits*

*I'm on this end*

*while the mainland is over that end"* (*The People's Daily [Overseas Edition]* 30 April 2005).

A household name in Taiwan, Yu was born in Nanjing, China in 1928 and moved to Taiwan with his family in 1950. His widely-disseminated lines helped to pour out the bitter homesickness and disappointment of a whole generation and have been lauded as the hallmark of Taiwan literature (*China Post* 25 May 2008).

"The shallow bay of the Straits", as Yu puts it, has nevertheless evolved into a strait of civil exchanges. Since 1987, numerous Taiwanese visitors have rubbed shoulders with Taiwanese business people in travelling across the strait, carrying with them various goods, gifts, equipment and technologies from the island. This growing exodus toward the west, interestingly, invites comparison with the panic stricken exodus of the defeated KMT and their refugees who "took with them huge sums of money, equipment, government files, and art treasures" to the east, to Taiwan (Downton 1986:131). As China implements its open door policy and seeks to become the world's factory, numerous people around the world rushed to China to invest and trade in a Chinese-version of the "Gold Rush", an event that happened in the histories of both Australia and North America. It is no

surprise that the Taiwanese,<sup>4</sup> with a shared Chinese culture<sup>5</sup> and close family ties, are the most enthusiastic force in this new gold rush. They have distinguished themselves not only by their standing as top investors but also by the influx of Taiwanese from Taiwan to the mainland. This mass movement was so remarkable that, after North America, Europe, and Oceania, mainland China was ranked as the fourth most popular settlement destination choice for Taiwanese, according to the survey conducted by Taiwan's Ministry of Interior Affairs and released in April 2004 (Ng 30 June 2004). Astonishingly, up to the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it was estimated that over 300,000 Taiwanese had settled in the mainland's largest metropolitan area, Shanghai, alone, with between 500,000 and 1 million Taiwanese living in the mainland at any time (Chao 2004:697) out of Taiwan's total population of 23 million. For many Taiwanese, mainland China signifies a land of new life. The ever-growing exodus-to-mainland, including investors and entrepreneurs, employees of Taiwanese companies, their families and opportunity seekers, has thus become one of the most dynamic interactions, termed by Clough as "people-to-people diplomacy" reaching across the Taiwan Strait (1993).

Amid this flourishing "people-to-people diplomacy" one may detect the influence of a shared Chinese culture. According to the interpretation of Chitty's Matrix Framework (see Chapter III), people of Chinese origin<sup>6</sup> constitute an arena or plexus of venues for an E-matrix (ethno-historical), which is "concerned with cultural reproduction and preservation" (2000:15; Chitty 2009b:67-68). Thus, the Chinese ideology "allows both sides of the Taiwan Strait to project themselves as the true guardians of Chinese culture and identity" (Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001:32). In the eyes of President Ma Ying-jeou, people on both sides "are all descendants of emperors Yan and Huang" (*Taipei Times* 20 May 2010). In the CCP's former General Secretary Jiang Zemin's terms, people on both sides should jointly carry forward the fine traditions of "the splendid culture of 5,000 years created by the sons and daughters of all ethnic groups of China" (Jiang 30 January 1995). In effect, this concern for cultural sustainability has been demonstrated by a widely-circulated assumption that the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to be the so-called "Chinese century", and also by their enthusiastic quest for a *renaissance*, a common word used by the top leaders of both sides to craft the titles of their landmark speeches mentioned above. In their common pursuit of renaissance, it is evident that they departed

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<sup>4</sup> Taken in its widest meaning, the term "Taiwanese" will be employed by this thesis to address all of the residents of the ROC in Taiwan, be they indigenous minorities, the descendants of early migrants from the south of mainland China, notably Fujian and Guangdong Provinces, since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, or (the offspring of) those mainlanders who arrived in Taiwan following the KMT's retreat in 1949. See also Sutter (1994:20); Rawnsley and Rawnsley (2001:43); Copper (2009: 11-15).

<sup>5</sup> The perception of a shared Chinese culture between the two sides may be debatable, in particular against the backdrop of Taiwan's history and future. Nowadays, many Taiwanese would also identify their culture as Taiwanese culture rather than Chinese culture. However, it is worthy of note that, as Copper observes, "Taiwan's culture, for the most part, is of Chinese origin" (Copper 2009: 15). Although indigenous customs, Japanese culture (1895-1945) and even American culture (after WWII) all have helped shape Taiwan's culture, the impact of Chinese culture remains predominant. Thus, there is no dearth of shared Chinese cultural heritage in Taiwan, such as Chinese language, Chinese calligraphy, classical painting, opera, music, folk arts, as well as folk religion and social traditional customs.

<sup>6</sup> In this context, the discussion may not be applied to some of the minorities in mainland China and Taiwan.

from the same Chinese E-matrix but are heading towards quite different sociopolitical goals, which may be graphically described as sleeping in the same bed while having different dreams<sup>7</sup> (*Taipei Times* 01 August 2010). Such a social relationship, in Weber's interpretive sociology, is referred to as a "conflict" (*Kampf*), notably a peaceful conflict in the light of peaceful unification or peaceful separation in the cross-strait context, which "consists in a formally peaceful attempt to attain control over opportunities and advantages which are also desired by others" (1978:38). This peaceful conflict entails the struggle (competition) for advantages or for survival, which, "in the long run", will lead to an inevitable "social selection" (Weber 1978:38-39).

Both of the two regimes have come to realise the implication of this "social selection" and reorient themselves towards an economic pragmatism and consequently stake their future on economic performance (Gong and Chen 1996:19). Faced with the diplomatic disaster caused by the ROC's forced retreat from the UN, the government in exile from the mainland resorted to industrialisation in the 1970s which resulted in the so-called "Taiwan Miracle" and the ascension of Taiwan as one of the "Four Small Dragons"<sup>8</sup> among the economies of Asia. Following the nightmare of Mao Zedong's (毛泽东) Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), Deng Xiaoping "pinned economic development down as the 'central task' for the CCP in the next one hundred years" (Wang 2005:32). After losing its way politically in Tiananmen Square in 1989, however, "economic growth and nationalism have come to form the *raison d'être* of the regime's legitimation, replacing the bankrupt Communist ideology that finds very few true believers in China today" [original emphasis] (Lee 2003:1). What people feel and believe, in their hearts and minds respectively, are significantly shaped by media and communication, which will be sitting at the centre of this ongoing social selection.

## Cross-Strait Relations: A Journalist-Focused Investigation

Given the absence of official ties, media and communication constitute an important player in cross-strait relations. What is fascinating is the question of how journalists, from a human individual perspective, impact cross-strait relations with their journalistic practice. Based on a rich variety of historical events (see Chapter II, V, VI), this thesis proposes that the Taiwan Strait is a site for mediatory "bridges" and the media and journalist have played an essential role in cross-strait negotiations, signalling brokering and contributing to the construction of harmony at times and

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<sup>7</sup> Arguably, David M. Lampton is the first one to introduce this Chinese idiomatic metaphor to Chinese foreign relations. He writes, "The Chinese have an expression that captures the essence of a relationship between two people whose lives are intimately intertwined but who do not fundamentally communicate with each other: 'same bed, different dreams' (*tong chuang, yi meng*)". Sharing "the same global bed", the U.S.-China relations are thus interpreted as *Same Bed, Different Dreams* (Lampton 2001: ix).

<sup>8</sup> Together with Hong Kong, Singapore, and South Korea as newly-developed economic powers.



discord at other times. In this respect, the choice of journalists as the focus of investigation must be justified.

First, the mass media and journalist can push every hot political and cultural button — on both sides. Over the past several decades, the mass media and journalist have played critical roles in the sociopolitical transformations that envelop cross-strait relations. On mainland China, “mass media command a sensitive location in the Chinese Communist system” (Chan 2003:159), with their perceived role to maximise the CCP’s power and profit. Correspondingly, they not only serve ideologically as the mouthpiece of the party-state, but also feed the party-state with tremendous revenue in the market economy “with Chinese characteristics”. Pertinent to this study is the CCP’s conviction that the media and journalist can act as an important player in its cause of “peaceful reunification”. In effect, they have been instrumental in the formulation and implementation of the CCP’s soft (also hard) tactics towards Taiwan. On the other side, “Taiwan has a long tradition of powerful and vocal media that present a challenge to government strength” (Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001:45). In Taiwan’s success story of political development, the media have gained high visibility, characterised by the opposition magazines (“non-KMT magazines” as they were called) which eventually gave rise to the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in 1986. Both sides being considered, the mass media and journalist may be barometers of the political climate between the two sides and also their ruling parties. The CCP and KMT were both inspired by Leninist doctrine, but they have both evolved into different types of non-Leninist entities.

Second, blazing like a firebrand, the journalist not only illuminates the expansion of cross-strait relations, but also mediates between the two contending parties. A cursory look at history from 1987 to 2009 (see Chapter II) shows that the journalist performed an unprecedented role of mediator in breaking through the political deadlock and reducing tensions and misunderstandings between the two sides. As Chang Jung-kung (张荣恭), a renowned journalist in Taiwan and the KMT’s Deputy Secretary-General, puts it, the media and journalists have always marched in the vanguard of cross-strait relations.<sup>9</sup> In practice, journalists on both sides maintain a close relationship with the ruling party to the extent that they may be viewed as what Cheek and Hamrin call “establishment intellectuals” (1986:3). All of these striking interactions provide a valuable vantage point within the field of international communication. Theoretically, a mediating role of the media and journalist has been characterised by Gilboa (2000; 2005b) in the literature as media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy, the latter having been notably well practiced while under-examined in the public diplomacy era. Furthermore, human individuals like journalists, in Chitty’s Matrix Framework, have been conceptualised as I-matrices (2000; 2004a; 2009b), being capable of shaping matrices at various levels ranging from the global political economy to local entities at some historical junctures. Culturally and ethnically bound together by the Chinese heritage, the individual journalists on both

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<sup>9</sup> This viewpoint was articulated by Chang in a television interview of *The Strait Forum* (海峡论坛) broadcast by *Fujian Southeast Satellite TV (SETV)* (福建东南卫视) in April 2006.

sides are to be treated as I-matrices within the greater Chinese R-matrix (Regional matrix), with a view that a journalist-focused investigation may help to shed light on the role of common individuals in international communication and international relations. The theoretical dimension of this thesis will be elaborated in Chapter III.

Third, the research motivation may also be attributed to the regulation of information flows across the Taiwan Strait. In the Information Age, information flows are supposed to be getting easier with the growth of new information and communications technologies (ICTs). However, for security and ideological concerns, cross-strait information flows, notably news media flows, have been suffering from various barriers. Despite a shared Chinese language,<sup>10</sup> the mainland audience has little access to Taiwanese news media, which have been restricted to a small inner circle consisting of governmental and military institutions, and Taiwan-affairs think tanks (see Chapter II). In Taiwan, the mainland news media have suffered a similar fate in spite of a liberalised media environment.<sup>11</sup> Due to the long-standing information barrier across the strait, covert media flows have always been linked with overt propaganda over the past several decades. Since the 1980s, this state of affairs has been largely welded into cross-strait civil exchanges, characterised by the Taiwanese exodus to the mainland and Chinese visits to Taiwan. Although the tight controls on information flows across the strait have been increasingly eroded by the Internet, lack of transparent and free flow of information still remains a negative factor which affects mutual understanding between the two sides. In an increasingly interdependent world with information circumnavigating the globe faster than any time in the past, as Rawnsley and Rawnsley wonder, “it is questionable just how much longer such states can hold out against the communications revolution” (2001:7).

Fourth, the research focus is further inspired by the contrast between “hot” public attention on cross-strait relations and “cold” public awareness on both sides with reference to the legitimacy of international communication in dealing with this conundrum. This contrast, from my point of view, reveals a huge theoretical gap which this thesis aspires to bridge. Among the nations,<sup>12</sup> it would be quite natural to group cross-strait relations into fields such as international communication and international relations due to the political status quo. However, in the sensitive cross-strait context,

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<sup>10</sup> In written language, mainland China has introduced simplified Chinese whereas Taiwan continues to use traditional Chinese.

<sup>11</sup> This statement concerns itself with the existing ban on the distribution of mainland news media implemented by the Taiwan side. For the evolution of Taiwan’s media environment towards press freedom, in particular after 1987, see Chapter II for more background.

<sup>12</sup> Over the period of 2007 to 2010 during which this thesis project was operated, the relevant abstracts of several chapters were accepted by some international academic conferences. It would be interesting just to take a glimpse at how the concerned organising committees grouped this research topic into the panels: in the panel of “China and International Relations” at the 18<sup>th</sup> Biennial New Zealand Asian Studies Society International Conference (July 2009, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand); in “Talking the Talk: Political Rhetoric and Public Diplomacy in an Interconnected World” at the 51<sup>st</sup> ISA Annual Convention (February 2010, New Orleans, USA); in “Chinese Elites and Global Power” at Melbourne Conference on China (July 2010, the University of Melbourne, Australia); in “Cross Strait Relations” at 2010 Canadian Asian Studies Association Conference (October 2010, Ottawa, Canada).

any attempt to link it with something “international” would invite serious political concerns. In particular, Chinese nationalists would take for granted that international communication is concerned with communication across national borders and thus it would be deemed wrong to study cross-strait relations within the field of international communication. Driven by such a mentality, an academic investigation may be perceived as actually a bid to advocate Taiwan independence. In nationalistic logic, communication across the Taiwan Strait is neither fish nor fowl. It cannot be labelled as international communication. Nor can it be categorised as “national” communication. Thus, pitching my theoretical tent in the field of international communication poses a political pitfall, one which may consequently endanger the “legitimation” of this thesis. However, it is this very pitfall that acts as the driving force behind the thesis. In this sense, the thesis sets forth to plant a “hot” shoot in a “cold” field. Importantly, the field has always included communication within non-western countries and Chitty has pointed out the value of an emerging Asian International Communication addressing communication questions between as well as within giants such as China and India (2010:181-196).

Taking all of the four considerations together, it is evident that cross-strait relations have presented this thesis with what may be called “opportunities and problems in equal measure” (Rawnsley 2000a:1). However, the intimate relationship between mainland China and Taiwan fascinates the researcher, himself a Chinese mainlander. Even the influential scholarly journal *The China Quarterly* states its current mission as “covering all aspects of contemporary China including Taiwan”.<sup>13</sup> Obviously, such an intelligible mission statement of a particular academic journal (also others alike) does not imply any political tendency. Since 1949, however, cross-strait relations alongside the international politics of the ROC on Taiwan have evolved into the very state of affairs which seems to be difficult for any political and communication theory to categorise and theorise. As Rawnsley observes, while the works of many scholars in related fields “turn on phrasing and terminology, others are more concerned with abstractions, definition, even questions of legality” (2000a:1). Concerning terminology, for example, political scientists and communication scholars tend to address the relationship between mainland China and Taiwan in a rather improvised manner, such as cross-strait relations (Chu 2000; Lieberthal 2000), Taiwan-PRC relations (Clough 1994), Taiwan-mainland relations (Sutter 1994:1), the evolving mainland-Taiwan relationship (Lampton 1994:269), China’s Relationship with Taiwan (Jacobs and Hong 1995), the Taiwan-China relationship (Wei 2000:356,360), and even the China-Taiwan equation (Lee 2000a:25), just to name a few. This thesis, as it has demonstrated, will employ the terminology of *cross-strait relations* on the ground that it is commonly used term, including the mass media and journalists, on both sides.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> This mission statement is available at <http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayJournal?jid=CQY> Accessed on 11 September 2010.

<sup>14</sup> On Taiwan, certain news media (and journalists as well) may have different preferences, which will be addressed in Chapter VI.

## Thesis Structure

As the first and foremost objective of this thesis, the investigation of the role of the journalist in cross-strait relations is a step-by-step intellectual journey. Therefore, this thesis is structured in seven interconnected chapters. Apart from this chapter of introduction, all of the following chapters have been assigned with a particular purpose to deepen understanding of the research question.

Drawing upon historical accounts in the literature, Chapter II conducts background research which outlines a comprehensive political and media background of mainland China and Taiwan from a historical perspective, characterised by the evolution of cross-strait relations and media involvements from 1949 to 2010. Although this chapter does not seek to provide an exhaustive history, it does serve as a chronological and institutional checklist for the genesis and evolution of the journalist's role in cross-strait relations, which is pertinent to Chapter V and VI.

Chapter III undertakes a literature review in the field of international communication. Having reviewed a variety of frameworks of analysis, this chapter selects Chitty's Matrix Framework as a useful tool to analyse cross-strait relations. Given the vast amount of literature, this chapter groups the literature around five themes: communication and diplomacy, public diplomacy, propaganda, media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy, and public relations. Throughout the literature review, this chapter also attempts to make the connection between the field of international communication and the study of cross-strait relations.

Chapter IV presents an intellectual journey in search of methodological insights. This chapter identifies the "cross-strait journalist" as the research focus and "traverses" different key paradigms to interpret this thesis' methodological orientation. It selects and justifies case studies and intensive interviews as two major research methods. Treating them as two stages of this thesis project, this chapter also renders a seven-step operationalisation for each method with a view to being methodological reference for other researchers.

Chapter V conducts case studies of two landmark historical events in 1987 and 1991 when journalists on the two sides first crossed the Taiwan Strait for their reporting missions since 1949 and thus acted as media brokers. This chapter consists of two sections: case narratives and case analysis. The case analysis section draws upon the four parameters of initiation and motivation, awareness, action and consequences of Gilboa's media-broker diplomacy model and analyses the characteristics of *cross-strait media-broker diplomacy*.

Chapter VI focuses on data presentation, employing intensive interviews with 16 journalists from mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong (SAR) in October and November 2009. In order to give the

readers the big picture of the role of the journalist in cross-strait relations over the period of 1987-2009, this chapter not only conducts what may be called mini case studies of five historical events on the basis of the interview data and documentary research, but also presents the results through a series of key concepts pertinent to this thesis. Based on the data presentation, six key findings will be highlighted. This chapter then proceeds with theoretical discussions on three main dimensions (historical, political, and journalistic) and concludes with a summary.

Chapter VII concludes this study by revisiting the research question and offering some predictions. Putting forward a typology of journalists and cross-strait relations, this chapter strives to theorise the communication and diplomacy situation in the cross-strait context. It also conducts a self-evaluation of the academic significance and limitations of the project. For the purpose of scientific research, it depicts possible directions in the relevant research areas. At a macro level, the chapter presents some recommendations for both mainland China and Taiwan with reference to identifying their respective promises and pitfalls in wielding their smart power in general and how to use media and media diplomacy to safeguard their interests in particular.

## **Summary**

Empirically and theoretically, this thesis champions a broader perspective for observing cross-strait relations and a peaceful avenue for handling the potentially explosive “Taiwan question”. By “a broader perspective”, I mean a perspective which perceives cross-strait relations with an open-minded vision and within a global landscape, transcending ethnic and disciplinary parochialism (see Chapter II, III, IV). By “a peaceful avenue”, the thesis commits itself to the investigation of the impact of communication and diplomacy, characterised by the journalist’s role, on the peaceful resolution of international hot spots (Chapter V, VI, VII). As Taylor points out, “communications as a process of persuasion, rooted in technology but requiring creative applications with deep-seated cultural, political, and psychological consequences, is the ultimate multidisciplinary subject” (2001:255). In this respect, although this thesis has been encamped in the field of international communication, it must adopt a multidisciplinary outlook to observe the complexity and diversity of the research subject. This is not really a contradiction, as international communication is itself interdisciplinary in nature. In the course of its advancement, therefore, this thesis will frequently make incursions into and benefit from other disciplines and fields, such as history, international relations, journalism, sociology, media studies, China studies, Taiwan studies, and Asian studies. While confining itself exclusively to the inquiry into the journalist’s role in cross-strait relations, this thesis pins its ultimate concern on the relationship between communication and peace.

## Chapter II The Cross-Strait Tango: History, Politics and Media

China's modern media have grown up and operate today in the shadow of China's long heritage of central government autocracy. Neither Yuan Shikai nor Chiang Kai-shek nor Mao Zedong nor Deng Xiaoping has been able to escape from the shadow of the imperial past (Fairbank 1990: x).

Thus the proximity of the two Chinas narrowed significantly the distance that propaganda had to travel, whether by balloon, loudspeaker, radio, or word-of-mouth (Rawnsley 2000b:83).

### Introduction

Situated in the west of the Pacific Ocean, the Taiwan Strait is truly exceptional from a geopolitical perspective, due primarily to its association with the complex cross-strait relations, mainland China being to its west and the island of Taiwan to its east. With one shore opening into the world's most populous area and a powerhouse of the world economy and the other to the very first democratic republic in East Asia<sup>15</sup> and one of its "Four Small Dragons" economies of the 1980s, this strait symbolises a Chinese political puzzle. It has always been viewed as "troubled waters" with no safe haven in sight. On mainland China, many ask why Taiwan dislikes reunification<sup>16</sup> with "us". On Taiwan, the islanders question why "we the Taiwanese" should be subordinated to the mainlanders. Most foreigners might wonder why Taiwan, which they would perceive as a "nation", one with extraordinary economic and political achievements, has always suffered an "unfair" international status. Whatever the question may be, it is unquestionable for someone that "even if one prefers to see Taiwan as a separate political entity, it still is part of China culturally and historically" (Metzger

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<sup>15</sup>As J. Bruce Jacobs (2008: 460) has noted, in all of Asia, "only four countries — India, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan — have established stable democracies".

<sup>16</sup>Laliberté points out that the usage of "*re*-unification" is "inappropriate" because Taiwan has never been under the governance of the PRC (2008: 99).

and Myers 1991: xxxiii). Others, however, may argue for a reconstruction of “Taiwan’s real history” (Jacobs 2011).

First and foremost, the Taiwan Strait is a geopolitical rift. Compared with the vast territory of mainland China, Taiwan is a small leaf-shaped island (sweet potato shaped, in the eyes of Taiwanese), just 100 miles off China’s southeastern coastline. Alongside several scattered islands including Penghu (the Pescadores), Mastu, and Kinmen (Quemoy), Taiwan has a land area of about 36,000 square kilometres and a population of 23 million people (GIO 2010:17). Though moored in a maritime world, Taiwan has been “always under the shadow of the continent nearby” (Kerr 1965:1). The geographical proximity welds together the fate of the two sides. Historically, however, “[e]ven Taiwan’s early history is a political issue” (Long 1991:2) and, in general, so much of Taiwan’s history “remains contested” (Jacobs 2011:203). Since the year of 1430, during the Ming dynasty, “which year marked the accidental landing in Taiwan of Wan San-ho, better known as Cheng He, the greatest of the Ming explorers” (Long 1991:5-6),<sup>17</sup> the strait has witnessed colonization by Europeans and Japanese, a disintegration of Manchu China that was accelerated by Western machinations, turbulent Chinese revolutions aimed at saving China, the political cleavage following the Chinese Civil War and most recently, an economic boom and the burgeoning of economic competition across the strait.

Deeply involved in the sociopolitical transformation of the two sides, the Taiwan Strait may also be characterised historically as a political strait. During the period of Manchu Qing dynasty, with the Sino-centric worldview, Manchu emperors within Beijing’s Forbidden City perceived Taiwan as a remote island hosting savage and indigenous people, a suitable destination for the exile of bureaucrats who had fallen from favour. Borrowing from Edward A. Shils’ concept of a political “center” and “periphery” (Metzger and Myers 1991: xvii), one might argue that Taiwan was never politically central in the “Middle Kingdom”. Rather it was clearly peripheral in location and nature. After WWII, however, peripheral Taiwan was “wrenched away” from “subordination to the Nationalist mainland into confrontation with the Communist mainland and dependence on the United

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<sup>17</sup> The genesis of Taiwan’s history vis-à-vis mainland China is a question awaiting impartial study. According to China’s first white paper on Taiwan entitled *The Taiwan Question and Reunification of China* (Taiwan Affairs Office, 01 September 1993), “Chinese governments of different periods set up administrative bodies to exercise jurisdiction over Taiwan. As early as in the mid-12th century the Song Dynasty set up a garrison in Penghu, putting the territory under the jurisdiction of Jinjiang County of Fujian’s Quanzhou Prefecture”. The *ROC Yearbook 2010* writes, under the section titled *The Original Taiwanese*, “Taiwan’s first inhabitants left no written records of their origins.... The majority of prehistoric artifacts found at over 500 sites indicate an Indonesian connection. Some items...suggest that Taiwan’s earliest settlers might have come from what is now the southern part of mainland China” (GIO 2010:50). In his monograph entitled *Taiwan: China’s Last Frontier*, Long (1991: 5) comments, “The first wave of mainland emigration pre-dates what Chinese historians have regarded as the true starting-point of Taiwan’s history. That is the year 1430,...”. Based on his review essay of Taiwan history, Jacobs (2011: 203) contends that “[I]t is clear, however, that Taiwan’s history has little to do with China’s history.”

States” (Winckler 1988:61). As a legacy of the unfinished civil war, the so-called “Taiwan question” has now been “centralised” by being placed at the top of the CCP’s political agenda (Taiwan Affairs Office 01 September 1993). Interestingly, within what Chitty calls the P-matrix or the global political economic venue (2004a:58), the Taiwan Strait has evolved from the frontline of “a tidy ideological confrontation” (1994:105) to the channel of a cross-strait marketplace flourishing in the post-Cold War era. It has become an economic strait.

One might note that the multi-faceted phenomenon of Greater China has great relevance to this strait. If the controversial discourse about Greater China is confined to the cultural dimension, the Taiwan Strait presents itself as a cultural strait, where “the cultural similarities of people are as powerful as the political differences that separate them” (Rawnsley 2003:110). Indeed, in the complex push-pull, the two sides can hardly have escaped from the influence of their shared Chinese culture, within which the dynamic mass media have extended its far-reaching impact beyond the cultural realm. As a media-dominated and media-friendly society (Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001:5), Taiwan boasts perhaps the highest media density in the world, with China’s oldest news agency, national radio station and private newspaper being based on the island. Mainland China, with an unparalleled 1.3 billion Chinese audience, has developed a gigantic media system under the party-state, characterised by the “Hallmark” media conglomeration (Lee, He, and Huang 2008:15) within which various state-owned media conglomerates compete with each other to project the image of contemporary China as a cultural totality.

With this highly charged Taiwan Strait in mind, this chapter will chronicle the evolution of cross-strait relations from three perspectives: history, politics, and media, so as to lay the groundwork for further research in the forthcoming chapters. As part of cross-strait relations, the interactions of the media on both sides constitute the focus of this thesis. Thus, considerable emphasis will be placed on the so-called *cross-strait media exchanges*. In Chinese, this term literally means news exchanges across the Taiwan Strait. Nevertheless, in the literature of both international communication and global journalism, “news exchanges” customarily refer to international news flow, with a particular implication of “a quantitative imbalance between North and South” (Boyd-Barrett and Thussu 1992:9). For conceptual coherence, this thesis uses the term *media exchanges* to summarise the broad meaning of media products flow, media interactions and reciprocal visits of journalists as Clough did in his monograph on *Reaching Across the Taiwan Strait: People-to-People Diplomacy* (1993), and thus reserves the term *news exchanges* for the narrow meaning of news flow (see Chapter VI for more).

In approaching the history of cross-strait relations, different researchers may adopt different ways of periodisation for their respective purposes. In their work on China’s relationship with Taiwan published in 1995, Australian leading figure in Taiwan studies J. Bruce Jacobs and his colleague Hong conduct a three-period examination, namely, a hostile relationship (1949-1978), peaceful



reunification (1979-1989), expanding economic ties (1987-1995) (Jacobs and Hong 1995:214-230). While investigating China's relations with Taiwan in the post-Cold War era, Sutter groups his analysis into two periods under Taiwanese presidents Lee Teng-hui (1988-2000) and Chen Shui-bian (2000-2008) (Sutter 2005; 2008). Chinese journalism scholar Chen Lidan proposes a three-stage periodisation of cross-strait media exchanges, characterised by media personnel's reciprocal visits: one-way flow (1987-1992); two-way exchanges (1992-2000); and exchanges on a relatively equal footing (after 2000) (Chen 28 November 2005). In his study of the evolution of Beijing's policy towards Taiwan during the reform era, Taiwanese political scientist Chu Yun-han divides his discussion roughly into two periods under the CCP leaders Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao (Chu 2005). While all these periodisations have their uses, this chapter has opted for a more "Taiwan-focused" periodisation, which is based on Taiwan's political leadership transition, since such a benchmark appears more easily to identify evolutionary shifts of cross-strait relations in general and media exchanges in particular. Although this thesis is confined to the historical period of 1987-2009, it would be useful to extend the background research up to 1949-2010<sup>18</sup> in order to depict a coherent historical picture for the reader. Thus, the coming section explores five eras, namely, Chiang Kai-shek (1949-1975), Chiang Ching-kuo (1975-1988), Lee Teng-hui (1988-2000), Chen Shui-bian (2000-2008), and Ma Ying-jeou (2008- ).

## **Evolution of Cross-Strait Relations and Media Exchanges**

To a great extent, modern China's history is one of two contending political parties: the KMT (founded at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century) and the CCP (established in 1921). In 1949, the retreat of the ROC to Taiwan and the establishment of the PRC in Beijing symbolised the subsequent division across the Taiwan Strait. Along this watershed of modern China, cross-strait relations began to adopt its real political meaning — the relations between two hostile governments as a result of the unfinished Chinese Civil War. From his historical perspective, Paul A. Cohen employs two notions to conceptualise the different Chinese regimes' respective efforts to modernise China thus: "[T]he long-standing struggle between centralizing and decentralizing forces in the Chinese polity" and "different modalities of reform" (1988:525,532). Cohen's two notions also proffer an essential baseline to observe the evolution of cross-strait relations, figuratively speaking, the CCP-KMT/DPP tango.

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<sup>18</sup> For background in reference to mainland China and Taiwan predating 1949, see among others, Kerr (1965), Gold (1986), Long (1991), Fairbank and Goldman (1998), and Copper (1996, 2007, 2009).

## 1. Chiang Kai-shek's Era (1949- 1975)<sup>19</sup>

The first era of cross-strait relations may be termed as the era of military strongmen. The emergence of two Chinas, each claiming suzerainty over both the mainland and Taiwan, led by the KMT and CCP respectively, incurred serious military confrontation in the 1950s. Consequently, their relations were dominated by a series of military conflicts related to the Korean War and two Taiwan Strait Crises. With an unfinished civil war still looming over the strait, the former allies (the two sides having cooperated in the Anti-Japanese War [1937-1945]) intended to use force to deal the other side a deadly blow. Since the KMT's retreat to Taiwan, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek vowed repeatedly to "recover the mainland" and thus viewed Taiwan as a "bastion for national recovery" (Long 1991: xvii). Given this justification, the KMT government "exercised authoritarian rule over the island state" (Tien 1989:1,110) and "specifically put the entire 'Taiwan area' under martial law"<sup>20</sup> (*Taipei Times* 12 August 2010), which was also known as "the Temporary Provisions Effective during the Period of National Mobilisation for the Suppression of the Communist Rebellion" (动员戡乱时期临时条款). On the other side, the CCP's Chairman Mao Zedong pursued every opportunity to "liberate Taiwan". When Mao was about to dispatch his PLA to cross the strait, the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 drew his military resources to the Korean Peninsula. Dramatically reversing its "hands-off" policy towards Chiang's regime, the Truman administration finally rediscovered the strategic value of the ROC on Taiwan to the extent that the US sent the Seventh Fleet to "neutralize" the Taiwan Strait in June 1950, leading to the direct involvement in cross-strait relations by the US (Rawnsley 2000b: 82, 85-86; Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001: 29-30). With American endorsement, Chiang remained convinced that the recovery of the mainland would be within his grasp. In 1954 Chiang's troops began to stage guerrilla operations against the mainland whereas the PLA retaliated by shelling Kinmen and Matsu, two offshore islands occupied by the KMT. The bombardment by the PLA, known as the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, prompted Washington to sign the Mutual Defense Treaty with Taipei in December 1954, which obliged the US security commitment to Taiwan. Because of the Eisenhower administration's announcement in May 1957 that it would install nuclear-capable missiles on Taiwan, the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis broke out in August 1958 with the PLA renewing its shelling of Kinmen and Matsu (Tubilewicz 2006:232-233).

In comparison with the 1950s, the 1960s were politically quiet (Gold 1986:74), partly because the CCP on the mainland was preoccupied with Mao's Cultural Revolution, and partly because Chiang's

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<sup>19</sup> Upon the death of Chiang Kai-shek in 1975, Yen Chia-kan (严家淦) became the President of ROC and held this position until 1978. Meanwhile, Chiang Ching-kuo, the genuine successor of Chiang Kai-shek, acted as the KMT's Chairman and the Premier of the Executive Yuan. Yen did not seek re-election in 1978 and thus paved the way for Chiang Ching-kuo's presidency (Copper 1988: 8; 2007: 24, 280).

<sup>20</sup> The KMT government proclaimed a series of martial laws three times between December 1948 and November 1949, with the last one declared on 22 November 1949. See the *Taipei Times* for more updated report (12 August 2010).

authoritarian rule had tamed the previously rebellious island. Military confrontation was gradually giving way to diplomatic competition in the 1970s. Though driven from the mainland, the ROC on Taiwan continued to hold the China seat in the United Nations Security Council and was recognised by most UN members as being “China” (Fairbank and Goldman 1998:340). The year 1971, however, saw the ROC being voted out of the UN with the China seat being taken over by the PRC. Moreover, in the following year, the long-standing animosity between the US and PRC was transformed dramatically into strategic cooperation through Henry Kissinger’s secret diplomacy with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai (周恩来), to service their common interests of containing the Soviet Union in the Cold War. This international political earthquake created a domino effect with major western powers, which transferred diplomatic recognition from the ROC to PRC. Despite several years of delay, formal diplomatic relations were established between the US and PRC on 01 January 1979, dealing the ROC the most devastating blow. Given the official ties with Beijing, the Carter administration cut its diplomatic relations with Taipei, abrogated the 1954 Mutual Defence Treaty and withdrew its military from the island (Tubilewicz 2006:234). The great diplomatic ordeal in the 1970s, though precipitating the ROC’s deteriorating international position and image, was to some extent counterbalanced by the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) by the US Congress in March 1979, which extends security commitment to Taiwan.

When the clouds of conflict and confrontation darkened the sky during 1950s to 1970s, cross-strait media exchanges were still in a preliminary stage. In particular, there was virtually no contact between media personnel on both sides (Hong 1996:194). In this era, the CCP and KMT governments used media, notably loudspeaker and radio, to broadcast propaganda across the strait, supposedly reaching their audiences without depending on intermediaries. This Cold War propaganda, being central to the psychological warfare of both sides, was structured “*by Chinese for Chinese*” [original emphasis] (Rawnsley 2000b:83). The two sides exchanged angry rhetoric and seeking to paint conditions on the other side “in the blackest possible colours” (Clough 1993:79). Durdin captures thus how this Cold War rhetoric was propagated through a mainland radio directed at Taiwan in the late 1970s: “A recent broadcast from Fukien, just across the Formosa Strait from Taiwan, charged the ‘Chiang Kai-shek clique’ with arresting and killing people ‘at will’, and with ‘ruthless economic exploitation and political suppression’” (1979:91). Echoes of familiar Cold War rhetoric could also be heard on the *BBC* and *VOA* in this confrontational era during which international radio broadcasting was used to conduct public diplomacy of a propagandist nature (Fortner 1993:279; Gilboa 2000:294; Rawnsley 1996).

With respect to radio propaganda, the KMT “had taken an early lead over its communist rivals” (Rawnsley 2000b:91). Formerly under the Ministry of Defence, the Taipei-based *Central Broadcasting System* (CBS, 中央广播电台) used to act as the KMT’s spearhead in the propaganda war against the mainland. In 1949, the CBS began to broadcast towards “mainland compatriots”,

subsequently in cooperation with the *Kwang Hua Broadcasting Station* (光华之声) and *Air Force Broadcasting System* (空军广播电台). Founded by the KMT in Nanjing in 1928, the *Broadcasting Corporation of China* (BCC, 中国广播公司) is viewed as “the pioneer of the ROC’s broadcasting industry” (GIO 2000:274). In 1949, the BCC established “a foothold in international radio with its broadcast of the *Voice of Free China* (自由中国之声) over short wave channels” (GIO 2000:274). In May 1954, the BCC also launched its Mainland Chinese Service Department (Rawnsley 2000b:91). On the mainland, two propaganda radio stations were instituted by the CCP. In August 1954, the national radio *Central People’s Broadcasting Station* (中央人民广播电台) in Beijing launched its broadcasting service towards Taiwan and hence blazed a trail for the CCP’s cross-strait propaganda. Furthermore, on the propaganda frontline, the PLA established its *Fujian Front Radio Station* (福建前线广播电台) in Xiamen (Amoy)<sup>21</sup> to mobilise military propaganda towards the KMT’s personnel when the PLA shelled Kinmen in August 1958. In 1962, this military radio station was relocated to Fuzhou, the capital city of Fujian Province, where the PLA’s Fuzhou Military Area was also based. Adapting to the cross-strait détente, it was renamed as the *Voice of the Strait* (VOS, 海峡之声广播电台) in 1984. For half a century, VOS has always been counted as the PLA’s mouthpiece with reference to its military stance towards Taiwan.

## 2. Chiang Ching-kuo’s Era (1975-1988)

The second era of cross-strait relations is characterised by reforms, which led to a massive transformation in the name of economic progress and integration into the world economy. The status change of the PRC and ROC in the international arena coincided with their respective generational leadership succession. Meanwhile, the two regimes were caught in the so-called different domestic “crisis patterns”: “The key crises in the PRC over the years clearly stemmed from its failure to cope with the problem of economic modernization”; whereas in the ROC, the KMT’s legitimacy was challenged for “either its undemocratic character, its inability to continue ruling the mainland, or Taiwan’s alleged destiny as an independent nation” (Metzger and Myers 1991: xxii). Hence, an era of reform was unveiled simultaneously across the strait in the late 1970s.

Having survived persecution in the Cultural Revolution, Deng Xiaoping resumed his political dominance over the CCP after Mao’s death. With pragmatic perception of the communist ideology, Deng manoeuvred the CCP to embrace an economic reform and open-door doctrine at the end of 1978, which entailed a peaceful international environment. Moreover, the US recognition of the PRC

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<sup>21</sup> A coastal city in southern Fujian Province, Xiamen is geographically close to both Kinmen and Taiwan.

enabled the CCP to handle cross-strait relations with confidence and flexibility. Beijing began to promote what have been called its “peace overtures” (Clough 1993:1; Tubilewicz 2006:234) towards Taiwan. On New Year’s Day of 1979, the same day as the US-PRC joint communiqué for establishing diplomatic relations was announced,<sup>22</sup> China’s top legislature — the National People’s Congress (NPC) proclaimed “A Message to Compatriots on Taiwan”, proposing a peaceful reunification with Taiwan through establishing the “three links” of direct mail, trade and transportation. Abandoning strident liberation rhetoric, this peace proposal set the tone for the CCP’s new cross-strait orthodoxy. In September 1981, Marshal Ye Jianying (叶剑英), the Chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, followed suit by delivering his nine-point proposals, later known as Ye’s nine points. Apart from the appeal for peace negotiations between the CCP and KMT, Ye promised that Taiwan would enjoy “a high degree of autonomy” as a special administrative region (SAR) after an eventual unification with the mainland (Copper 2007:195). The CCP’s peace overture reached its climax two years later when Deng, as the then paramount leader, announced his formula of “one country, two systems” in the Sino-British negotiations of Hong Kong (Deng 1993:67, 388). Since then, the principle of “one country, two systems” has been enshrined as the cornerstone of the CCP’s policy towards Taiwan.

Simultaneously, the other shore of the strait was also experiencing a great transition. No analysis of political transition in Taiwan would be complete without an assessment of a personage — Chiang Ching-kuo (Copper 1988:5). After Chiang Kai-shek’s death, Chiang Ching-kuo, also known as CCK, who was more politically flexible than his hard-line father, became the KMT’s Chairman in 1975 and the ROC’s President in 1978. In his biographical work entitled *Chiang Ching-kuo and Taiwan: A Profile*, Durdin comments thus: “Sons who succeeded to the positions of forceful fathers often turn out to be weak and disappointing. Chiang Ching-kuo does not fit this pattern. He has already shown himself to be strong-willed, decisive and effective” (1979:78). In response to its expulsion from the UN and derecognition by the US, the KMT was compelled to enhance its legitimacy by industrialisation and democratisation (Tubilewicz 2006:241). In stark contrast with the KMT’s disastrous management of the mainland’s economy in the 1940s, Taiwan under the CCK’s rule was transformed, particularly after the UN expulsion, from an economic backwater to one of the richest economies in the world, earning its place as one of the “Four Small Dragons” of Asia. Regarding the KMT’s policy towards the CCP, however, Chiang Ching-kuo scorned Beijing’s overtures for talks and decided to sustain what he repackaged in 1981 as a “Three Noes” policy — no contact, no negotiations, and no compromises (Copper 2007:258; Tubilewicz 2006:235). He remarked in an interview in the late 1970s, “We will never negotiate with the Chinese Communists. We would not be so stupid as to do that. They would only use any contacts for propaganda purposes” (Durdin 1979:90). The KMT maintained that any contact with the “communist bandits” would imply some

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<sup>22</sup> It is generally agreed that Beijing deliberately selected this date to send its public letter to Taiwan on the grounds that, with US diplomatic recognition in hand, Beijing would be able to press Taiwan to negotiate unification on the CCP’s terms (Copper 2007: 164-165).

degree of recognition of its legitimacy and thus undermine the KMT's own legitimacy (Long 1991:203). Therefore, Taipei banned cross-strait travel and trade and rejected "three links".

Benefiting from his political and administrative credentials, Chiang Ching-kuo "set the reform ball rolling" (Long 1991:182), a move which had been proven to have a far-reaching impact on both the politics of Taiwan and cross-strait relations (Copper 1988:7). The most significant measures taken by the KMT were to lift the 38-year-long martial law on 15 July 1987 and the travel ban to the mainland on 15 October 1987. Thereafter, Taiwan moved rapidly towards becoming "a full-fledged democracy" (Wang and Lo 2000:661), which inevitably invited the legalisation of opposition parties, a discussion on Taiwanese identity and media liberalisation. Originating from the *Tangwai*<sup>23</sup> movement (党外运动), the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was established in 1986. It was later legalised and acted as Taiwan's major opposition party. Within the KMT hierarchy, a number of young Taiwanese elites, most of whom held American PhDs, were remarkably promoted to the power core, from which emerged the technocrat Lee Teng-hui.

Inevitably, a reform era reduced cross-strait tensions. Media exchanges between the two sides began to influence the public in a massive manner. The adoption of an open-door policy by the CCP and the liberalisation of the travel ban by the KMT provided a golden opportunity for the public to have access to media products from the other side. Thus, cross-strait media exchanges gained its initial momentum from media product flows. To some extent, the CCP-proposed "three links" were fulfilled by mass media. At the beginning, however, the extensive influx of Taiwan media products entered as contraband via the then British colony of Hong Kong, ranging from popular songs, movies to love-story novels. These entertainment items were so influential that Taiwanese singer Teresa Teng (邓丽君)<sup>24</sup> and romance writers Chiung Yao (琼瑶) and Sanmao (三毛), as the icons of Taiwanese popular culture, became household names in the mainland and impacted a whole generation of mainland Chinese in the 1980s. These products also had a tremendous propaganda effect for Taiwan, signifying its prosperity, liberty, and even romance. The mainlanders' long-standing hostility towards Taiwan was considerably reduced. Simultaneously, both sides sweetened their propaganda broadcasts that were directed at each other, switching to a "soft tone" from a "hard tone". Thus, alongside Taiwan's entertainment products, the *BCC*'s music and news programmes gained the same popularity as the *BBC* and *VOA* on the mainland where the listeners were keen to get information from overseas. It was in this era (the early 1980s) that a few bold Taiwanese journalists initiated their clandestine visits to the mainland (Chapter VI). Due to the "Three Noes" policy, however, only very limited mainland media products, including propaganda broadcasting and some

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<sup>23</sup> Literally meaning outside the party, i.e. the KMT, the term refers to a group of opposition politicians in the period from the 1970s to the early 1980s (Copper 2007: 254), among whom were Chen Shui-bian (陈水扁) and Annette Lu (吕秀莲), the president and vice president in 2000-2008.

<sup>24</sup> Her Chinese name is Teng Li-chun.

classic Chinese works, could enter Taiwan so that media exchanges in Chiang Ching-kuo's era represented an "obviously unidirectional" and "seriously unbalanced" flow (Hong 1996: 194,197).

The year of 1987 is widely acknowledged as a milestone in the history of cross-strait media exchanges (also in the evolution of cross-strait relations in general). In July 1987, just as the KMT government was considering moving forward to lift the travel ban to the mainland, the cross-strait deadlock was broken by two early birds from the *Independence Evening Post* (自立晚报). With the travel ban still in effect, the *Post* took the initiative of dispatching two journalists Li Yung-teh (李永得) and Hsu Lu (徐璐) to the mainland in September 1987 for a two-week long reporting mission. Their visit was no small bombshell, not only flouting the travel ban to the mainland, but also playing a vital role in guiding the two adversarial governments into interacting with each other. The long-frozen ice of cross-strait relations finally began to crack. One month after their visit, in October 1987 the mainland's All-China Journalists Association officially extended its welcome to Taiwanese journalists to cover news on the mainland. On the other side, this unprecedented leap performed by the journalists triggered the "mainland fever" among Taiwan's media. The KMT government sped up opening its mainland policy by announcing the lifting of the ban on private travel to the mainland in October 1987. Scores of Taiwanese journalists flocked to the mainland to conduct their reporting. A flourishing period of media exchanges was subsequently unveiled. This historical event will be investigated in Chapter V.

### **3. Lee Teng-hui's Era (1988-2000)**

With Chiang Ching-kuo's (CCK) passing away, cross-strait relations entered upon its era of technocracy. Revolutionary elders in both the KMT and CCP leadership began to fade into history while technocrats of the younger generation, among whom were Lee Teng-hui on Taiwan and Jiang Zemin on mainland China, rose to power.

The rise of Lee Teng-hui represented "a transition from mainland Chinese to Taiwanese rule, as well as an end of the 'Chiang Dynasty'" in Taiwan (Copper 2007:161). Holding a PhD from Cornell University, Lee rose to prominence by assuming the vice presidency under CCK in 1984. In January 1988, he succeeded as the ROC's President upon CCK's sudden death. Although a technocrat, Lee turned out to be a resourceful politician in terms of his determination to continue Chiang's reforms and his maneuvering of the KMT's mainland and foreign policies' transformation. Consequently, Taiwan's political landscape was changed beyond recognition.

After being elected as the president on his own merit in 1990, Lee articulated in his inaugural address the conditions under which the negotiations over unification should take place, namely, the PRC's adoption of democracy and a market economy; Beijing's renunciation of the use of force against Taiwan; and its non-interference in Taiwan's foreign relations (Tubilewicz 2006:236). In 1990, he instituted the National Unification Council (NUC) affiliated with the President's Office, which subsequently promulgated the National Unification Guidelines spelling out a three-stage process leading to eventual unification. One year later, to accommodate the increasing cross-strait civil exchanges since 1987, Lee's administration also established the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) (台湾海峡交流基金会) to negotiate with the mainland on functional problems, with Taiwanese tycoon Koo Chen-fu (辜振甫) as the president. In responding to the establishment of the SEF, Beijing created the Association for Relations across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS) (海峡两岸关系协会), chaired by Wang Daohan (汪道涵), Jiang Zemin's political mentor and most trustworthy senior advisor (Chu 2005:248, 258). The "honeymoon",<sup>25</sup> in the early 1990s, between the two sides, culminated in the first of the Koo-Wang series of talks, in April 1993 in Singapore. This is commonly acknowledged as the first high-level semi-official meeting since 1949. At the end of his tenure, however, Lee "dropped a political bombshell" (Chu 2005:264) in July 1999 by announcing his "two-state theory" in an interview with the *Deutsche Welle*<sup>26</sup> that viewed cross-strait relations as "special state-to-state relations". On Taiwan, Lee's announcement "did represent an abrupt change in Taiwan's policy" (Jacobs and Liu 2007:389). On the other side, this was perceived by Beijing as the ultimate revelation of Lee's stance in favour of Taiwanese independence (Su 07 July 1999). Apart from being a provocative policy towards the mainland, the ROC's foreign policy also underwent a fundamental shift during Lee's tenure. Abandoning the KMT's adherence to the one-China principle, Lee launched a series of diplomatic campaigns, also known as "flexible diplomacy" and "vacation diplomacy", to enhance the ROC's international statue. Perhaps the crowning diplomatic achievement was his much publicised visit to his alma mater Cornell University in June 1995, achieving the first visit by the ROC's President to the US and hence provoking an indignant reaction from Beijing.

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<sup>25</sup> In Chu's account (2005: 258), a series of behind-the-scene negotiations occurred from 1990 to 1992 before the Koo-Wang talks and notably Wang Daohan got directly involved in the secret negotiations with Lee Teng-hui's private envoy as early as 1990.

<sup>26</sup> There was a viewpoint, for example in mainland China, that Lee had intentionally singled out this German medium in the light of the relationship between East and West Germany in the Cold War. The Australian scholar Jacobs counts this viewpoint as an interesting hypothesis. He and his co-author I-hao Ben Liu wrote in 2007 thus, "Initially, President Lee would have preferred an interview with *Time* or *Newsweek*, but they did not make a request for an interview, so he used the opportunity of the interview with the *Deutsche Welle*" [original emphasis] (Jacobs and Liu 2007:389). Su Ge, the former Professor of China Foreign Affairs University and afterwards a Chinese diplomat commissioned by Beijing to the US, commented on Lee's "two-state theory" as saying that "in this way Lee intends to imply that cross-strait relations can be likened to 'two-Germany model'" (in Chinese, available on the website of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' (CASS) at [http://www.cass.net.cn/zhuantai/taiwan\\_1/zhjia/sug2.htm](http://www.cass.net.cn/zhuantai/taiwan_1/zhjia/sug2.htm) Accessed on 15 October 2010; also published on the *People's Daily*, 27 July 1999, p3).



Being called Taiwan's "Mr Democracy", Lee also played the role of a major force behind the democratisation process which in turn "strengthened his presidency" (Copper 2007:161,214). The first election, where all the seats of the Legislative Yuan were contestable and contested, was held in 1992, the DPP gaining political momentum. The first direct presidential election was conducted in 1996, through which Lee successfully won a second term. It was also during this era that the one-hundred-year old KMT suffered from schisms over differences between Lee's Taiwan born followers and transplanted mainland elites who, resenting the pro-Taiwanese tendency in the KMT, organised the New Party (NP). "[A]s a multiparty political system developed, a new more independent-minded identity took hold of the island's people" (Lampton 2001:3). All of these changes heralded a political transformation in Taiwan.

Corresponding with Lee's shrewd rule on Taiwan, mainland China entered Jiang Zemin's "new era". Like Lee, a technocrat (but trained by the Soviet Union rather than the US), Jiang was chosen as the CCP's General Secretary, by the ageing Deng, after the dismissal of the liberal leader Zhao Ziyang (赵紫阳) in the aftermath of the 1989 Tiananmen tragedy. In stark contrast with the vociferous democratisation on Taiwan, the mainland's democratic sentiments were abruptly muted in the post-Tiananmen era. "Dancing" with Lee on the quicksand of cross-strait relations, Jiang appeared to be ambitious and amenable to negotiations at times while at other times he and those aligned with him suffered from "a strong international reputation (or domestic curse) as soft liners in dealing with the United States and Taiwan" (Wu 2005:329). Dancing to the KMT's tune, Beijing established the ARATS in late 1991. Infuriated by Lee's visit to the US, however, Beijing immediately suspended the proposed second Koo-Wang talk scheduled for 1996. In an attempt to thwart Lee in his re-election bid, the hardliners in Beijing ordered the PLA to conduct two military exercises in the strait in 1995-1996, known as the Third Taiwan Strait Crisis. The CCP's saber-rattling strategy had a threefold negative effect on its cross-strait image. Firstly, it shattered the CCP's peaceful image that had been pieced together by the 1980s peace overtures; Secondly, the CCP's fraternal image was compromised by the revelation of its "carrot-and-stick" approach in dealing with the "Taiwan question"; Thirdly, it might have actually helped Lee Teng-hui to gain votes (Chu 2005:262; Clough 1999:6) and fuelled the impetus of the rise of the DPP.

Nevertheless, two significant achievements under Jiang's leadership are worth mentioning. In 1993 the CCP government publicised its first white paper on Taiwan entitled *The Taiwan Question and Reunification of China*, which elaborates the CCP's stance with reference to the solution to the "Taiwan question" (Taiwan Affairs Office 01 September 1993). On 30 January 1995, Jiang, as the core of the third-generation leadership of the CCP, put forward eight propositions, later known as Jiang's eight points, in which he promised that "on the premise that there is only one China, we are prepared to talk with the Taiwan authorities about any matter" (Jiang 30 January 1995), a political gesture believed to reveal "the emerging flexibility" among the CCP's leadership on the Taiwan issue (Tubilewicz 2006:237). Although Jiang's new peace initiative was enshrined as "the basic

guideline for Beijing's Taiwan policy in the post-Deng era" (Wu 2005:321), it has not produced a substantial impact on cross-strait relations. On the other hand, however, it reconfirmed "Taipei long-held assumptions about the predicament of the CCP leadership" (Chu 2005:261).

During Lee's era, Taiwanese journalists streamed into the mainland in the late 1980s, culminating in Taiwanese journalists' involvement in the 1989 Tiananmen pro-democracy movement in Beijing (Chapter VI). Since the KMT government would not liberalise the ban on the mainland journalists entering Taiwan for security and ideological concerns, the booming cross-strait media exchange was characterised by a unidirectional flow. Nevertheless, significant change occurred in the wake of the "Minshiyu Incident" — a fishing dispute between Fujian Province and Taiwan in July 1991. With the mediation of the *China Times* (中国时报) and the SEF between Beijing and Taipei, the KMT government granted four mainlanders, including two journalists Fan Liqing (范丽青) with *Xinhua News Agency* (新华社) and Guo Weifeng (郭伟峰) with *China News Agency* (中国新闻社), one-off visas to enter the island as negotiators. Fan and Guo became the first mainland journalists commissioned by the CCP to step onto Taiwan since 1949. This symbolic step produced two positive effects on cross-strait relations. It signified the genesis of the two-way media personnel exchange, promoting mutual trust and conciliation between the people on the two sides. More importantly, it was viewed as an indicator of cross-strait détente and hence unveiled a short honeymoon between the two governments in the early 1990s. Subsequently, a small number of mainland journalists were granted permission to enter Taiwan and journalistic academic exchanges also sprang into existence. The landmark event in 1991 will be the second case to be studied in Chapter V.

The political détente of the early 1990s turned sour in the aftermath of Lee's Cornell visit and the Third Strait Crisis in 1995-1996 and was subsequently devastated by Lee's enunciation of his "two-state theory" in 1999. Although Taiwanese journalists continued to travel to the mainland for their reporting missions, cross-strait tensions left the media exchanges little room to achieve significant development. The most noticeable one was that in 1996 the PRC's State Council Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) promulgated *the Regulation on Taiwan's Journalists Conducting Reporting in the Motherland* (关于台湾记者来祖国大陆采访的规定), which was claimed by Beijing to offer more opportunities for the Taiwanese media personnel to visit the mainland.

#### **4. Chen Shui-bian's Era (2000-2008)**

The electoral victory of the pro-independence DPP in March 2000 sent shock waves through both Beijing and Taipei. The ascendancy of Chen Shui-bian as the first DPP-supported President dealt a

serious blow to Beijing's unification campaign (Chu 2005:266). In effect, at the late stage of Lee's tenure, the CCP came to realise that the real threat to unification derived from the rising DPP rather than the declining KMT. In an attempt to prevent Chen from being voted into power, Beijing once again engaged in sabre-rattling to influence Taiwanese voters. The military intimidation, however, ended up with the "unexpected" result of Chen Shui-bian's victory over the KMT candidate Lien Chan (连战) and James Soong (宋楚瑜), the candidate from the People First Party (PFP).<sup>27</sup> In his case study of this landmark election, Rawnsley remarks, "The peaceful transfer of presidential power to the DPP was a moment of historical significance for Taiwan: not only did the election bring to a close fifty years of government by the nationalist KMT, but it also demonstrated that Taiwan had finally entered the 'consolidation' phase of democratisation" (2003:105). In Taipei, it took "the mammoth defeat" to "shock the KMT from its complacency and finally appreciate how distant from the electorate it had grown" (Rawnsley 2003:113-114). After this political earthquake, the KMT had lost control over both mainland China and Taiwan. Cross-strait relations subsequently became a struggle between the CCP's forces of unification and the DPP's forces of separation, in contrast with the competition, of the earlier period, between the CCP and KMT for control over all of China.

Strikingly, in his inaugural address in May 2000, Chen, a founding member of the DPP, appeared to distance himself from his independence rhetoric by announcing instead the so-called "Five Noes" policy, in which he pledged that, if the PRC renounced the use of force against Taiwan, the DPP government would maintain the status quo with its five "noes", namely, no declaration of independence, no change of the national title of "the Republic of China", no change of constitution, no referendum on independence, and no abolition of the Guidelines for National Unification.<sup>28</sup> Chen Shui-bian indeed adopted a series of policy initiatives to improve cross-strait ties during his first term (Chao 2004:668; Tubilewicz 2006:245-249), including replacing Lee's mainland economic policy "no haste, be patient" with a more proactive policy of "active opening, effective management" and, remarkably, lifting the ban on mainland journalists who wanted to cover news in Taiwan. Faced with an independence-minded rival, the CCP was obliged to adapt itself to a new way of dancing. Viewing Chen as a secessionist, Beijing responded by "listening to his words and watching his deeds", putting the DPP government on an extended political probation (Chu 2005:266).

To some extent, Chen's eight-year presidency turned out to be no less than a nightmare. At a personal level, his image and his presidency were ruined by scandals in which his close aides and his family were involved in corruption (Copper 2007). At the public level, his ineffective governance led Taiwan's widely acclaimed democratisation astray. Due to his alleged mismanagement of the economy, Chen had to deliberately stir up cross-strait tensions for political gain (Sutter 2008:196-

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<sup>27</sup> The PFP was organised by James Soong, a "maverick KMT heavyweight" (Rawnsley 2003: 109; Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001: 13, 142), who "bolted" the KMT and established the PFP for running in the March 2000 election (Sutter 2008: 197). This political figure will appear again in Chapter V's case study.

<sup>28</sup> As Chu notes, the US played an important behind-the-scenes role in inserting those five "noes" into Chen's inaugural speech (2005:269).

205). In August 2002, he realigned himself with the DPP's orthodox doctrine by declaring that "with Taiwan and China on each side of the Taiwan Strait, each side is a country". Chen's "one country on each side" formula upset both Beijing and Washington and raised great tensions across the strait. In 2003, Hu Jintao consolidated his position as the CCP's General Secretary and Chinese President and began to assume the formal responsibility of managing cross-strait relations. After Chen won a very slight majority in the controversial 2004 election, Beijing extended an olive branch to the Taiwanese opposition — the so-called Pan-Blue camp (*Fanlan* 泛藍),<sup>29</sup> comprising the KMT and its offshoot parties, the People First Party (PFP) and the New Party (NP), which basically endorsed eventual unification with the mainland. Ironically, the two historical rivals once again formed a united front after the Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945). This time, however, while they shared the "same bed", they had "different dreams" — the CCP was using the KMT to counterbalance the DPP's secessionist rhetoric, while the KMT was using the CCP to revitalise itself politically through its peacemaking mission across the strait. This unusual "united front" reached its climax in 2005 when the heads of the three parties, Lien Chan, James Soong, and Yu Mu-ming (郁慕明), in a dramatically successive manner, paid official visits to the mainland. On 29 April 2005, a landmark moment "that goes down history", Hu and Lien "clasped their hands tightly" in Beijing and unveiled a historic CCP-KMT summit after an interval of 60 years (*The People's Daily [Overseas Edition]* 30 April 2005).

Unexpectedly, a significant development of media exchange was achieved after the DPP came to power. To fulfill his campaign pledge to expand press freedom, Chen announced at the outset of his first term that his government would lift the ban on mainland journalists staying in Taipei for news coverage. Subsequently, four Chinese national media outlets, including the *People's Daily*, *Xinhua News Agency*, the *Central People's Broadcasting Station* and the *China Central Television (CCTV)* (中央电视台) stationed their correspondents in Taipei in 2001, followed by *China News Agency* (中国新闻社) in 2004. These officially-endorsed interactions signified the normalisation of cross-strait media personnel exchange and a sort of conciliation between the two governments. After the enactment of the Anti-Secession Law by Beijing in March 2005, however, the Chen administration suspended reporting activities of *Xinhua* and the *People's Daily* correspondents in Taiwan because of the alleged "distorted news reporting" (see Chapter VI). Nevertheless, this negative move did not dampen media personnel exchanges on the whole. Journalists from *Xinhua* and *People's Daily* could still apply for visas to enter Taiwan on a case-by-case basis. The most remarkable event happened in April 2005 when Lien Chan, being accompanied by a large team of Taiwanese journalists, made his historic visit to the mainland. This significant event was widely reported on both sides and

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<sup>29</sup> With "Blue" being the KMT's party colour, the Pan-Blue camp took shape in 2000 after the DPP's victory in the presidential election. Correspondingly, the other side of the political spectrum hosts the Pan-Greens (*Fanlǜ* 泛绿), green being representing the DPP's party colour. This camp incorporates the DPP and its more radical ally Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) with their advocacy of Taiwan independence. See Copper (2007: 205) and Sutter (2008: 201).

throughout the world. According to mainland official sources, up to the end of 2004, thirteen Taiwanese media institutions had been granted the licenses to station their correspondents in the mainland and Taiwanese journalists had conducted more than 10,000 visits to the mainland; meanwhile, mainland journalists scored 500 visits to Taiwan (*The People's Daily* 21 September 2005).

## 5. Ma Ying-jeou's Era (2008- )<sup>30</sup>

In March 2008, the KMT regained power after eight years in opposition. Ma Ying-jeou and his running mate Vincent Siew (萧万长) won a landslide victory with 58.45 percent of the vote and thus “promulgate the second peaceful transfer of power in Taiwan’s relatively young democracy” (Jacobs 2008:460,465). Taiwan’s citizens voted to oust the Chen administration primarily “because of the inefficiencies of the DPP government and the alleged slowing of the economy” (Jacobs 2008:465). With the KMT back in power, Beijing believed that a relatively favourable period for cross-strait relations would be approaching and eventual unification may be anticipated in the foreseeable future. As the historical circle rotated back to the KMT-CCP tango, Beijing would perceive the previous eight years under the DPP as the twist and turns of cross-strait relations. In response to the leadership transition on Taiwan, Hu Jintao floated his six points at the end of 2008 to promote the peaceful development of cross-straits relations (Chapter I).

Obtaining his PhD from Harvard University, Ma has “long been considered one of Taiwan’s young political stars” (Copper 2007:172). With a steadfast belief in both Western democracy and the Chinese heritage, Ma appears to be circumspect in dealing with the CCP. Throughout his campaign, his stance on the sensitive cross-straits relations remained somewhat inconsistent (Jacobs 2008:464,467). Since he came to office, Ma has maintained that economic problems should be dealt with before both sides could move on to political issues (*Taipei Times* 20 May 2010). Compared with his predecessors, Ma has been more proactive to expand cross-strait ties. In 2008, the long-standing ban on the three links was formally lifted and followed by the liberalisation of tourism from the mainland to Taiwan and direct cross-strait flights. More importantly, in June 2010, the two sides signed a milestone Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), deepening further cross-strait economic integration. In the sphere of mass media, Taiwan relaxed restrictions on the posting of resident mainland correspondents in Taiwan after Ma proposed normalising cross-strait media deployment in May 2008. The relaxation began with the extension of stays of resident correspondents in Taiwan from a maximum of one month to three months, with a possible extension

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<sup>30</sup> This account has been updated to October 2010.

of a further three months (*China Post* 19 May 2010). *Xinhua* and the *People's Daily* were allowed to resume their reporting activities in Taipei in 2008. Some regional Chinese media outlets<sup>31</sup> were also permitted to deploy reporters in Taiwan (*China Post* 19 May 2010). Despite the warmer ties since 2008, however, Ma made it clear on 19 May 2010 that he would not negotiate unification with China even if he is re-elected in 2012 during a press conference to mark the eve of his second year in office. Ma reiterated that the guidelines for his cross-strait policy was to uphold his new “Three Noes” policy, namely, no discussion of unification with Beijing during his term, no pursuit or support of de jure Taiwanese independence and no use of military force to resolve the Taiwan issue (*Taipei Times* 20 May 2010). On 02 October 2010, Taiwan’s Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) Chairwoman Lai Shin-yuan<sup>32</sup> (赖幸媛) stated that the highest principle of the KMT government’s mainland policy was “putting Taiwan first for the benefit of the people” and that the people of Taiwan have the right to choose the future direction of cross-strait relations (*CNA* 02 October 2010).

It is conceivable that cross-strait relations still have a long way to go before sufficient consensus and trust are accumulated by the two parties. The “puzzling facts” may be best summarised by John F. Copper: “Taiwan’s economic health literally depends on China, and most people in Taiwan know this. Political links, however, are almost nonexistent. Will economics or politics decide Taiwan’s future? No one seems to know” (2009:xii).

## Political Structures and Media Systems

No investigation of the journalist’s role could be achieved without an analysis of political structures and media systems. Over the past 60 years, each side has erected an elaborate political structure to regulate cross-strait affairs. Meanwhile, the media system has been closely incorporated into their respective sociopolitical structures so that it also testifies to the widely cited argument that “the press always takes on the form and coloration of the social and political structures with which it operates” (Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm 1956:1). While exploring their respective political structures in the coming section, special emphasis is to be placed on those policymaking bodies concerning cross-strait relations.

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<sup>31</sup> Up to May 2010, these media included *Fujian Southeast Satellite TV* (*SETV*, 福建东南卫视), the *Fujian Daily* (福建日报), *Xiamen TV* (厦门电视台), *Hunan TV* (湖南电视台), and the *Shenzhen Press Group* (深圳报业集团).

<sup>32</sup> Lai was originally a member of Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU).

## 1. Political Structure of Mainland China

Traditionally, mainland China, or the PRC, has been identified as a communist country. As Lee observes, however, there is no communism in China any more and “all that remains is the Communist Party, a gigantic organization emptied of revolutionary idealism” (2003:2). Article 1 of the current PRC’s constitution still states that the PRC is the “a socialist state under the people’s democratic dictatorship led by the working class and based on the alliance of workers and peasants”.<sup>33</sup> Regarding cross-strait relations, the CCP’s political structure possesses two characteristics. One, in general, is the tight combination of the state and party apparatuses. As the ruling party of a country with a vast geographical and population size, the CCP executes its ruling power in a typically authoritarian way, combining the party and state systems so closely that the PRC has been generally viewed as a “party-state”. The other one, in particular, is the fragmentation and multilevel regulation of Taiwan affairs. From the CCP’s perspective, “there are no small things in Taiwan affairs” (对台无小事) and thus Taiwan affairs exist everywhere. Consequently, a wide range of institutions in charge of Taiwan affairs have been installed in the CCP’s state bureaucracy.

Due to the sensitivity of the Taiwan issue in the CCP’s political agenda, it has been a tradition that the top leader holds the ultimate power in this salient policy area. Chu remarks,

During the Maoist era, the power of setting the guiding principle on the Taiwan issue rested firmly in the hands of Mao Zedong. Not even premier Zhou Enlai was in a position to make any final decision on important matters. During the reform era, Deng Xiaoping decided all important issues regarding Taiwan and Hong Kong; even Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang had no chance to weigh in (2005:247).

With such a political heritage, the two Taiwanese journalists from the *Independence Evening Post* were allowed to visit the mainland with Deng’s direct approval in 1987 when a “Deng-in-command” model dominated (Chapter V). In the post-Deng era, certainly, Jiang Zemin and then Hu Jintao had the final say in the decision-making towards Taiwan. Despite personal oversight by the top leaders, the decision-making mechanism has “on the whole become more institutionalized” (Chu 2005:246). The CCP’s Politburo and its Central Standing Committee serve as the paramount decision-making body, headed by the General Secretary, who concurrently acts as the Chinese President and the Chairman of the CCP’s Central Military Commission (CMC). However, what stands at the centre of top level decision-making scheme is actually the so-called Central Leading Group for Taiwan Affairs (CLGTA) (Chu 2005:246-248; Clough 1993:129). Since 1993 when Jiang Zemin replaced Yang Shangkun (杨尚昆) as the leader of the CLGTA, CLGTA has consistently included as members the

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<sup>33</sup> The full text of the PRC’s constitution (in English) can be found on the website of China Information Base: <http://www.chinatoday.com/law/NO1LAW.HTM> Accessed on 18 October 2010.

General Secretary and his top policy advisors from four systems, namely, foreign affairs, united-front work, the PLA, and intelligence and counterespionage (Chu 2005:246,248).

Under the direct and immediate supervision of the CCP Central Committee are installed a range of specialised departments, including the CCP's Propaganda Department, which has been "invested with the responsibility of regulating the press and issued broad instructions concerning the contents of all publications" (Ting 1974:164) since the 1940s; and the United Front Work Department, which has been given the responsibilities for supervising organisations of people of Taiwan origin in the mainland (Clough 1993:130) and extending the CCP's relationship with the nonparty elite, including influential figures in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao. To deal with Taiwan affairs exclusively, the CCP also established the Central Committee Taiwan Work Office, which was merged into the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) in March 1991. The consolidation of dual offices within the party and administrative systems offers a good example of the CCP's party-state.

Alongside the party system is the State Council, the PRC's administrative branch headed by the Premier as the state's chief executive. The State Council appears to be a formidable bureaucratic giant composed of more than 50 members, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, TAO, the Information Office, the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, and *Xinhua News Agency*, etc.<sup>34</sup> Merged with the CCP's Taiwan Work Office, the State Council's cabinet-level TAO was established in 1988 and has been known as the authoritative regulatory body in implementing the policies decided upon by the CLGTA and coordinating the implementation of these policies by all of TAO outlets at central, provincial and local levels (Clough 1993:129). Thus, almost every ministerial organisation has its own sub-ministry section in charge of Taiwan affairs in their own specialised field. Even *Xinhua News Agency*, for instance, as the national news agency, also has its own Taiwan Affairs Department (Chapter IV). Since 2001, TAO has been hosting press conference on a regular basis to enunciate the CCP's official stance regarding Taiwan.

Parallel to the party and administrative systems are the National People's Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC),<sup>35</sup> both of which typically hold a yearly plenary session at the same time, being called the *Lianghui* (literally in English "the Two Meetings"), to make important national level political decisions. Although some foreign observers would view the NPC as something like the House of Representative while the CPPCC as the Senate in Western democracies, the nature of the PRC's political landscape differs significantly to the extent that the NPC assumes the real supreme legislature whereas the CPPCC, mainly composed of celebrities and nonpartisan members, is positioned as an important institution of multiparty cooperation and political consultation, which subsequently invites frequent criticisms from the Chinese media and public for being a "political flower vase" or ornament. Despite these differences, both the Chairmen of the NPC

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<sup>34</sup> More information can be found at the official website of the Central People's Government of the PRC: <http://www.gov.cn/english/> Accessed on 18 October 2010.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.



and CPPCC are prominent figures within the CCP leadership, sitting in the CCP's nine-member Politburo. Similarly, each of them has its own specialised committee in charge of Taiwan affairs as well as that of Hong Kong, Macao and overseas Chinese. It was the NPC's Standing Committee that "sent" the milestone missive, "A Message to Compatriots on Taiwan", on behalf of the CCP in January 1979.

Apart from the party, administrative, legislative, and political consultative systems, two important forces, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS), must also be addressed. Given Mao's dictum that "political power flows from the barrel of a gun" (Cheung 2001:61), the PLA has always been positioned as the party-army. In the CCP's course of unification, the PLA shoulders "sacred missions" which may be defined as preparing for military struggle against Taiwan independence and conducting military propaganda towards both Taiwan's servicemen and civilians. To the public in Taiwan, the PLA functions as the tool of the CCP's use-of-force policy. Under the leadership of the General Political Department (GPD), the PLA has formulated a top-down military propaganda system directed at Taiwan, characterised by *The PLA Daily* (解放军报) and the frontline radio station — the *Voice of the Strait* (VOS) as its mouthpieces. As a nominally nongovernmental coordinating institution, ARATS is merely the CCP's agent in charge of the practical dimension of Taiwan affairs. Originally established in the late 1991, the ARATS has enjoyed high visibility in cross-strait relations as a counterpart of Taiwan's Strait Exchange Foundation (SEF). Serving as the so-called "white gloves",<sup>36</sup> the ARATS has been involved in a series of negotiations with the SEF in both 1990s and after 2008. ARATS is currently chaired by Chen Yunlin (陈云林), the previous TAO's director (Chapter VI).

Below the national level, almost all the party, administrative and legislative systems<sup>37</sup> have their own provincial and local branches throughout the vast mainland so that the regulating network of Taiwan affairs has also been extended nationwide. Within this huge system, think tanks have assumed increasing prominence in policy making on Taiwan affairs. Notable institutions include Xiamen University's Taiwan Research Institute (厦门大学台湾研究院),<sup>38</sup> the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' (CASS) Institute for Taiwan Studies (中国社会科学院台湾研究所), and Shanghai Institute for Taiwan Studies (上海台湾研究所).

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<sup>36</sup> This metaphor implies that the ARATS (also its counterpart SEF in Taiwan), being technically private, has been able to deal with officials from the other side without such contacts being regarded as formal or government-to-government negotiations (Copper 2007: 233).

<sup>37</sup> The PLA deploys its own Taiwan affairs outlets in various military areas.

<sup>38</sup> Celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2010, Xiamen University's Taiwan Research Institute is China's oldest research institution (established on 09 July 1980) specialising in Taiwan studies. While the cross-strait ties are flourishing, Taiwan studies appears to be increasingly "hot" in China's academia to the extent that scores of universities, including Beijing University and Tsinghua University, have established their own research arms in this field.

## 2. Political Structure of Taiwan

Compared with mainland China, Taiwan's political structure appears to be relatively simpler. Formulated by the founding father of the ROC Dr. Sun Yat-sen (孫中山), the "Three Principles of the People" have been the official ideology of the ROC. Article 1 of the ROC's Constitution states, "The Republic of China, founded on the Three Principles of the People, shall be a democratic republic of the people, to be governed by the people and for the people" (GIO 2006:48). The ROC's central government consists of the President Office and five Yuans (governing bodies): Legislative Yuan, Executive Yuan, Judicial Yuan, Examination Yuan, and Control Yuan. Copper depicts the five-Yuan structure thus from a Western perspective:

Three of the branches of the government — the executive, legislative, and judicial — are similar to their Western counterparts. The Examination and Control Yuans are a carryover of Chinese traditions. The Examination Yuan administers exams for government jobs and serves as a personnel agency....The Control Yuan nominally holds the powers of consent, impeachment, censure, and audit (1988:2).

In his 2008 inaugural speech, President Ma Ying-jeou outlined a blueprint for re-establishing a robust constitutional tradition:

The Executive Yuan must answer to the Legislative Yuan. The Judiciary must guarantee the rule of law and protect human rights. The Examination Yuan must make the civil service sound. The Control Yuan must redress mistakes by the government and censure malfeasance by civil servants (Ma 20 May 2008).

In effect, the ROC practices a presidential political system (Copper 2007:214). Since 1996 in Lee Teng-hui's era, the president has been elected by direct election for a four-year term. Acting as the head of the ROC, the president exercises a wide range of authority, including the appointment of the Premier of the Executive Yuan. Under the Executive Yuan currently are 8 ministries and 31 ministerial-level organisations (GIO 2009), among which is the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), the counterpart of the CCP's TAO. Also related to the ROC's mainland policy is the Government Information Office (GIO). Established in 1947, GIO has evolved over time to be the policymaking body for clarifying the ROC's policy and "setting the course of development for Taiwan's communication industry" (Wang and Lo 2000:668). Since 01 March 2006, however, the newly-created National Communications Commission (NCC) has been regulating the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors, taking over many of GIO's functions.

In retrospect, significant institutional initiatives occurred during Lee Teng-hui's presidency. In October 1990, Lee announced the establishment of the National Unification Council (NUC) to assist him in the formulation of mainland policy. The NUC was headed by the president himself and staffed by senior government officials, industrialists and scholars. In February 1991, the NUC put forward the National Reunification Guidelines, which proposed a three-phase process for ultimate unification with the mainland under the Three Principles of the People. In October 1989, the Executive Yuan instituted a cabinet-level Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) at the request of President Lee. MAC's main functions include formulating mainland policy, coordinating the policies of various government departments towards the mainland, and strengthening communication with the Legislative Yuan on mainland policy (Clough 1993:133). One year later, the MAC organised the Strait Exchange Foundation (SEF) as a nonprofit corporate entity to resolve the practical issues in cross-strait relations. After the DPP came to power in 2000, though Chen Shui-bian frequently clamoured to amend the ROC's constitution in order to pave the way for Taiwan independence, the Chen administration basically followed the KMT's decision-making structure, except that Chen declared in 2006 that the NUC would "cease to function" (Copper 2007:189).

### **3. Media Systems: Mainland China vs Taiwan**

The analysis of media systems entails philosophical conceptualisation of both media environment and freedom of speech. In the cross-strait context, as Hachten and Scotton note, "China does not reject the idea of press freedom. Its 1912 constitution granted its citizens freedom of speech and press, but the constitution included a list of situations in which government could restrict this freedom. The Chinese call this 'a pragmatic approach' to freedom of the press" (2007:94). Nevertheless, two different media systems and perceptions of free speech have been shaped on mainland China and Taiwan due to the divergent political structures and social evolutions. Thus, evolutionary orientation has become their common identifying feature. Notably in mainland China, "the media are growing so rapidly that descriptive accounts usually lag behind the changes" (Ma 2000:21).

Regarding comparative research on the world's media systems, it has been generally acknowledged that the communication scholars Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm laid the groundwork through their *Four Theories of the Press*, consisting of authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility, and Soviet communist concepts of the press (1956:2,6). Within the *Four Theories* typology, mainland China used to be the communist model which was "only a development of the much older authoritarian theory" (Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm 1956:2) while nowadays it has been increasingly difficult to judge its media system to be pure communist. Similarly, Taiwan's media system also remains evolutionary. During the martial law era, Taiwan might have gained a

rather less attractive image as the authoritarian model. For instance, J. Bruce Jacobs summarises his observation of Taiwan's press in the 1970s as, "Taiwan's press does operate within certain constraints. It does not have the independence of the American or British presses. Yet Taiwan's press does possess more independence than is typical in most 'developing' or communist countries" (1976:786). Since the late stage of Chiang Ching-kuo's tenure, the incompatibility with the 1956 typology became even more salient because Taiwan's media system began to transform in the process of democratisation. The evolution on both sides serves as an illustration of the argument that the 1956 typology "fails to fully match reality" (Lambeth 1995:4). In the view of Curran and Park, the enormous influence of the 1956 "geo-political view of the world's media system" may be attributed to its Cold-War worldview which was "widely endorsed in the west" (2000a:3-4). In the post Cold War era, together with South Korea and India, Lambeth classifies Taiwan as the so-called "advancing" or "developmental" model through which he refers to those economic high performers with the media being urged to "match the democratic aspirations of their countries" (1995:14). While discussing the concept of media freedom in the Asian context, Chaudhary and Chen advocate three useful groupings of authoritarian, modified libertarian and communist (1995:314). Within this somewhat sandwich-like framework, Taiwan and mainland China are respectively corresponding to the latter two "layers". Challenging the parochialism of Western media theory, Curran and Park suggest an alternative scheme, including democratic, authoritarian, neo-liberal and regulated media systems (2000a:11-13). With what they call "a more interpretive orientation", however, "the case of China" is positioned in an extra category of "transitional or mixed societies", which refers to countries being transformed or regions with mixed regimes. Meanwhile, "the case of Taiwan" is grouped into the so-called "authoritarian neo-liberal societies" (Curran and Park 2000a:12,13; Curran and Park 2000b:21-34,124-138).<sup>39</sup> More recently, Hachten proposes five political concepts of the press in the contemporary world, namely, authoritarian, Western, communist, revolutionary, and developmental models (2007:16). Through Hachten's five-concept "world news prism", democratisation has qualified Taiwan as being an example of the "Western" model (2007:19-23).

In addition to the philosophical conceptualisation, the media systems of both mainland China and Taiwan can also be observed from an empirical perspective. Concerning mainland China, the traditional CCP thinking defines the media as the mouthpiece of the Party. Owing to "the concept of total integration between the press and government" (Chaudhary and Chen 1995:312) within the political structure of party-state, the notion that the press ought to be a watchdog of government is

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<sup>39</sup> In this monograph entitled *De-Westernizing Media Studies*, Mexico, Korea, and Malaysia were also grouped into this category together with Taiwan. In their introduction to this book, Curran and Park explained their way of classifying countries and also stressed that in some societies, such as Mexico and Taiwan, "the media are sites of power struggle because fissures have developed within the dominant bloc" (2000: 12-15). The case of Taiwan's media studies in this book, presented by Chin-Chuan Lee, mainly dealt with Taiwan's media struggle against state control under martial law from 1949-1987 and capital concentration in the early 1990s (2000: 124-138). Since the 1990s, as it has come to be widely accepted, Taiwan's media system has been consistently heading towards freedom of speech. The case of Taiwan and in particular its media system, therefore, may be viewed as a microcosm of how world's media systems are in evolution.

especially foreign to Communist China (Vanden Heuvel and Dennis 1993:26). For several decades, all the media had been expected to serve the Party as “a tool of political indoctrination” (Vanden Heuvel and Dennis 1993: v, 26). As Hong comments, the mainland media, particularly the Maoist type, are virtually the Party’s organ and the state apparatus which “represent a typical communist authoritarian model” (1996:187). Because the Mao-dominated Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) “brought China to the brink of economic ruin and left the Chinese Communist Party in a crisis of legitimacy” (Lee 1990:4), the ideologically disenchanted populace became suspicious of the official political indoctrination. In the post-Mao era, economic reform was launched by the CCP’s ideologically pragmatic leader Deng Xiaoping. To gain popular support for his reform policies characterised as the construction of “socialism with Chinese characteristics”, Deng granted the media more latitude so that a transition toward media liberalisation came into being in 1980s on the mainland. To a great extent, this media liberalisation was inspired by the Chinese intellectual ferment for democracy and press freedom. Nevertheless, it ended up with the abortion of the Tiananmen pro-democracy movement in 1989. Subsequently, the party-state tightened its reins over the media. Since the demise of the Soviet Union, “[p]reservation of power has become the very end of the Communist Party rather than a means to achieving Communism” (Lee, He, and Huang 2008:11). Twenty years later, while having embraced the global capitalist economy and achieved dazzling economic growth, the party-state cannot be said to be enamoured by or passionate about “western-type” freedom of speech. No truly independent news media have arisen on the mainland. However, strikingly, since the 1980s, the party-state has been pushing the media, previously party-financed organs, towards financial autonomy. In this process of media marketisation, institutional “innovation” is created in a fashion whereby “power marries money in a tacit manner” (Lee, He, and Huang 2008:13). From a political economy perspective, He contends that the official Chinese media have transformed themselves from being “the old propaganda instrument” to what he calls “the new Party Publicity Inc.”, which is “oriented more toward promoting the image of the Party and justifying its legitimacy” while being “financially responsible for its own survival”. Accordingly, influenced by market forces, journalists have settled into the role of “hired” publicity officers (2000:143-144). Crafting his chapter title as “*China: Caged Media in a Free Economy*”, Scotton makes an upfront judgement: “China is a nation that wants the benefits of an open, capitalist economy for its 1.3 billion people, but still wants to tightly control its media” (Hachten and Scotton 2007:94). Showing similar concern about the Communist party-state’s tight control over the media, Wu Guangguang, a political scientist who used to work for the CCP’s party organ *People’s Daily*, portrays the diversifying Chinese press structure as a monster-like image of “one head, many mouth”. He further asserts that “many ‘mouth’ may open up even though they are within the structure of a single head and are often restricted in operation by that head” (2005:139, 156).

On mainland China, the relationship between the media and party-state has been vividly embodied in the realm of cross-strait relations. Given its ultimate nationalistic goal of reuniting Taiwan with the

mainland, the CCP has become progressively more responsive to every issue concerning Taiwan over the years (Chapter VII). The CCP classifies all of the news reporting associated with cross-strait relations as “reporting on/towards Taiwan” and all of the media products directed at the Taiwanese as “propaganda towards Taiwan”. Both the “reporting on/towards Taiwan” and “propaganda towards Taiwan” are under the direct supervision of the State Council TAO, which is in charge of formulating propaganda guidelines and setting propaganda tones towards Taiwan. Furthermore, within the army structure, the PLA has incorporated “propaganda towards Taiwan” into its psychological warfare operations. Through the top-down structures at the central, provincial and local levels, the TAO and the CCP’s Propaganda Department jointly draw a clear line for the media to follow and monitor the media’s activities in this sensitive area. Consequently, tight control and censorship are imposed on the media through the three-pronged channel of the party, government and army. All of the media are required to toe the Party line to ensure that they not only inform the public on both sides about the CCP’s Taiwan policy, but shape their opinions to favour the CCP. The Party line, in this respect, may be best identified in the news report of *Xinhua News Agency*. As a former Chinese journalist, He thus describes *Xinhua*’s outstanding clout in China’s media landscape:

Xinhua News Agency, which was organizationally under the supervision of the State Council, actually functioned as the information outlet for both the central government and the central party leadership on every important issue. It provided news to all the major news organizations in the country, and all other organizations were required to carry Xinhua version when it came to major political issues (He 1996:3).

This is also the case with respect to reporting on/towards Taiwan or propaganda towards Taiwan. *Xinhua* has always been viewed by Taiwan as the official voice of the CCP. In the eyes of other mainland media, *Xinhua*’s “enviable” journalistic privilege primarily derives from its affiliation with the State Council under which the TAO also operates. When it comes to sensitive issues or critical periods in cross-strait relations, for instance, the third Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1995-1996, it is not surprising that all of the media are “speaking in one voice” initiated and directed by *Xinhua* and thus formulating the “powerful” propaganda campaign towards Taiwan (Chapter VI).

Concerning media control, a resounding echo was heard from Taiwan during the 1950s-1970s when military confrontation overshadowed the strait. Based on a Leninist party structure (Tien 1989:1), the KMT used to believe that strict media control was crucial to the maintenance of the KMT’s political monopoly (Vanden Heuvel and Dennis 1993:44). Thus Wang and Lo state, “politically, Taiwan was de facto a one-party state before 1987” (2000:661). In 1951, claiming a newsprint shortage, Chiang Kai-shek’s regime froze applications for new newspaper licences and set a ceiling on the number of pages for each issue of existing newspapers (from 8 in 1957 to 12 after 1971) (Wang and Lo 2000:663). Through such a press ban under the martial law, the KMT effectively restricted freedom of the press. Until 1987, out of 31 daily newspapers, 20 were privately owned while 11 were owned

by the KMT government (Tien 1989:197). Although the press market was dominated by two family-owned daily giants: *China Times* (中国时报) and *United Daily News* (联合报), both of them were closely allied with the KMT because their owners also sat on the KMT's central standing committee. As for the broadcasting media, sharing "the communist conviction that broadcasting is a source of political power" (Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001:26), the KMT government maintained an even firmer grip, through which the ownership of three leading TV stations<sup>40</sup> was completely concentrated upon the government-KMT-military monolith. Given such a media ecology, "hundreds of reporters, writers, and editorialists were detained, interrogated, harassed or jailed for stepping outside the bounds of the permissible" (Lee 2000b:126).

However, big swings emerged in Taiwan's media environment because of Chiang Ching-kuo's reform in the 1980s. After the termination of martial law in July 1987, Taiwan's media began to advance towards what Hong terms as "a semi-authoritarian and semi-market model" (1996:187). Half a year later, press restrictions were finally lifted by the KMT government on 01 January 1988. Not only were the pre-existing newspapers eased through a lifting of the ceiling of 12 pages, but new and independence-minded newspapers sprang into existence. During Lee Teng-hui's tenure, media liberalisation, privatisation and proliferation gained their momentum. While Taiwan's media enjoyed greater latitude, old taboos, such as Taiwan's future status and cross-strait relations, became open debates on the media. Parallel to media liberalisation, the increasing delights of the populace in political participation and diversity facilitated the pervasiveness of current affairs call-in programs in the broadcasting media through which the audience expressed their views on the air with particular vehemence. In the early 1990s, Dr. Jason Hu (胡志强),<sup>41</sup> the then GIO's Director-General, even claimed that Taiwan's media enjoyed "almost unlimited freedom" (Vanden Heuvel and Dennis 1993:44). Within a diversified political culture, different political factions with different political agendas competed with one another for media coverage and exposure. In regard to cross-strait relations, Taiwan's media have also formed two broadly defined blocs<sup>42</sup> — the so-called Pan-Blue media and the Pan-Green media, a division that paralleled the two camps in Taiwan's political spectrum, mentioned above. No matter what "colour" of one particular media institution, the fundamental point is that Taiwan's media were allowed to voice opinions which were strictly bottled up under the old martial law regime. Despite numerous problems in this increasingly free media environment, Taiwan was rated as "Asia's freest country" by Freedom House in its 2006 report (GIO 2006: back cover). The exceptional achievement of freedom of speech, from a media perspective, defined what the "Taiwan Miracle" is likely to be.

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<sup>40</sup> In the sequence of creation time, they are *Taiwan Television Corporation* (TTV, 台视, 1962), *China Television Company* (CTV, 中视, 1968), and *Chinese Television System* (CTS, 华视, 1969).

<sup>41</sup> As a KMT member, Hu is currently serving as Taichung Mayor.

<sup>42</sup> In mainland China, the authority and press tend to categorise Taiwan's media in this way, although Taiwanese journalists seem to be not entirely receptive to this categorisation.

## Summary

This chapter has been centred upon three dimensions of cross-strait relations: history, politics and media. Figuratively, cross-strait relations have been portrayed as a political tango with the CCP-KMT and the CCP-DPP as the dancing partners over five historical “sessions”. Striking similarities have been identified, in particular in the CCP-KMT case, in their respective efforts to modernise the state through reform, to strengthen their legitimacy through pragmatic economic policies, and to employ the media in the ever changing cross-strait relations. For the CCP and KMT, their common footwork may be attributed to their commitments to Chinese culture and their ideological roots harking back to the tune of the former Soviet Union. Regarding the DPP, despite its advocacy of Taiwan independence, it too has not been able to disengage itself from the influence of Chinese culture and ethnicity. On the other hand, significant differences did emerge between the two divergent societies, notably in the mass media, after Taiwan’s democratisation in the 1980s. Within this Chinese entanglement, woven by the two sides, media and journalists have been deeply involved both institutionally and individually in a strait of politics. As participant, witness and mediator, the media and journalists have also considerably influenced cross-strait relations. This will be scrutinised in the forthcoming chapters.



## Chapter III Making the Connection: An International Communication

### Approach to Cross-Strait Relations

This history of international communications and its representations is a history of the interwoven paths of *war*, *progress*, and *culture*, and the trajectory of their successive rearrangements, their ebb and flow (Mattelart 1994: xiii).

Media interaction between the PRC and Taiwan, as a key component of communication patterns in Cultural China, has oscillated widely as both sides try to gain advantages from it (Lee 2000a:24).

### Introduction

In both mainland China and Taiwan, no political leader can escape from the test of handling the potentially explosive cross-strait relations. The KMT-backed President Ma Ying-jeou (马英九) is no exception. Since he came into office in May 2008, Ma's "pro-China" approach has always been dampened by the opposition, notably the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU). During a round-table forum organised by the *United Daily News* (联合报) on 02 August 2010, Ma justified his policy stance by likening the military might of Taiwan and mainland China to a grasshopper and a rooster. He claimed that, although Taiwan could be a powerful grasshopper, the best strategy was not to provoke the rooster but rather to discourage it from recklessness (*Taipei Times* 04 August 2010).

A rooster and a grasshopper — the stark contrast presents a strange confrontation. Despite the rationality of his mainland China policy, the metaphor which Ma has adopted, to a great extent, captures the essence of Taiwan's relations with mainland China, which have long been entangled in the dilemma of war and peace. Since the turn of the new millennium, the Cold War on a global scale

has faded as a collective memory, but the cold war across the Taiwan Strait still goes on and thus poses an even greater challenge to all the parties concerned.

Any attempt to disentangle the “knot” of cross-strait relations, especially along the path of international communication, may run up against two major stumbling blocks: with *international* on one side and *sovereignty* on the other. Given so many Chinese implications within cross-strait relations, there seems to be a need to challenge the Sino-centrism and parochialism by just raising such simple questions as: Are cross-strait relations something what we call international relations? Does the phenomenon of the communication across the Taiwan Strait fall into the category of international communication? As is so often the case, a simple question does not have a simple answer. These academic inquiries, no matter how simple they are, may encounter some difficulties on both mainland China and Taiwan. On the mainland, where the CCP government claims exclusive sovereignty over Taiwan, any bid to identify cross-strait relations as a sort of *international* relations would be denounced as politically inexpedient and academically questionable — Taiwan, as a part of China, definitely cannot be “internationalised”. On the island of Taiwan, even if the diversity and dynamics of an increasingly democratised society are supposed to provide more political and intellectual tolerance, still the academic inquirer would feel frustrated and confused when Taiwan’s controversial international status is taken into consideration. Albeit with a de facto government of its own, Taiwan is not officially or openly recognised as a sovereign state, a reality that is ultimately demonstrated by its absence from the United Nations. John F. Copper thus observes, “it is the world’s most isolated nation (if it is a nation)... — ranking last in memberships in international organizations and second to the last in the number of foreign embassies it hosts” (2009:xi).<sup>43</sup>

Over and above the snare of “international”, cross-strait relations become more complicated in relation to the paradox of sovereignty. Based on its perceived sovereignty over the island, the CCP government retains its right to use force against Taiwan should it seek formally to secede. On the other hand, since the Lee Teng-hui’s era, the ROC on Taiwan has always struggled for its part to demonstrate sovereignty or to have small states recognise it as being a sovereign state. Indeed, sovereignty is “a paradoxical issue” (Nordenstreng 1993:461); “modern” notions of sovereignty have been debated around the world over several centuries. The discourse of sovereignty across the Taiwan Strait also has deep roots in the international system. Coterminous with the conceptualisation of cross-strait relations in a real political sense in 1949, the modern sovereignty-oriented international system was well established after WWII in the context of decolonisation and increasing numbers of sovereign nation-states. Over the past several decades, the political debate over

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<sup>43</sup> Concerning Taiwan’s foreign relations, *The ROC Yearbook 2010* published by Taiwan’s Government Information Office (GIO) states thus: “Through its partnerships with nations the world over, the ROC seeks to advance common agendas of benefit to all. It has full diplomatic relations with 23 states, including 12 in Central and South America and the Caribbean, four in Africa, six in Oceania and one in Europe. In 2009, it maintained 91 representative offices in the capitals and major cities of 57 countries,” and “[c]urrently, it has full membership in 31 intergovernmental organizations (IGO) and their subsidiary bodies.” (GIO 2010: 76, 72).

sovereignty across the strait has converged on the transformation in world politics and economics associated with the ending of the Cold War and the unfolding of globalisation. Having noted “the decline of sovereignty” in the international arena since the 1990s, Nordenstreng uses the term “*Sovereignty and Beyond*” (1993:461) to map world politics and international communication. While delineating the prisms, trajectories and modes of understanding for Chinese communication, Lee also portrays this world trend as moving into “an information age based on multilateral negotiations among a wide range of state and nonstate participants” (2000a:3).

In dealing with the two stumbling blocks, Mowlana’s insights may be useful and meaningful. While proposing a detailed guideline for reconsidering “the nature of the international communication field within the rubric of international relations” (1994:14) in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, he writes:

In today’s world the classical sense of international communication as interactions among states or policy-making elites can no longer be considered the sole dimension of communication studies. The rise of non-state actors, their subversion of traditionally sovereign domains of action, the increase in economic and interpersonal interactions at the global level, as well as the changing nature of diplomacy and propaganda all reveal the expanding conception of what “international” means for this field, as well as for international relations in general (1994:15).

Accordingly, within the cross-strait context where any “foreign”, “sovereign”, and “international” implications of approaches or theories may be “problematic”, it should be academically plausible to distance cross-strait relations away from the political debate over sovereignty, more exactly, from the dominant *state-centric* paradigm of international relations and international communication. Hence, the guideline of the research presented in this thesis is to follow a path “beyond” sovereignty in an effort to sort out the suitable mosaic of the framework of analysis and theoretical foundations based on the vast literature of ingrained state-centric perspectives. Hopefully, the research might fulfil what Tehranian terms as the ten commandments of “peace journalism”<sup>44</sup> — “[T]ranscend your own ethnic, national, or ideological biases to see and represent the parties to human conflicts fairly and accurately” (2004:242).

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<sup>44</sup> “Peace journalism” is defined by Tehranian (2004: 241) as in war situations “a kind of journalism that knows when elephants fight, the grass gets hurt”.

## Frameworks of Analysis

Although the PRC government prefers the confinement of cross-strait relations within the Chinese context to the internationalisation of the Taiwan issue,<sup>45</sup> the fact is that cross-strait relations have never alienated themselves from the international background (Chapter I, II). Furthermore, the origin and evolution of cross-strait relations offer a wide array of long-rooted evidence of international correlations and implications. As McQuail points out, all societies have “latent or open tensions and contradictions that often extend to the international arena” and the study of mass communication cannot avoid tackling questions of values and conflicts (2005:12). Therefore, it is understandable that any framework of analysis applicable to cross-strait relations should bolster the vision, tolerance, and compatibility for international factors.

### 1. Frameworks: An International Perspective

Interestingly, the emergence of cross-strait relations as a political concept strikingly coincided with both the division of the international landscape in the post-WWII era and the formulation of international communication as an academic field. At the conclusion of World War II in 1945, in Fortner’s words, “the muddled geopolitical composition of the world suddenly clarified” (1993:151), marked by a bipolar division between the East and West. Since then, the East-West division had profoundly dominated the international arena for almost half a century. From the perspective of international communication, Hamelink attributes “the most dramatic impact on world communication” to the East-West tensions and the ensuing Cold War (1994:24). Mattelart further notes that it was during the height of the Cold War that “the first attempt to construct a discipline called international communications took place in the United States in the 1950s” when its frame of reference was also conceived in terms of “blocs” (1994: xiv). Although China may not literally belong to those behind the descending “Iron Curtain” that fell across the European Continent as Sir Winston Churchill prophesied in his 1946 Fulton speech (Harbutt 1986:186), clearly, the PRC established in Beijing positioned itself as one of the major members of the Soviet Union-backed Eastern bloc. On the other side of the Taiwan Strait, Taiwan was incorporated into the American-dominated Western bloc through the Mutual Defense Treaty signed in 1954 between Washington and Taipei (Chapter II). Consequently, throughout the 1950s to the 1970s, the cross-strait tensions and

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<sup>45</sup> For example, in his eight-point proposal directed at Taiwan (see Chapter II), the previous CCP’s General Secretary Jiang Zemin states that “[T]he affairs of Chinese people should be handled by us, something that does not take an international occasion to accomplish” (Jiang, 30 January 1995).

military conflict exactly mirrored the nature of the East-West confrontation as a whole. Akin to the Berlin Wall, the Taiwan Strait may be seen to represent, in Mowlana's terms, "a cultural as well as an ideological barrier" (1994:21); different from the Berlin Wall, however, such an image of the Taiwan Strait existed not only during the Cold War era, but currently persists in the hearts and minds of what Canetti calls the "two crowds" of a war (1962:72). Chitty has written about the descent of East-West and North-South dimensions into Asian international communication: "International communication has been shaped as a field in the past by constellations of issues arising from the great geopolitical tectonics of the world, East-West and North-South faultlines and from prisms formed primarily from western social theory. First, the new geopolitical situation will shape new constellations of issues in the future. Second, North-South frameworks (haves and have-nots) will descend into Asian countries" (2010:191). The East-West dimension within the Chinese R-Matrix, because of the western polarity of the Taiwanese A-Matrix, becomes a legitimate focus of inquiry in international communication under this view.

As the post-WWII international system being transformed by the Cold War thinking, communism used to be a significant influence at the global level, characterised by the two powerful communist regimes of the Soviet Union and the PRC. In the elaboration of his developmental construct, Lerner asserts that the persuasive transmission of enlightenment is "the modern paradigm of international communication". Lerner fortifies his proposition with a conviction that Karl Marx actually initiated this insight in the preface to the fourth edition of his *Das Kapital*, which states that "[T]he more developed society presents to the less developed society *a picture of its own future*". In an ironical tone, therefore, Lerner comments that had Marx not failed to amplify his own insight, he might have been called the "father of international communication" instead of the "father of international communism" (1969:182-183). Lerner's interpretation of international communication, to some extent, has been testified to by the unremitting efforts of the ROC on Taiwan in the 1950s to project a favourable image of "Free China" in its propaganda towards those "mainland compatriots" living under communist oppression (Rawnsley 2000b:83,96).

Since the 1970s, the radical American scholar Immanuel Wallerstein introduced his notion of world system — to the analysis of the emerging globalised world. Within Wallerstein's world structuration are seen an advanced core, an exploited periphery and an intermediate semiperiphery. This macro-structural and profit-driven framework appears to be relevant to the study of cross-strait relations. While applying it to the examination of Taiwan's political economy, Winckler and Greenhalgh contend that Taiwan originally fell into the category of exploited periphery, but during the reign of the Japanese colonists before 1945 and the mainlander-dominated Nationalists after WWII, Taiwan might be categorised as intermediate semiperiphery. They summarise, "[I]n general, globalism should be applicable to Taiwan, which has always been a part of some larger political unit heavily influenced by external political and economic events" (1988:6-8).

With the receding ideological confrontation between East and West, the world “shuddered under seismic forces of change” (Mowlana 1996:176) at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since then, humanity has experienced a myriad of global problems such as the collapse of the Soviet Union, the transformation of Eastern Europe, the end of the Cold War, the slide from a bipolar world to a unipolar world, the 9/11 Incident and pervasive terrorism around the world. With the Iron Curtain having been raised, a globalised world has surfaced where “[N]ot just in trade and economic affairs but in social and political ways, we are increasingly coming together” (Hachten and Scotton 2007: ix). Such a “new world disorder” has posed a series of questions to international relations and international communication. Thus, to map this world in transition with some new frameworks of analysis appears to be the common task for international communication scholars. To some extent, this research interest has been well documented by the literature published in *The Journal of International Communication (JIC)*. A rather cursory review of *JIC* shows that different frameworks have been presented over the decade around the new millennium (1994-2004). On the first issue of *JIC*, Robertson expounded his seminal idea of glocalisation “as a refinement of the concept of globalisation”(1994:33) to conceptualise the globalised world. In this respect, cross-strait relations may be perceived as a vivid embodiment of glocalisation. In the same issue of *JIC*, Mowlana, “as a witness to the history of international communication”(Chitty 2004b:5), put forward a ten-point proposal to shape the future of international communication in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, where the tenth point proposes a re-evaluation of the traditional categorisations of actors for international communication with a framework based on cultural spheres, consisting of “categories like the Islamic, Confucian, North American, or West European zones”(1994:29). In Mowlana’s cultural framework, cross-strait relations have been integrated into the cultural category of Confucianism. The initiatives of these two scholars were followed respectively by two younger researchers in their effort to map the world. Along Robertson’s path, Kraidy carries out his upfront inquiry of “*Glocalisation: An International Communication Framework?*”(2003:29-49). Relaying the momentum of steering international communication from American University in the U. S., Chitty proceeds with Mowlana’s academic mission through “*Configuring the Future*” for “international communication within world politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century” (2004a:42) in the ten-year anniversary issue of *JIC*, whereby he comprehensively presented his Matrix Framework as a tool for mapping world politics and international communication.

The scholarship of the frameworks of analysis presented in *JIC* epitomises the joint efforts of international communication scholars to map the world in transition. Chitty refers to three historiographers of international communication Mowlana, Hamelink, and Mattelart, who also articulate their own frameworks (2004a:50). Hamelink views global communication as a human right and places emphasis on the disparity of the today’s global communication system caused by “stark inequities between North and South in the access to communication hardware and software” (1994:2). In a bid to “draw a strategic map” of world communication, Mattelart conceptualises “the

communication triangle” which is historically based upon “the interwoven paths of *war*, *progress*, and *culture*” (1994: xi; xiii).

## **2. Chitty’s Matrix Framework: A Cross-Strait Application**

Among all of the above-mentioned frameworks of analysis, this study has opted for Chitty’s Matrix Framework for heuristic purposes regarding the complexity of cross-strait relations. In the international arena, although all of the major powers recognise Beijing as the legitimate government of “one China”, Taiwan’s politically separate status is still salient — it not only maintains diplomatic relations with 23 countries but also has “substantive ties with many other states” (GIO 2009). Hence, the ontographic terminology applied to describe the two sides of the strait is fraught with difficulty because of political sensibilities. This conundrum may be approached with the ontography of Chitty’s Matrix Framework.

First published in 1994, Chitty’s Matrix Framework positions itself as a model “that builds corridors between political economy and culture” and that is “able to make credible connections between the international and the individual, between world politics and personal security” (2000:14). Being inspired by the IT technology of MS-windows, as Chitty notes, he has been seeking to map the relationships in a globalised world through:

a digitisation of social reality into social pixels — values, attitudes, and beliefs. These pixels are embedded in individual matrices, which in turn are embedded in administrative, regional, and political-economic matrices. ...Matrices are like folders on a computer desktop. Each folder is a matrix within which other folders can be placed, each in turn a nest for other folders, ... (2000:14-15)

Obviously, its major characteristic appears to be “a framework consisting of matrices within matrices” (2004a:56) and “linking the singularity of global political economic structure through multiplicities of matrices to myriads of individual agents” (Chitty 2004b:6). Thus, within this Matrix Framework, the world order has been largely symbolised by five “inter-nestled matrices” (2009b:66), comprising of the all-encompassing P-matrix, regional (R-matrices), administrative (A-matrices), ethno-historical (E-matrices) and individual (I-matrices) matrices.

**Table 3.1 Chitty's Matrix Framework in the Cross-Strait Context**

Matrix	Descriptions
I-matrix	Individuals
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sun Yatsen, Chiang Ching-kuo, Deng Xiaoping</li> <li>➤ journalists on mainland China and Taiwan</li> </ul>
E-matrix	Ethno-historical collectivities' actors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Han (Confucian) Chinese, Indigenous Taiwanese</li> </ul>
A-matrix	Administrative collectivities' actors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Australia, Canada, England, Singapore</li> <li>➤ Guangdong and Fujian (Province), California (State)</li> <li>➤ Hong Kong and Macau (SAR)</li> <li>➤ Taiwan (the ROC)</li> <li>➤ Taiwanese media: <i>China Times</i>, <i>Liberty Times</i>, <i>Independence Evening Post</i></li> </ul>
	Regional administrative collectivities' actors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ China (the PRC), India, the United States, Indonesia and Brazil</li> <li>➤ Europe</li> <li>➤ Chinese national media: <i>Xinhua News Agency</i>, <i>People's Daily</i>, <i>CCTV</i></li> </ul>
	Global collectivities' actors
P-matrix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Global political economy</li> </ul>

Note: This table is largely adapted from Chitty's original Matrix Framework table, which can be accessed at *The Journal of International Communication* (2004), 10 (2), p59.

In relation to the international and cross-strait landscape (see Table 3.1), large political organisations such as Europe, China, India, Indonesia and the United States may be viewed as R-matrices<sup>46</sup> while smaller ones, such as Australia, California, England, Guangdong, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, may be viewed as A-matrices. The application of this microcosmic matrix in the cross-strait context is materialised by the Taiwan Strait, a geographical boundary involving the Chinese R-matrix on the one side and Taiwanese A-matrix on the other. Sovereignty may be exercised at different levels. Within the Chinese R-matrix there are different degrees of effective sovereignty and permissible external relations between A-matrices. Currently China has legal sovereignty over all its A-matrices

<sup>46</sup> In a consultative conversation with the author dated 15 October 2010, Chitty remarked that, within his Matrix Framework, large political organisations with a population of approximately 200 million or above are categorised as R-matrices. In this respect, the top five countries with the largest population in the contemporary world, viz. China, India, the United States, Indonesia, and Brazil, are qualified to be considered as R-matrices.



but does not have effective sovereignty over Taiwan. China not only permits Hong Kong and Macao, its two Special Administrative Regions (SAR), to have diplomatic spaces in their memberships<sup>47</sup> of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the International Olympic Committee (IOC), but also offers the status of SAR to Taiwan with seemingly more favourable treatment under the unification formula of “one country, two systems”. But under the current circumstances, Taiwan’s diplomatic activities are being conducted without agreement from China.

Largely based on the same Han nationality (*han zu*),<sup>48</sup> striking similarities exist in the Chinese R-matrix and Taiwanese A-matrix where the majority of people is of Chinese origin. In particular, many political leaders and journalists on mainland China and Taiwan stem from the same majority Han E-matrix. Sharing the same E-matrix, therefore, the two matrices are similarly concerned with their “security-related survival of cultural identity of the collectivity” (Chitty 2000:15; Chitty 2004a:60). Unfortunately, this common concern about the sustainability of the Chinese culture has not led to the solution of their disagreements over Taiwan’s political status. Rather, to some extent, the same E-matrix has made their relations even more sensitive and complex.

The dynamics of I-matrices has been demonstrated by the potential for privileged individuals, individuals privileged by knowledge, money or power, to shape A-, R- and P-matrices to the extent that it is possible to move the folder marked P-Matrix, containing all the other matrices, into an individual I-matrix folder, demonstrating the seminal influence of individuals such as Karl Marx or Adam Smith who reshaped the P-Matrix (Chitty 2004a:58). In this respect, although the Chinese R-matrix and Taiwanese A-matrix are dominant much of the time in the cross-strait context, there have been some historical occasions on which I-matrices can shape the two matrices. Two landmark media events will be illustrative of these occasions in which four journalists (two from Taiwan and two from the mainland) spearheaded cross-strait détente by their pioneer reporting mission travels in the 1980s-1990s (Chapter V).

Seeing this research project through Chitty’s Matrix Framework provides three unique perspectives. First, a holistic non state-centric globalised perspective which not only incorporates culture along with political economy but also links the global political economy and regional, administrative and ethno-historical matrices to individuals (Chitty 2004a: 58; Chitty 2009b: 66-67). Thus, the Matrix

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<sup>47</sup> Their memberships of these international organisations are formally titled as “Hong Kong, China” and “Macao, China”. Macao is still not a member of the APEC and the IOC.

<sup>48</sup> Undoubtedly, both mainland China and Taiwan are multi-ethnic societies from the perspective of ethnic purity. Although the term Han nationality is socially accepted in both mainland China and Taiwan, one may still question the ethnic validity of Han nationality (*han zu*), viewing it as an invented category. Even in that case, there is no dearth of such kind of nationalities around the world. English, for instance, has been an invented category as a nationality since around the time of Henry the VIII-Elizabeth the First. French, Germans, Romans, etc. are also invented categories.

Framework is capable of constructing enough space for exploring a variety of actors within the cross-strait context, such as governments and political leaders, media institutions and journalists, Chinese and Taiwanese, etc. Second, what may be called a tailored comparative perspective of treating the state “as one non-physical product of one of several kinds of matrices” (Chitty 2004a:58) so as to facilitate a journalist-focused investigation in a comparative context, becomes possible. In this sense, the problem of “conceptualizing the political relationships between China, Hong Kong and Taiwan wanes in importance when China, because of its size, is treated as a R-matrix or regional matrix, with its provinces, special administrative regions and Taiwan being treated as A-matrices” (Chitty 2009b:68); Third, an individual perspective which allows the concentration upon the role of individual actors, notably journalists, without insulation from the global landscape, becomes possible.

With the application of Chitty’s Matrix Framework, cross-strait relations may be reconceptualised as the relations between the Chinese R-matrix and the Taiwanese A-matrix, largely within the similar Han E-matrix and the single international system — the P-matrix. The research question of the thesis may be refined as the role of journalist I-matrices in the relationship between the Chinese R-matrix and the Taiwanese A-matrix. With profound cultural and human implications, such a research question can be theoretically enriched by the flood of international communication and international relations literature. Thus this chapter is to conduct a literature review in the interdisciplinary fields of communication and diplomacy.

## **Communication and Diplomacy: Historical and Contemporary Twins**

Communication and diplomacy are two time-honoured human activities, without which mankind would have never been able to live. Both communication and diplomacy may be traced back to the outset of human history, for “even in pre-history there must have come some moments when one group of savages wished to negotiate with another group of savages” (Nicolson 1963:6). It needs to be said that the terms may be used in connection with states or non-state actors. Diplomacy and communication are engaged in the course of interpersonal and inter-institutional relations as well as by global level actors that are not states. Noting that “an intimate relationship exists between communication and diplomacy”, Tran Van Dinh, the former Vietnamese diplomat, describes that “[C]ommunication is to diplomacy as blood is to the human body” (1987:6,8). Diplomacy is basically nothing but verbal or body communications, because “it is obvious that communication is part and parcel of diplomacy, conditions its existence, and determines its success or failure” (Tran 1987:8). Naturally, this long-rooted intimate relationship has always made communication and diplomacy attractive to both insiders and outsiders.

## 1. Communication and Diplomacy: Are They the Same?

In modern English, the term *diplomacy* is, “after all, a notoriously flexible word” (Alan James, cited by Constantinou 1996:71). It may refer to several quite different things: a business, an art, an occupation, a field of study, or even a way of life, some of which are apparently negative due to their involvements with intrigue and tact. In effect, this “flexible” word has been used in the English language for just around two centuries, whereas diplomats “existed long before the words were employed to denote the class” (Gore-Booth, cited by Constantinou 1996:76). From the ancient Greek city-state to the Roman Empire, from the Chinese Warring States to the European feudal dynasties, titles such as messengers, heralds and orators were found applicable to this small group of people, who were normally recruited from the elite. Due to their communication-oriented character, these elites were those with communication skills of a high order. In more modern times, due to their prowess in the art of communication, diplomats were even considered as artisans in Plischke’s edited volume (1979) entitled *Modern Diplomacy: The Art and the Artisans*. In vivid language, Cohen portrays an appealing image of modern diplomats for us: “They dress in similar elegant suits, flash the same charming smiles at photo opportunity sessions, and often speak elegant Harvard- or Oxford-accented English” (1991:3). Unfortunately, their enviable art of communication appeared to be a regular companion of diplomatic plot. This characterisation as a dissembler was described ironically by Sir Henry Wotton (1568-1639), a British poet and diplomat, as that of “an honest man sent abroad to lie for his country” (Morgenthau 1985:571; Tran 1987:3). In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Soviet leader Stalin further concluded that “to speak of honest diplomacy is ‘like speaking of dry water’” (Eban 1983:332).

No matter how “notorious” diplomacy and diplomats might be, there is little doubt that they have performed a spectacular and brilliant role in human history. Hence, numerous academic endeavours have been devoted to investigate this controversial field of study. Within the Anglo-American literature, several representative definitions and interpretations may be quoted here. In his classic work of diplomacy originally published in 1939, Sir Harold Nicolson, the noted British diplomat and diplomatic historian, proposes to employ the “precise, although wide” definition given by the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* as “[D]iplomacy is the management of international relations by negotiation; the method by which these relations are adjusted and managed by ambassadors and envoys; the business or art of the diplomatist” (1963:4-5). By this definition, Nicolson hopes to clear away the terminological confusion for diplomacy so that he can “avoid straying, on the one hand into the sands of foreign policy, and on the other into the marshes of international law” (1963:5). Stressing diplomacy as an element of national power in his classic work of international politics first

published in 1948, Hans Morgenthau notes that the emergence of diplomacy “coincides with the rise of the nation state” and thus interprets the “primary objective” of diplomacy as “the promotion of the national interest by peaceful means” (1985:570-571,563). While examining the effect of cross-cultural differences on diplomatic negotiation, Cohen asserts that diplomatic negotiation consists of “a process of communication between states seeking to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome” (1991:7). More recently, in his effort to construct six conceptual models for media and diplomacy, Gilboa refines the definition of diplomacy to “a communication system through which representatives of states and international or global actors, including elected and appointed officials, express and defend their interests, state their grievances, and issue threats and ultimatums” (2000:275). These definitions, mainly based upon the state-centric perspective, have been welded to the evolution of diplomacy in which “the types of actors and venues have expanded to include extra governmental and extra territorial forms” (Chitty 2009a:314). Seeking to “rethink” the concept of diplomacy, Constantinou articulates that the *raison d’être* of diplomacy lies in “identity/difference” and therefore diplomacy is “established only when there are boundaries for identity and those boundaries of identity are crossed” (1996: xiv,113). While analysing communication as an essential aspect of diplomacy, Jönsson and Hall follow Constantinou’s suit by stating that the first step of their research strategy would be “to abandon the state-centric perspective that has dominated the study of diplomacy” and “conceive of diplomacy as an institution structuring relations among polities, that is, political authorities of various kinds with distinct identities” (2003:196).

By its very nature, diplomacy remained the synonym of *secrecy* and *privacy* for centuries before WWI. Nevertheless, US President Woodrow Wilson turned out to be the most eloquent spokesman to provoke a challenge to this European-dominated tradition. Being portrayed as “the great generalissimo on the propaganda front” with “the seductive voice” (Lasswell 1927:216), Wilson presented in 1918 his famous “Fourteen Points” speech in which he advocated that “there shall be no private international understandings of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view” (Eban 1983:345; Morgenthau 1985:571). Wilson’s rhetoric has been widely acknowledged as the “biblical text” of open diplomacy (Ammon 2001:43; Eban 1983:345; Gilboa 2000:275), although it was actually set forth to preach “the gospel of Americanism to every corner of the globe” (Creel 1920). Moreover, Wilson’s new diplomatic philosophy was proved to be a mere US propaganda campaign against European hegemony because at a personal level Wilson himself did not take “Wilsonianism” seriously.

At the same time, secret diplomacy has never vanished from our vision. Half a century later, perhaps one of the most ironical manifestations of secret diplomacy in modern diplomatic history happened in the early 1970s when US President Richard Nixon’s envoy Henry Kissinger and the PRC’s Premier Zhou Enlai “proceeded” with their secret negotiations to counterbalance the threat from the Soviet Union. This “geopolitical revolution” (Kissinger 1999:139) dramatically transformed the long-standing antagonism between Washington and Beijing into the so-called “strategic imperative

for Sino-American cooperation” (Lampton 2001:2) (see Chapter II). Consequently the US formal diplomatic recognition of the ROC on Taiwan was supplanted by its economic, cultural and military commitment to this traditional ally in the form of “nongovernmental” relations consecrated by the congressional Taiwan Relations Act (TRA). Such a precedent, as Tran comments, “accounts to a diplomatic subterfuge” (1987:5) and is being followed by other major powers of the world. From an historical perspective, therefore, the pervasiveness of open diplomacy was not facilitated fundamentally by a US-initiated diplomatic doctrine but by the advances of modern communication. As Morgenthau puts it:

Diplomacy owes its rise in part to the absence of speedy communications in a period when the governments of the new territorial states maintained continuous political relations with each other. Diplomacy owes its decline in part to the development of speedy and regular communications in the form of the satellite, the airplane, the radio, the telegraph, the teletype, the long-distance telephone (1985:569-570).

As the context of diplomacy changed, the decline of diplomacy in the old form commenced and there was a re-shaping of the nature of diplomacy. No longer will the era exist in which diplomacy is conducted through backstage deals and battles, rather, communication has revolutionised diplomacy to the extent that the so-called “new diplomacy” — public diplomacy — is being put under the spotlight. From the private and closed-door negotiation to a sort of public and open communication, diplomacy is taking an irreversible track on which the media, facilitated by the new information and communications technologies (ICTs), play a remarkably expanding role. In light of this revolutionary change, Abba Eban, the former Israeli Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, conducts a careful examination of both *old diplomacy* and *new diplomacy*. He notes that, apart from “the collapse of reticence and privacy in negotiation”, the intrusion of the media “into every phase and level of the negotiation process changes the whole spirit and nature of diplomacy” (1983:345). The world-renowned diplomat and diplomatic historian, Henry Kissinger laments thus: “The speed and scale of modern communications will make it increasingly difficult for future historians to render an accurate account of contemporary international relations” (1999:136). As a consequence, the traditionally intimate relationship between diplomacy and communication begs for a brand-new interpretation. In the first year of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Ammon was prophetic with his book chapter entitled as: “*Today’s Communications, Tomorrow’s Diplomacy*” (2001:151).

## 2. Public Diplomacy: Who Can Win?

Old and new, ebb and flow, there is no way to put the clock back. While diplomacy is “seeping out from private to public venues” (Chitty 2009a:315), the decline of diplomacy may be clarified as the decline of traditional diplomacy, which is mainly about government-to-government relations (G2G) (Snow 2009a:6). Meanwhile, the rise of public diplomacy, however, “has become the most debated topic in the field of international communications since the cultural imperialism thesis and calls for a new world information order in the 1970s and 1980s” (Taylor 2009:12). Perhaps one of the most debatable features of public diplomacy lies in its close historical connections with international communication and propaganda. Fortner notes that one of the principal uses of international communication since 1946 has been to “conduct public diplomacy” (1993:278). Chitty remarks that public diplomacy has been intertwined with a historical suspicion that “public diplomacy is rebranded propaganda” (2009a:316). From the opposite angle, Mowlana acknowledges an historical tendency where terms such as “propaganda” and “psychological warfare” became supplanted with those more self-consciously neutral terms, such as “international communication” and “public diplomacy” (1996:8). It appears that an inexact equation has been formulated among these three concepts: public diplomacy, international communication and propaganda. Moreover, the increasing dominance of public diplomacy serves to remind us that, over the past sixty years, a triangle of influence has been formed by them. Noting the conceptual debates of public diplomacy since the Cold war, Gilboa thus formulates three public diplomacy models: the Basic Cold War model, the Nonstate Transnational model, and the Domestic Public Relations (PR) model (Gilboa 2000; Gilboa 2001; Gilboa 2008:59).

Whatever the ambiguity may be, a majority of communication scholars sought to gain insight into public diplomacy<sup>49</sup> whose aim may be simply to win the hearts and minds of people. While presenting his study on the contribution of the media in Taiwan towards political institutionalisation and democratisation, Berman elaborated in early 1990s the so-called international demonstration effect (IDE), which

refers to the power of ideas, events, behavior and values to defy containment within national borders. Primarily through the media of communication, people in different and often distant locations are exposed to these ideas and events. Their intrinsic and

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<sup>49</sup> The official website of the Center for Public Diplomacy, University of Southern California, notes that public diplomacy was coined in the mid-1960s by former U.S. diplomat Edmund Gullion and it was developed “partly to distance overseas governmental information activities from the term *propaganda*, which had acquired pejorative connotations”. For more background and interesting definitions of public diplomacy, please visit at [http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/index.php/about/what\\_is\\_pd](http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/index.php/about/what_is_pd) Accessed on 07 October 2010.

transcultural appeal promotes behavior that aspires to emulate what is perceived (1992:11,90).

Although this IDE is not diplomacy-oriented, it does share common ground with the conceptualisation of public diplomacy in the field of international communication. Fortner stresses that the aim of public diplomacy is “to affect the policies of other nations by appeals to its citizens through means of public communication” (1993:278). Frederick, in a somewhat similar fashion, defines public diplomacy as “activities, directed abroad in the fields of information, education, and culture, whose objective is to influence a foreign government by influencing its citizens” (1993:229). As the director of the *Voice of America (VOA)* in the 1990s, Geoffrey Cowan crystallises the function of public diplomacy as “to decide what image — or images” to project to the world and the many ways to achieve or interfere with this goal (2004:231). Together with Arsenault, Cowan also argues that practitioners and academics should examine public diplomacy in terms of *Moving from Monologue to Dialogue to Collaboration* and thus constitute the three layers of public diplomacy (Cowan and Arsenault 2008:10-30). While examining the performance of journalists in the 2003 Iraqi War, Seib offers what he calls “a baseline definition of public diplomacy”, which “is to inform, engage, and influence foreign publics” (2004:126). Employing the term “foreign information activities” in her historical review of American public diplomacy, Zaharna views them as “an integral part of American history” and identifies their aims as “informing, influencing, and gaining the support of foreign publics” (2004:219). Hachten and Scotton propose to use what they call “a cumbersome term” — International Political Communication (IPC) — to redefine public diplomacy as “the political effects that newspapers, broadcasting, film, exchanges of persons, cultural exchanges, and other means of international communication can achieve” (2007:165). Noting that most of the definitions of public diplomacy place their main emphasis on the use of mass communications, Scott-Smith argues that public diplomacy is “precisely the area where the unique content of exchanges, and their particular political value, needs to be taken into account” (2008:175). By drawing heavily on a 2007 report commissioned by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Nicholas J. Cull establishes a simple taxonomy of public diplomacy by dividing its practices into five elements: listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy, and international broadcasting (2008:31-54). To map out the terrain for Australian public diplomacy, Chitty maintains that public diplomacy in the contemporary world “consists of multiple approaches for the public sector, in engagement with second sector (businesses), third sector (NGOs), fourth estate/sector (media) organizations and nationwide participation in participatory development of a foreign policy that has support at home and respect and credibility abroad, while serving national interest” (2009a:316).

Differing from the mainstream observations, Gunaratne cautions that public diplomacy turns out to be a battle that “neither party can win in the long run” (2005:766). In his attempt to unravel the intricacies of public diplomacy, global communication and world order through the theory of living systems and Eastern philosophy, Gunaratne perceives public diplomacy as “an activity of particular

importance to hegemon or center countries”, constituting a substantial portion of global communication (2005:759). Clearly, being the sole superpower, the United States is the most typical centre country of the contemporary world. Hence, the thriving public diplomacy is also perceived by the international community as something packed with the US-centric bias. In the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the United States was afflicted by the omnipresent question “Why do they hate us?” It spared no effort to vitalise public diplomacy in its anti-terrorist war campaigns in order to save its poor global image from further paling (Cowan 2004:227; Snow 2004:18; Snow 2009a:10; Taylor 2009:12). In effect, the acceleration of American public diplomacy in the post-9/11 era is by no means a new thing. Rather, it has turned out to be a repetition of what Zaharna calls “a distinct historical pattern in American public diplomacy” (2004:220-221), which reflects a wave curve with the war-period mobilisation as the peak followed by the peace time at the low ebb. Nevertheless, the post-9/11 era demands a motto-shift of public diplomacy, which Snow summarises as moving from “telling America’s story to the world” to a new doctrine of global partnership and engagement (2009a:5). Thus, public diplomacy has been flourishing throughout this globalised world to such an extent that more and more global actors, whether they like it or not, have to consider the implication and implementation of public diplomacy for their own ends.

In China, *public diplomacy* is a foreign concept and Chinese public diplomacy is relatively weak, in comparison with its “very strong and influential” state propaganda system (Wang 2008:259). However, with “the rise of Chinese hegemonic power and China’s capacity and intention to develop a powerful unified message internationally” (Chitty 2010:191), China, though somewhat of a newcomer, appears to be an ascending star in the field of public diplomacy. In contemporary Chinese understanding, *public diplomacy* is a term which means “public relations activities related to foreign relations, conducted within respect to Chinese as well as foreign audiences” (Chitty 2010:194). Thus, amassing a whole wealth of economic and cultural resources, such as the flood of “Made-in-China” products, the widespread Confucius Institutes, the kung fu movies starring Jackie Chan (成龙) and Jet Li (李连杰), and even giant pandas — the Chinese “National Treasure”, China has begun to learn how to manoeuvre all of them in “talking back” (Rawnsley 2009:282-286) and cultivating a “China Soft” image (Chitty 2008:155-172). A recent culmination of Chinese public diplomacy may have been best interpreted by the spectacular opening ceremony of 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, with the eye-catching slogan “One World, One Dream” presenting visually on the mega-screen of the Bird’s Nest. So what dream are the Chinese dreaming? From a non-Chinese perspective, it may be either the fulfilment of China’s international ambition or the realisation of its long-rooted self-image of the “Middle Kingdom” (Rawnsley 2009:284,286). According to the official Chinese statements, however, it should be “the great renaissance of the Chinese nation”, which frequently appears in the CCP leaders’ speeches directed at Taiwan (Hu 31 December 2008; Jiang 30 January 1995). The increasing awareness and momentum of Chinese public diplomacy have been prompted partly by its striking growth in economic and commercial power achieved over the past thirty years, and partly by its self-



portrait of being the totality of the Chinese nation and culture. Within the context of cross-strait relations, however, Chinese public diplomacy may be defined as a three-pronged campaign, which consists of “externally” both projecting an international image of the exclusively legitimate government for “one China” and “nibbling” at the diplomatic recognition afforded to Taiwan by a few countries, and “internally” propagating the CCP’s goodwill for Taiwanese through cross-strait exchanges. Interestingly, giant pandas once again become the special diplomats for mainland China just as the so-called “panda diplomacy” in the 1970s when “pandas were despatched across the globe as a sign of goodwill” (Rawnsley 2009:284,286). As *The Guardian*’s reporter observes, “Pandas have long been an important symbol of Chinese diplomatic overtures to both allies and former foes” (Walker 23 December 2008). While capturing global attention, Tuan Tuan and Yuan Yuan, the two giant pandas (whose names stand for “reunion” when put together in Chinese) boarded a charter flight on 23 December 2008 to perform the peace “mission” across the Taiwan Strait, in a Chinese official’s words, to “sow the seeds of peace, solidarity and friendship on Taiwan’s soil” (Walker 23 December 2008).

### **3. Propaganda: Good or Evil?**

The pervasiveness of public diplomacy may be attributed to both the “communication revolution” and the American dramatisation in the post-9/11 era. Nevertheless, public diplomacy cannot enjoy its prevailing virtues for nothing because it is a propaganda-like activity. Unfortunately, propaganda appears to be a word which the Western people perceive as “too loaded a term and one associated with dastardly regimes, such as Stalin and Hitler” (Snow 2004:17). With such a negative perception dominating the hearts and minds of the West, there is no surprise that in the Western world anything relating to propaganda might cause doubt, fear, hatred, scepticism, and suspicion. Since public diplomacy has been used as a “euphemism” for propaganda (Mowlana 1996:8; Snow 2004:17), the attractive image of public diplomacy has also been tarnished by this undesirable term, particularly when the U.S. attempted through public diplomacy to overcome those increasing negative perceptions that so many have of it in the Muslim world. Although one may not be entitled to interpret the complex situation with a more manageable dichotomy as “good public diplomacy” versus “bad public diplomacy”, one should never forget the fundamental truth that propaganda does not belong exclusively to dictatorships such as those of Stalin and Hitler. Just as Taylor notes, “even though both Britain and the United States, as pluralistic democracies, normally fight shy of the word, that does not mean that they do not engage in it”(1995:3). Therefore, no distinctions exist between the West and the East, for “propaganda is a process unique to human communication regardless of time, space and geographic location” (Taylor 1995:x).

Deriving from Latin, the term *propaganda* originally referred to proclaiming the gospel of Christ to the whole world by the Roman Catholic Church. The contemporary usage of this term in its political, sociological, and commercial contexts, however, dates back to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Mowlana 1996:115). Noted for his insightful propositions of the “pseudo-environment” and “stereotypes”, Lippmann observed, in early 1920s, that “there must be some barrier between the public and the event” in order to conduct propaganda (1965 [c1922]:10,28,53-55). Indeed, implying something evil and false to the truth, propaganda has always positioned itself as two sides of the coin: abominable but influential, especially during the two world wars which facilitated the formation of “the unholy trinity” of “war, media, and propaganda” (Bagdikian 2004:xiii). As a powerful weapon, propaganda was of such critical importance to warring countries that it aroused the research interests of both Lasswell and Lerner, the two vectors that shaped international communication (Chitty 2004a:50). In Chitty’s words, “the former was preoccupied with what might be called the ‘dark side’ of political propaganda and the latter with the ‘light side’ of the propagation of modernity” (2004a:42). Arguably, Lasswell may be the most notable scholar who initiated research on the role of war propaganda in the 1920s. In his pioneer book entitled *Propaganda Techniques in the World War*, he contends that propaganda is “likewise a passive and contributory weapon, whose chief function is to demolish the enemy’s will to fight by intensifying depression, disillusionment and disagreement” (1927:214). Lasswell’s seminal study about the highly orchestrated propaganda techniques in modern war was followed by a multitude of scholars, albeit most of whom has already transcended the battlefield. In the report of a first ever international survey<sup>50</sup> titled *How Nations See Each Other* in the late 1940s, Buchanan and Cantril interpret propaganda as “government communication abroad”, whose role is to “translate national policies into terms that are understandable to the peoples abroad whom they affect” (1972:98). Declaring that the campaign for international development had just begun in the 1960s, Lerner reminds the developing areas that “[O]nly persuasion — the effective management of communication — can shape public opinion in such manner as to reduce popular frustration and prevent political upheaval” (1969:178,182). In his in-depth analysis of the relation between the media and the government during the Vietnam conflict (1961-1973), Hallin portrayed it as the first “*Uncensored War*” in which “the journalists clearly did not think of themselves simply as ‘soldiers of the typewriter’ whose mission was to serve the war effort” (1986:6). Having noted “the important role of propaganda in many aspects of modern life, not necessarily related to international intrigue or military campaigns”, Jowett and O’Donnell have made consistent effort to clarify propaganda and provided a widely cited definition as “the deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist” (Jowett and O’Donnell 1999:xi, 6; cf; McQuail 2005:467; Wilcox et al. 2003:229). As opposed to Lasswell’s war propaganda, Taylor explicitly states that “propaganda has the potential to serve a constructive, civilized and peaceful purpose” and hence advocates

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<sup>50</sup> This survey was sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

propagandising for peace in a nuclear age — “we need peace propagandists, not war propagandists — people whose job is to increase communication, understanding and dialogue between different peoples with different beliefs” (1995:303-304). Taylor’s peace propaganda, sounding more like public diplomacy, may help us to overcome the traditional negative perceptions of propaganda and transform its historical functions. For both peace and war propaganda, propagandists are indispensable. Mowlana identifies them as “technicians, bureaucrats, and specialists,” who are in the service of the state, the party, the political or commercial campaign, and so on (1996:115-116).

No matter how scholars define or redefine the complex subject of propaganda, nobody would deny that what lies behind propaganda is *power*, “the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes you want” (Nye 2008:94). This desirable power is perceived by Lasswell as “power over opinion” (1927:14) while within McQuail’s mass communication theory it is revealed as “media power”, referring to “a general potential on the part of the media to have effects, especially of a planned kind” (2005:465). In a more contemporary and fashionable term coined by Joseph S. Nye in the late 1980s, it is “soft power”, which lies in the ability to attract and persuade, in contrast with hard power — the ability to coerce (Nye 2004). The power of propaganda is manifest, especially when the government gets involved. “The carrying power of ideas is greatly increased when the authority of the government is added to them” (Lasswell 1927:15). Modern history has shown that it is because of this power that the government tends to employ propaganda for its own ends, whether during wartime or peacetime. In their path-breaking political economy work of “the manufacture of consent”, Herman and Chomsky concentrate on the inequality of wealth and power within their “propaganda model”, which describes American media-government complex as allowing the dominant government and private interests to get their messages across to the public while marginalising dissenting voices (2002:2). More recently, Snow documents how “covert propaganda” was executed by the Bush administration and thus gave rise to an array of “press-as-propaganda” scandals and “pay to sway” journalists in the United States (2007:86-90). Given the pervasiveness of propaganda in the “Number One Country”, “[t]he social influence literature credits the United States with being the greatest purveyor and consumer of propaganda in the world” (Snow 2007:106). At a global level, the “powerful” propaganda has already penetrated into every corner of our social life, such as advertising, broadcasting, entertainment, public relations and even the Olympic Games, all of which may be identified as propaganda to some extent. We are found to be living in an age of propaganda.

Within the cross-strait context, the connotation of propaganda (in Chinese, *xuanchuan*, 宣传) differs significantly from its ambivalence in the West, in a way similar to Taylor’s observation that “modern dictatorships have never fought shy of the word ‘propaganda’ in quite the same way as democracies do” (1995:14). Taylor further exemplifies this point with historical institutional evidence that the Nazis had their Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda and the Soviets their Propaganda

Committee of the Communist Party, but Britain has a Ministry of Information and the Americans an Office of War Information (1995:14). In the Cold War era, the French sociologist Jacques Ellul considered the Soviet Union, China, and the United States as the world's "three great propaganda blocs", which refer to "the most important propaganda systems in terms of scope, depth, and coherence" (1965:ix). Interestingly, this still remains true for today's CCP institutionalisation of propaganda (Chapter II). Within the CCP hierarchy it can be seen that propaganda departments have been strikingly installed at various levels. The CCP's propagandists are normally viewed as those with power and authority. In his academic biography of Deng Tuo (邓拓), the head of the 1950s CCP's central propaganda department, Cheek makes his comments on Chinese propaganda thus: "To western readers 'propaganda' may not sound like an honourable vocation for the intelligentsia. In Mao's China, for a time, it was" (1997:vi). In the post-Deng era, the CCP government has come to realise the negative connotations of the term *propaganda* in the global context, thus there seems to be a self-improvement of rebranding the English translation from the Propaganda Department to the Publicity Department (Rawnsley 2009:282). It is worth noting that, in both ideological and institutional senses, the high-ranking status of propaganda remains largely unchanged in today's China (Chapter VI).

Ideologically, propaganda is a rather positive term in the cross-strait context, partly because both the CCP and KMT are historically based upon the Leninist political party, which was convinced that "a true Bolshevik would be ready to believe that black was white and white was black if the Party required it" (Nelson 1997: xv); and partly because the Chinese E-matrix is not as sensitive to propaganda as is the Anglo-American E-matrix. In retrospect, propaganda has been conducted rather "blatantly" by the CCP and KMT. Before 1949, the two parties never ceased using propaganda towards each other. As Lee (1990:10-11) notes, during WWII, Zhou Enlai even took personal charge of the *New China Daily* (新华日报) to confront the KMT propaganda in the inland temporary capital of Chongqing. After the KMT took refuge in Taiwan, cross-strait propaganda presented itself as a two-way psychological warfare in the 1950s, characterised by the propaganda loudspeaker and radio broadcasting beaming respectively from each side against the other (Rawnsley 2000b:90-91) (See Chapter II). In the mainland, as discussed in Chapter II, all of the media products with Taiwanese as the target audience or the cross-strait communication activities are consecrated by the CCP as the "propaganda towards Taiwan", which commands a central location in its pursuit of national unification. The mainland media engaging in this field are to a large extent driven by the mission of political propagation. As for Taiwan, in the martial law era, the official press were "explicitly designated as vehicles for 'political warfare' against the Communist regime across the Taiwan Strait" by the KMT to "fulfil their mission as state propaganda apparatuses" (Wei 2000:338, 339). Therefore, propaganda is not only a special type of communication between the two sides, but actually a significant part of cross-strait relations (Chapter VI, VII).

#### 4. Media Diplomacy and Media-Broker Diplomacy: A Global Diplomat?

As public diplomacy is prevailing everywhere, diplomacy is no longer the patent of diplomats. People in different walks of life can have their own voices and active participations in this “privileged” field previously dominated by professional diplomats. In both academic literature and media reports, there seems to be a tendency to use (or treat) *public diplomacy* interchangeably with *media diplomacy*, mainly due to the growing reality that the bulk of public diplomacy is being conducted through the mass media. Nevertheless, as Gilboa has clarified, public diplomacy uses several channels or techniques, only one of which is the mass media (2000:290). Amongst these channels or techniques, undoubtedly, the mass media have been the most dynamic actor in the diplomatic arena. While analysing the decline of diplomacy after WWII, Morgenthau specified the development of speedy and regular communications in the form of “the satellite, the airplane, the radio, the telegraph, the teletype, the long-distance telephone” (1985:570). In the information age, however, the new information and communications technologies (ICTs) characterised by live broadcasting news reports and computer/internet-mediated communications have advanced far beyond the human expectations of several decades ago. Accordingly, the involvements of a rich variety of media in diplomacy give rise to different types of media diplomacy. A wide range of terms, such as “newspaper diplomacy”, “radio diplomacy” (Rawnsley 1996), “television diplomacy”, “headline diplomacy” (Seib 1997), “megaphone diplomacy” (Sparre 2001), “telediplomacy”, “cyber diplomacy”, and “satellite diplomacy”, has been coined to capture the role of the media in diplomacy.

Taking the traditional state-centric view, a succession of scholars have been devoting research efforts to define media diplomacy. Yoel Cohen appears to be the first one to have done the valuable job of illuminating this promising subject. In his pioneer monograph entitled *Media Diplomacy: The Foreign Office in the Mass Communications Age*, Cohen asserts that media diplomacy does exist as one type of diplomacy and that media diplomacy is “associated with the concept of influence” (1986:6,8). Afterwards, Ramaprasad clarifies media diplomacy as “the role the press plays in the diplomatic practice between nations” (cited by Ebo 1997:44). Constructing a theoretical framework between media diplomacy and foreign policy, Ebo “broadly” defines it as “the use of the media to articulate and promote foreign policy” in order to achieve “a preferred national identity and a complementary international image in the world community” (1997:44). Noting that references to this concept in the professional literature are highly confusing, Gilboa suggests a more specific and thus more useful definition: Media diplomacy refers to the uses of the mass media by leaders/policymakers to build confidence and advance negotiations as well as to mobilise public

support for agreements (1998:62; 2002a:741). In the cross-strait context, Lee adopts “esoteric communication” to get the point:

Esoteric communication, with the media acting as a “looking-glass mirror” has filled part of the diplomatic void between the PRC and Taiwan. The media provide a thin context devoid of the rich texture necessary for the art of diplomacy and direct negotiation.... The media’s routine reporting has replaced the role of secret “shuttle diplomacy” played by a few overseas Chinese scholars and politicians who had been asked to relay messages between the two sides (2000a:25-26).

In his innovative study of the media’s role in contemporary diplomacy, Gilboa comprehensively presents six conceptual models into two groups on the basis of the media’s involvement: the first group includes three models — secret diplomacy, closed-door diplomacy and open diplomacy — concerning the limitations which officials impose on media coverage; the second group consists of the other three models — public diplomacy, media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy — dealing with extensive utilisation of the media by officials and sometimes by journalists to promote negotiations (Gilboa 2000:275). Perhaps the most striking part of these six conceptual models is the conceptualisation of media-broker diplomacy, which Gilboa proposes to employ as a term to highlight the performance of journalists in diplomacy. Initially he defined this journalist-focused model as “international mediation conducted and sometimes initiated by media professionals” (Gilboa 1998:67; Gilboa 2000:298). Later media-broker diplomacy was updated as something that “typically occurs when there is no contact between enemies and no third party to help them resolve their differences” (Gilboa 2005b:99). Clearly, the latter definition is adapted to a much wider context within which media-broker diplomacy may operate at various levels of Chitty’s Matrix Framework. A brief review of current literature shows that Gilboa’s works in 1998 and 2000 are the first attempt to construct a systematic, theoretical introduction to media-broker diplomacy (2000:275), and that he might also be the only scholar who has adopted this conceptual model so far.

Noting that there are some controversies in the usage of the terms such as public diplomacy, media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy, in his six-concept model Gilboa places great emphasis on identifying what Gunaratne calls “elegant distinctions” (2005:761), which are very useful in gaining conceptual clarity:

[P]ublic diplomacy is conducted through multiple channels, but media diplomacy is exclusively conducted through mass media. Media-broker diplomacy is similar, but not identical, to media diplomacy in context, time, purposes and medium but is very different in initiators, method, sides and target (2000:303).

In media diplomacy, reporters pursue professional journalism work and follow moves initiated by policymakers. In media-broker diplomacy, journalists act more as diplomats, sometimes initiating and conducting critical diplomatic moves (2000:298-299).

Parallel to Gilboa's media-broker diplomacy model are some alternative interpretations proffered by other authors. With some nostalgia for traditional forms of diplomacy, Abba Eban remarks that "[p]ublic anxiety about the issues of peace and war has led private organizations and individuals to enter the diplomatic arena with offers of mediation" and consequently "[Q]uakers, church leaders, heads of peace research institutions, professors, members of parliaments and journalists have all attempted to solve or alleviate conflicts which have eluded the efforts of officially accredited emissaries" (1983:386-387). From the perspective of a media researcher, Gurevitch views the new role of globalised television as "international political brokers" that sometimes "may launch reportorial initiatives that tend to blur the distinction between the roles of reporters and diplomats" (1991:187-188). Referring to Gilboa's initial definition of media-broker diplomacy, Sparre comments that Gilboa's use of the word *diplomacy* in its traditional meaning of the management of the relations between states obscures the fact that media's involvement in diplomacy also can function at the sub-state level and in communal conflicts. Hence, Sparre adopts "megaphone diplomacy" to depict the media/journalist's role as notice boards to "square the circle" in the sub-state level and in communal conflicts, such as the one in the Northern Ireland (2001:89).

Apart from public diplomacy and media diplomacy, media-broker diplomacy also overlaps track-two diplomacy or the second track diplomacy, which refers to unofficial negotiators and informal forms of negotiations (Gilboa 2005b:101). The Canadian track-two diplomacy expert Peter Jones notes that, first arising in the 1960s, Track Two is presently recognised as "quiet, unofficial dialogues to help resolve conflicts" (2008:3). While discussing the unofficial interactions across the Taiwan Strait, Clough not only acknowledges that "in the absence of official negotiations, relations between the two contending parties are being moulded by a process that has been called 'track-two diplomacy'" but also uses track-two diplomacy "in a wider sense to refer to a broad spectrum of people-to-people interactions between the two sides" (1993:2). Obviously, all of these unofficial interactions have been endorsed by the government. Wang Yi (王毅), the Director of the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO), remarks thus, "Among cross-strait exchanges, people-to-people exchanges were the most basic and direct contact among the people across the Taiwan Strait and was the most effective" (*Xinhua News Agency* 24 September 2010). Such unofficial orientation also has resonance in the American context in which Snow advocates to "put the public back into diplomacy" and to shift from G2P (government-to-public) to P2P (public-to-public) (2009a:6-7). In this sense, what Snow suggests here may be also categorised as track-two diplomacy. In a nutshell, the difference between track-two diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy is manifest: track-two diplomacy exists and functions mainly in comparison with track-one diplomacy, i.e. government-to-government interactions and

negotiations, whereas media-broker diplomacy specifically focuses on the role of journalists as brokers or diplomats. In relation to the theoretical similarity, media-broker diplomacy shares common ground with track-two diplomacy in stressing “interpersonal dynamics and social-psychological techniques” (Jones 2008:4).

The foregoing conceptual models of media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy maintain their roots largely in a rich array of cases from around the world where the mass media have begun to assume the role of global diplomat. This kind of diplomatic engagement at times captured plenty of academic efforts to explore how the media, for example emotive media coverage of atrocities in Iraq, Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia in the 1990s, impact on Western countries’ foreign policy and thus commentators and scholars invented the term “CNN Effect” (Gilboa 2009a:455; Robinson 2001; Robinson 2002). At other times, the global diplomatic role of the media has also directed much scholarly attention to the linkage between the media and modern conflict resolution. However, media utilisation in advancing peacemaking processes is a subject of controversy (Gilboa 2002b:207-208), for which scholars across disciplinary domains may have different perspectives. Professor of Law Schneider advocates the application of some of the best concepts in communication to international conflict resolution, “a problem often only viewed through a legal or dispute resolution lens” (2009:3). By raising the question that “*Is Journalism Interested in Resolution, or Only in Conflict*”, Professor of Journalism Pauly makes a “gloomy argument” of journalism’s contributions to conflict resolution mainly due to those external constraints, among which is the structural placement of journalism at the very centre of political and social conflict (2009:19,22). From the perspective of a critic of journalism, however, Schudson asserts that “the fixation of the press on conflict whenever and wherever it erupts”, along with other features of journalism, make the media “a valuable force in a democratic society” (2006:23,32). Although news work places the media in general and journalists in particular at the very nexus of political and social conflict, it seems that there are still some opportunities for the media and journalists to contribute to conflict resolution. Applying a social ecological perspective to the interdisciplinary field of conflict communication, Oetzel et al. highlight the so-called “bottom-up effect”, which represents how lower levels (individuals, organisations, etc.) use dialogue to construct a peaceful climate for higher levels (communal, intercultural/international conflicts) (2006:732-736). In the same vein, communication scholar Gilboa calls for sufficient studies on the media’s role on diplomacy and foreign policy, stressing the fact that most existing studies focus on the often negative contributions of the media to the escalation and violence phases of conflict while very few studies deal with the actual or potential media contributions to conflict resolution and reconciliation (2002a:731-732; 2009a:455; 2009b:88). Gilboa’s assessment of the state of the art, to some extent, has identified a promising avenue for future theorising and mediation practice.

In his consistent effort to explore media contributions to conflict resolution, Gilboa (2002a) presents a basic taxonomy where global communication is identified as four types of actors: controlling,



constraining, intervening, and instrumental, together with four corresponding concepts, which are the CNN Effect theory, real-time policy, international political brokerage, and media diplomacy. Within this particular taxonomy, the latter two types of actors and concepts highlight the importance of the media's involvement in international mediation and conflict resolution. Based on the integration of theories and approaches from international relations, conflict studies, communication studies, and journalism, Gilboa further constructs a multidisciplinary framework for media and conflict resolution, through which the five functions of the media (news, interpretation, cultural transmission, entertainment, and mobilisation) are assessed respectively in terms of functions and dysfunctions in the four phases of conflict (prevention, management, resolution, and reconciliation) (2006:599-619; 2009b:106-107). In order to approach this assessment, he also suggests distinguishing five levels of media by geopolitical criteria, including local, national, regional, international, and global media (2006:596; 2009b:103).

A study of the role of the journalist in cross-strait relations may be also categorised as a conflict topic.<sup>51</sup> Through the lens of Gilboa's multidisciplinary framework for media and conflict resolution, journalists in this thesis are considered as both a part of the mass media and a kind of diplomatic and strategic public. As a part of the mass media, the journalists in this study derive from three types of media (local, national and regional) with their media functions mainly focused on news, interpretation, and mobilisation (see Chapter IV and VI for details). As a kind of diplomatic and strategic public, this study is to demonstrate the potential positive role of the journalist in terms of signalling, building confidence, promoting negotiations, and moderating/balancing conflict in cross-strait relations. To this end, this study will continue to follow the pertinent conceptual models of media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy within the large academic field of international communication. This study not only showcases the critical diplomatic initiatives which the journalist conducted in the media-broker diplomacy model, but also tries to uncover the government's uses of the media and journalist to serve their political and diplomatic goals through the model of media diplomacy. In this respect, two landmark media events will be closely examined in Chapter V as classic illustrations of how journalists played the role of media brokers in cross-strait context, and in Chapter VI some journalists in mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong (SAR) will also be interviewed to approach their perceptions and self-perceptions.

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<sup>51</sup> In the cross-strait context, there has been fierce debate as to how to define the nature of the cross-strait conflict. From the Chinese perspective, it is an internal conflict. Many Taiwanese and many other states, however, may view it as an international conflict. With the nature of the cross-strait conflict open to debate, this journalist-focused study places its interest in the contribution of the journalist to cross-strait conflict rather than the political debate of the conflict nature.

## 5. Public Relations: Does Money Work?

While investigating the triple complex of international communication, public diplomacy, and propaganda, we should not overlook public relations (PR), which might be viewed as a communicative bifurcation of this triple complex. Similarly, because PR is a flexible and controversial concept, numerous efforts have been made to define it over the years. Based on more than 500 definitions, Rex Harlow, a pioneer public relations educator and the founder of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), figures out his own definition as: “Public relations is a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its public” (cited by Wilcox et al. 2003:3). From a political science perspective, Manheim emphasises “the public relations aspects of public diplomacy”, which he terms as “strategic public diplomacy”, encompassing the creation, distribution, control, use, processing, and effects of information as a political resource, whether by governments, organizations, groups, or individuals (1994: viii, 7).

In terms of content and objective, public relations can be separated into public affairs aspects and commercial aspects. Concerning its geographical sphere, public relations may be also divided into two broad categories: domestic and international. From a public affairs perspective, Kunczik and Weber focus on “public relations for the nation state” which in their words “means the planned and continuous distribution of interest-bound information by a state, aimed at improving the relative country’s image abroad” (1994:18). With a commercial orientation, however, public relations are frequently perceived as business activities, particularly a kind of seemingly corporate-dominated activities sometimes synchronizing advertising. Noting the lines between advertising and public relations have blurred into a general communication function, Newsom and Carrell define the two as the efforts relying on “carefully crafted messages and graphics designed for specific audiences to persuade them to accept a product or service or to support an idea” (1995:90). Wilcox and his colleagues view international public relations as “the planned and organized effort of a company, institution, or government to establish mutually beneficial relations with the publics of other nations” (Wilcox et al. 2003:378). Chitty further identifies two characteristics of international public relations, namely, being broader than public diplomacy while not beginning with a state-centric bias (2009a:316). Through the lens of propaganda, Taylor considers public relations as “a branch of propaganda” with “a nicer way of labelling”, which is “a related communicative process designed to enhance the relationship between an organization and the public” (1995:6). Taylor’s categorisation of PR in a broad sense, however, appeared to be unacceptable to some social scientists who maintain that “the word *propaganda* should be used only to denote activity that sells a belief system or constitutes political or ideological dogma” (Wilcox et al. 2003:229).

Albeit disagreements exist as to how to define and orientate public relations, the acceleration of public diplomacy and propaganda has been reinforced by public relations or in some contexts like the United States downplayed by public relations (Snow 2009a:9-10). In effect, their interdependence even dates back to the reign of Alexander the Great when the early forms of international public relations — the use of propaganda messages — emerged as the attempts to cultivate images in the service of foreign policy (Hamelink 1994:17). In the contemporary world, an increasingly remarkable trend has been seen that public relations has a large-scale convergence with the triple complex in terms of systematic image cultivation and media management, characterised by its values in building and maintaining a reputation or favourable image in a global society. More and more global actors come to realise these values and begin to utilise professional public relations organisations to wage PR campaigns both at home and abroad. Consequently, PR has become an increasingly lucrative business. Particularly, aiming to achieve a favourable international image and to fulfil the objective of its foreign policy, the government has become the biggest client of public relations firms. As Ebo points out, public relations campaigns directed at the media generally result in positive media coverage for nations and thus encourage governments to maintain expense accounts for domestic and international public relations (1997:47). In stark contrast with the cutback in the newsroom, Oates observes:

At the same time that many newsroom budgets have been slashed, the amount of money spent by governments, corporations, and even individuals on public relations is on the rise. As a result, journalists may find it increasingly difficult to resist relying on the resources of well-funded PR campaigns instead of careful independent reporting (2008:50).

This trend, obviously contradicting journalistic ethics, has been well documented by a variety of case studies over the past several decades, among which is the one criticised by Hamelink as the media's "prime examples of distorted mediation" (1994:6): during the 1991 Gulf War, many U.S. TV stations broadcast the videotapes manufactured by the Washington-based public relations firm Hill and Knowlton, which carried out a 10 million dollar propaganda campaign for the Bush administration, whereas many important stories about the war were not reported.

To some extent, PR is a true American "success" story. The U.S. not only has a long tradition of public relations, but also remains a fiercely competitive battlefield of international public relations activities. Actually, foreign interests have been seeking representation in Washington for many years (Manheim 1994: pvi). Kunczik and Weber render a meaningful hypothesis of this phenomenon — most PR campaigns are waged in the U.S. and western industrialised countries because the more important (economically and/or politically) a country (superpower) is, the more likely foreign countries will wage campaigns (1994:19). In his systematic analysis of foreign PR industry in the U.S., Manheim conducts a case study of how the Kuwaiti government-in-exile moulded American public opinion as a means of influencing U.S. foreign policy during the Gulf War (1994:45-52).

Interestingly, the US dominance in international public relations is also mirrored in cross-strait relations. Nowadays, it is no surprise to see that a wide array of public relations firms, either government-sponsored or non-government-sponsored, have been rubbing shoulders with one another in the U. S. (Washington, D.C. in particular) for the image cultivation and interest lobbying of their Chinese client government and corporations as well as those of the Taiwanese. Such a flourishing scene serves as a reminder of the fact that the U. S. is of utmost importance in cross-strait relations. In this respect, Clough offers a useful case of how Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui used PR to achieve his visit to Cornell University in 1995 (also see Chapter II):

Since the U.S. administration opposed the visit because of the damage it would do to the relations with Beijing, Lee mobilized pro-ROC individuals and organizations throughout the country to lobby Congress. He had the KMT sign a three-year, \$4.5 million contract with a public relations firm, Cassidy Associates, to contribute to the effort. The lobbying effort was extraordinarily successful, producing a nearly 100 percent vote in favor of Lee's visit (1999:7).

Paralleling their respective economic growth, the PR industry has experienced rapid growth on both mainland China and Taiwan in recent years. From the public affairs perspective, however, both governments encountered some frustrations in their image cultivation during the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. On the mainland side, the image of the PRC and the CCP government suffered great loss caused by several health communication crises, culminating in the outbreak of SARS in 2003 and the exposé of the tainted milk powder scandal in 2007, while on the other side, the ROC's reputation was significantly tarnished by the corruption scandal of the DPP's Chen administration during 2000-2008. Attracted by the booming economic prospect, however, a lot of international public relations firms launched their branches in mainland China. As the Hoffman, a California public relations firm, cautions in its newsletter: practicing public relations in the PRC requires a good understanding of the nation's history and political sensitivities. The tips are as follows:

It is important to be politically correct. Although Taiwan is considered by its partners in the outside world as a separate country, China considers it a renegade province of China. Consequently, companies should not refer to Taiwan as a separate country in their news releases or product specification sheets (Wilcox et al. 2003:385).

## Summary

This chapter is concerned with the multidimensional examinations of cross-strait relations through the literature review of international communication, notably the pertinent frameworks of analysis and five conceptual dimensions (communication and diplomacy, public diplomacy, propaganda, media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy, and public relations). In a broad sense, the common ground of the academic field of international communication and the study of cross-strait relations may be summarised as two identifying features: historically post-WWII formulations and theoretically profound geopolitical concerns. By and large, however, the two fields remained somewhat strange to each other, partly because at the theoretical level, the study of cross-strait relations was trivialised or sidelined by the traditional paradigms of international communication out of concern that the division across the Taiwan Strait had been caused by the unfinished Chinese Civil War, partly because at the practical level, any attempt to examine cross-strait relations with *international* communication approaches and theories may be silenced by political sensitivity. Thanks to “international communication’s acute responsiveness to geopolitical, technological, and social changes” (Chitty 2010:182), cross-strait relations, arising from one of the most difficult international flash points, are hopefully heading towards a hard-earned legitimacy as a research subject in the field of international communication. Thus, a perceived constructive relationship between the two fields deserves serious attention. On one hand, international communication provides comprehensive and useful theories and approaches to enlighten the study of cross-strait relations, especially provoking academic challenges against the Sino-centrism and geopolitical parochialism. On the other hand, the intricacies and uniqueness of cross-strait relations pose a series of meaningful questions to both international communication and international relations as a whole. In the same vein, this chapter also serves as an academic attempt to make the connection – provide some connective fibres between international communication and cross-strait relations.

In a narrow sense, this study has been pursuing a particular academic inquiry of cross-strait relations with an international communication approach. Given a journalist-focused orientation specified at the outset of the thesis and the preceding five conceptual dimensions of international communication, this study is to tread the path of media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy models while synthesizing relevant theories and research within the field of international communication. Furthermore, noting that scant attention has been paid to the potential contributions of the media (journalists) to conflict resolution in the professional literature, this thesis also attempts to illuminate

positive roles which the journalist played in the cross-strait context via case studies and intensive interviews (Chapter V, VI).

While examining media diplomacy in the British context, Yoel Cohen astutely notes that “crises, war and peace are the stuff of both journalists and diplomats” (1986:7). Complex but fascinating, cross-strait relations have presented themselves as a subject of war and peace, diplomacy and communication. If tackling cross-strait relations is categorised as conducting diplomacy, in substance, communication is as central to cross-strait relations as is diplomacy. As one part of the research proposition of this study (see Chapter I), the consequent corollary may be that cross-strait relations are a process of communication. Several decades ago, the Nobel Prize winner in Literature Elias Canetti observed that: “[T]he outbreak of a war is primarily *an eruption of two crowds*. As soon as these crowds have formed, the supreme purpose of each is to preserve its existence through both belief and action” (1962:72). Nowadays, this social psychological insight into war still echoes across the Taiwan Strait. Hence, the following chapters are to uncover how the media and journalists mediate for those beliefs and actions between the “two crowds” in this matter of communication.

## Chapter IV To Polish the Dim Mirror: In Search of Methodological Insights

The world of phenomena will always be that “buzzing, blooming thing out there,” just as theory is at best only a dim mirror image of that blooming richness (Rosengren 1993:9).

Taiwan and mainland China are not directly comparable, but at a micro level, strategies of adjusting state-society relations within the constraints and potentialities of one’s factor endowments, including culture and ideology, offer fruitful ground for future research (Gold 1986:x).

### Introduction

Inhabiting the world of phenomena with “blooming richness” (Rosengren 1993:9), the core research question of this thesis has been located in Chitty’s Matrix Framework and subsequently redefined so as to examine the role played by journalists (I-matrices), through media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy, in encouraging the relationship between the Chinese R-matrix and the Taiwanese A-matrix, stretching over a historical period from 1987 to 2009 (Chapter III). Considering the historical background research in Chapter II which shows that crystallization of journalists’ involvements in cross-strait relations has been precipitated by a series of historical media events,<sup>52</sup> the research question may be correspondingly viewed as history-based, event-oriented, and I-matrix/individual-centred. Such a research question aligns itself with the research trend which may be traced back to Rosengren’s 1990s’ observation of the growing humanistic research in sociology and communication:

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<sup>52</sup> The term “event” in this study involves both historical and media/communication implications. A glance at literature shows that different definitions of “event” come forth in different contexts. From a historian’s perspective, Postan (1971: 51) defines an historical event as “a past occurrence”, or “a ‘real’ segment in the continuum of historical experience”. Though with some historical implications, “media event” is originally defined by Dayan and Katz (1992:7) as a television genre which refers to those broadcast events “presented with *reverence* and *ceremony*” and “preplanned, announced and advertised in advance”. More recently, addressing the links between media, communication and power, Davis adopts such term as “historical ‘media events’ transmitted via the mass media” (2007: 2). In this study, however, the term of “media events” is used in its generic sense to refer to those historical happenings with deep involvements of media and communication.

This general development has two articulations. First, the acting and willing subject, the human individual qua human individual, is in focus much more than before. Second, the historical perspective has grown ever stronger, a welcome complement to the sometimes rather one-sided, ahistorical perspective of the old behavioral and social science approaches (1993:7-8).

From a more recent vantage point, this thesis may be identified as one of what Chitty calls “I-matrix studies”. The I-matrix, he argues, has been often “ignored” in the fields of international communication and international relations “except in relation to elites and decision-making among elites”. In mapping the future of international communication, he prescribes that the study of “I- and E-matrix construction of images of international and national security and development” would be one of the important areas for continued and future attention (2004a:42; 62).

Being I-matrix/individual-centred, this thesis proposes that: (1) cross-strait relations are a process of communication within which the media acts as the indicator of the political climate and journalists in particular have been important actors in constructing a peaceful climate; (2) historically journalists have been instrumental in improving cross-strait relations at times and at other times media has ratcheted up animosity; (3) however, their role as mediators has been achieved at the cost of journalistic independence and neutrality. To seek evidence for this proposition, this thesis attempts to identify appropriate research methods in this chapter by exploring a variety of related research paradigms and approaches so as to shape the methodological foundation. At this juncture, it would be useful to start this methodological spadework with the definition of *journalists* so that we may get to know “who’s who” in this study.

## **A Journalistic Cohort: Defining Personnel**

Defining journalists can be a task of intricacy; journalists being studied in cross-strait context are not as simply defined as journalists in some other settings. This intricacy is even mingled with “a fundamental and long-standing ambivalence over who ‘gets’ to be called a journalist” (Zelizer 2005:205). Hallin also observes that “the notion of the journalist as a ‘professional’ is vague and in many ways dubious” and “many journalists would characterize their job as a craft rather than a profession” (2000:220). Despite such ambivalence and vagueness, this study will use the term of journalist only in its most common or generic sense: news personnel dealing with collecting, editing, producing and disseminating news in the mass media. In accordance with this operational definition, editors and chief editors are also categorised as journalists.



The journalists in this study present themselves as a distinctive cohort within a large journalistic population. Scrutinising this particular cohort offers a great opportunity to gain insights into the composition of the journalistic community within both the Chinese R-matrix and the Taiwanese A-matrix. In practice, the working titles for this cohort may sound a bit cumbersome in English translation. On mainland China, these journalists are usually called “the journalist reporting news on/towards Taiwan” (*Duitai Xinwen Jizhe*) or in the CCP’s term “the journalist of propaganda towards Taiwan” (*Duitai Xuanchuan Jizhe*). On Taiwan, correspondingly, they are identified as “the journalist reporting news on the mainland” (*Dalu Xinwen Jizhe*). The comparability of the working titles on both sides reflects not only the existence of journalistic counterparts across the Taiwan Strait but also the implication that they are viewed as specialised and somewhat external to mainstream journalists.

Albeit deriving historical cultural values from the same E-matrix of Han nationality, both the Chinese R-matrix and the Taiwanese A-matrix differ significantly from each other in terms of their political ideologies, subcultures, political, social and economic systems owing to their different sociopolitical evolutions, notably after they split in 1949. Hence, each side tends to perceive handling the news reporting about the other side as a task of expertise and of great political significance. This has been the case in current mainland China and also in Taiwan during the martial law era (1949-1987). This perception consequently provides the *raison d’être* for a cohort of journalists, who are highly trained specialists with an expertise/knowledge of the history, languages,<sup>53</sup> tastes, taboos, stereotypes, and public policies on the other side. From the perspective of mass communication, this kind of specialisation can be generally attributed to the division of labour facilitating production and distribution of the mediated messages (Jamieson and Campbell 2004:7). Within the two matrices, however, it may be largely interpreted as a consequence of widely acknowledged sensitivity and complexity of cross-strait relations demanding that relevant news reporting be carefully (even diplomatically) crafted by experienced hands. Subsequently, these “experienced hands” have formulated a distinct cohort of journalists on both sides.

To address such a journalistic cohort, I am introducing the *cross-strait journalist* as a compatible concept, which means those journalists on both sides who specialise in reporting Taiwan Strait affairs and have conducted reporting missions across the Taiwan Strait. Within a large journalistic community, cross-strait journalists distinguish themselves from others by their everyday journalistic practices, norms, rituals, conventions, and consensual understandings, all of which have constructed a sort of cross-strait journalistic subculture. This subculture may not be understood easily by their

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53 In Taiwan, the usage of language can be a matter of politics concerning Taiwanese identity. In everyday life, apart from Chinese Mandarin, Taiwanese (named as Southern Fujianese or *Minnanhua* 闽南话 in the mainland) and Hakka are also widely used by some subethnic groups. See Rawnsley and Rawnsley (2001: 39-43) for more background accounts.

fellow journalists in other fields whereas their journalistic counterparts on the other side may have a better understanding. Thus, the characteristics of cross-strait journalists may be sketched as follows:<sup>54</sup>

- (1) Their everyday practices centre on news reporting of cross-strait affairs or reporting with important implications to cross-strait relations;
- (2) Their newsworthiness (news value) is significantly confined to the context of the Taiwan Strait, and as a consequence highly dichotomous, with their journalistic focus either on mainland China or Taiwan;
- (3) Their customs, including the usage of particular Chinese words and phrases, personal perspectives and cultural preferences, are more or less influenced by the other side;
- (4) In comparison with their peers in the journalistic circle, they appear to rely more on the political, economic and intellectual elite of the two sides so as to conduct their work better;
- (5) Their physical journalistic travel is ideally embodied by their reporting missions across the Taiwan Strait. Hence, they are deeply involved in the media exchange activities between the two sides, for instance, receiving and cooperating with their counterparts from the other side and (perhaps more desirably for some of them) being a stationed journalist on the other side.

In the light of their deep involvements in cross-strait relations, these “technicians, bureaucrats, and specialists” may be also categorised as “propagandists” according to the definition of Mowlana (1996:115-116). Regarding the fourth characteristic, as a sort of politically-minded intellectual elite themselves, cross-strait journalists fall into the elite group of the two societies in a broad sense. This elite status has been vindicated by the interesting fact that both governments tend to select candidates from this very cohort for appointment to the administrations, on each side respectively, of cross-strait relations.<sup>55</sup> Thus, these “ex-journalists” have been expressly recruited into the political elite and consequently form a part of the policy-making body with the cross-strait journalistic subcultural background. From the institutional perspective, therefore, it is not surprising that this cohort of journalists has become an indispensable political actor in the cross-strait political arena.

The conceptualisation of cross-strait journalists serves to produce “a specific, agreed-upon meaning for a concept for the purposes of research” (Babbie 2004:122). Hopefully, this conceptualisation could help to inspire some further research interest in the interface of cross-strait relations and media

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<sup>54</sup> These observations are based on my firsthand knowledge as a cross-strait journalist on mainland China.

<sup>55</sup> There has been no shortage of such examples across the Taiwan Strait to illustrate the connection between the cross-strait journalist and the governmental appointment since 2000. Fan Liqing, a senior cross-strait journalist from *Xinhua News Agency*, was appointed as the Vice-Director (Spokeswoman) of the Information Bureau of the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) of China in 2007; Lee Yung-teh, one of the first Taiwanese journalists who set foot on mainland China in 1987, acted as the Minister of the Council for Hakka Affairs, the Executive Yuan (行政院客家委员会, a cabinet-level ministry) of the DPP government from 2005-2008, followed by a more recent governmental appointment as the Deputy Mayor of Kaohsiung City designated by its Mayor Chen Chu (陈菊), one of the 18 founders of the DPP in the 1980s.

and communication in the academic sense, and also to revive the awareness of journalists within this cohort in an empirical sense.

## **An Intellectual Journey: Defining Paradigms**

To a great extent, the examination of cross-strait journalists may be viewed as an intellectual journey. At the personal level, this journey is demonstrated by the career transition of the present writer, a former cross-strait journalist in mainland China, who left his home and travelled to Australia to read for his PhD while keeping his eyes critically on both mainland China and Taiwan. More importantly, at the theoretical level, the research project sees itself travelling along a route fraught with stumbling blocks, with a view to bridging the gap between the field of international communication and the study of cross-strait relations, as stated in Chapter III. At the journalistic level, the research is particularly preoccupied with the “travel” of both the mediated message and the journalist across the Taiwan Strait. Travel and traveler, therefore, are the remarkably meaningful words for this study. Based upon such a self-portrait of an academic traveler, I have always been reminding myself of two kinds of parochialism for fear that I may be reduced to being a mindless wanderer by losing the right intellectual direction.

### **1. Appreciating Parochialism**

To tackle the first one, which I put forward as the Chinese/Taiwanese parochialism, I have introduced Chitty’s Matrix Framework as the framework of analysis, through which three unique perspectives will be accessible (Chapter III). The second one comes as disciplinary parochialism, to be treated at this stage.

At least two reasons are available for justifying the consideration of disciplinary parochialism in this study. Firstly, any research about media and communication cannot distance itself from society while any theories for media and communication are deeply rooted in a broader sociological tradition. Thus, any research about (the role of) journalists is closely associated with the societal context in which journalism is practiced. As McQuail points out in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of his prominent monograph *Mass Communication Theory*, “it is hard to draw a line between ideas concerning mass media and wider theories of society” (1994:2). This interpretation has been endorsed by Golding and Murdock all the

more sharply in their argument that “theory for the media can be little more than a special application of broader social theory” (cited in McQuail 1994:3). Considering such a society-oriented feature, relating the media and communication research to a wider social context appears to be an academic must. Only by doing so can we achieve a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the role played by cross-strait journalists.

Secondly, within the territory of media and communication, it is worthy of note that so many different schools or subspecialties delimit their boundaries to the extent that Rosengren terms them as “frog ponds” instead of research fields: “It is as if the field of communication research were punctuated by a number of isolated frog ponds — with no friendly croaking between the ponds, very little productive intercourse at all, few cases of successful cross-fertilization”(1993:2). As a consequence, the theories of media and communication seem to be so fragmentary that only through the perspective of a wider intellectual territory can we overcome disciplinary parochialism which has been revolving around media and communication research over decades.

In effect, disciplinary parochialism is not an intellectual property exclusively owned by media and communication research. It appears to be a common threat confronting every social science discipline and field, or to an even larger scale, all of the scientific research. In effect, it has become a kind of research culture which we have been taking for granted for years. This parochial research culture was interestingly testified by the personal academic experience of Thomas Kuhn, a previous Harvard student of physics and later on a renowned professor of the history of science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), who “was struck by the number and extent of the overt disagreements between social scientists about the nature of legitimate scientific problems and methods” when he wrote his influential treatise entitled *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1996:x). Clearly, it is no exaggeration to argue that disciplinary parochialism is really a reminder which every researcher could use to challenge his research design and perspective. In this sense, perhaps the most effective remedy for disciplinary parochialism is the one wisely suggested by Burrell and Morgan in their seminal work of *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis*:

In order to understand alternative points of view it is important that a theorist be fully aware of the assumptions upon which his own perspective is based. Such an appreciation involves an intellectual journey which takes him outside the realm of his own familiar domain. It requires that he become aware of the boundaries which define his perspective. It requires that he journey into the unexplored. It requires that he become familiar with paradigms which are not his own. Only then can he look back and appreciate in full measure the precise nature of his starting point (1985: xi).

## 2. Appreciating the Paradigm

Challenging while exciting, the intellectual journey advocated by Burrell and Morgan is worth trying, especially for the research presented in this thesis which claims to be travelling across the Taiwan Strait. Given the field of international communication in which this study has been positioned, it will be advisable, therefore, to take this study outside of its familiar domain to a wider intellectual territory so that some fresh insights may be gained. In this respect, I would like to select three (in my view) typical typologies, at the social philosophical level, in an attempt to define and appreciate the paradigm to be followed in this thesis.

### (1) Burrell and Morgan's Typology (1985)

Burrell and Morgan not only inspired researchers to take “an intellectual journey...into the unexplored” as a starting point of their academic inquiry, but also provide an analytical scheme for them to use as an “heuristic device” (1985:xi; xii). In their scheme, they argue that social theory can usefully be conceived in terms of four broad paradigms on the basis of two dimensions: the nature of social science (objectivistic vs. subjectivistic), and the nature of society (regulation vs. radical change or consensus vs. conflict). Crossing these two dimensions are four key paradigms, namely radical humanism, radical structuralism, interpretive sociology, and functionalist sociology. Each of these four mutually exclusive paradigms generates its own distinctive approach to the analysis of social life.

Accordingly, Burrell and Morgan's fourfold typology directs this study to a great philosophical debate of the relationship between human beings and their environment. It is abundantly clear that this study views the environment (social world), in Burrell and Morgan's words, as “being of a much softer, personal and more subjective quality” instead of one that is “being hard, real and external to the individual” (1985:2). Along the “subjective-objective” dimension in terms of the nature of social science, this study tends to stress the importance of the subjective experience of individuals in their participation in cross-strait relations. As a consequence, along the four sets of assumptions related to ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology which suggested by Burrell and Morgan (1985:1), the stance of this study can thus be summarised as follows:

Ontology: Relativist. Social reality is the product of individual mind;

Epistemology: Subjectivist. Social reality is something that has to be personally experienced;

Human Nature: Interactive. Personal experience is the product of the external environment;

Methodology: Qualitative. The approach emphasises the relativistic nature of the social reality.

Intersecting with the “subjective-objective” dimension is the so-called “regulation-radical change” dimension, along which the sociology of regulation is primarily concerned with the status quo, social order, consensus and solidarity, etc., whereas the sociology of radical change is preoccupied with structural conflict, contradiction, emancipation, and deprivation, etc. From these two dichotomous perspectives, this study, with it focuses on the mediating role of cross-strait journalists, is inclined to align itself with peace rather than war, with consensus rather than conflict, with cohesion rather than collision. Therefore, concerning the nature of society, this study should be categorised as a part of sociology of regulation.

Binding the two dimensions together like a cross, it appears that this study has been placed somewhere in the paradigm of interpretive sociology (*subjective plus regulation*). Just as Rosengren points out that “theory is at best only a dim mirror image of” the blooming richness of the world (1993:9), the real world actually is much more diversified than these four clear-cut paradigms, these tidy reductions. Though falling into the camp of interpretive sociology, this study may not necessarily take the extreme positions so as to fully meet those criteria. In practice, it may be quite natural to see that sometimes it also positions itself somewhere in the middle ground of the two dimensions. Nevertheless, Burrell and Morgan’s typology does help to render a solution to getting out of the common academic mire of disciplinary parochialism by locating ourselves within a wider “intellectual map” (1985:xi).

## (2) McQuail’s Typology (1994)

It is worthy of note that, within Burrell and Morgan’s “intellectual map”, the term *paradigms* has been used “much in the natural science sense” and therefore “should rather be called schools or traditions of research” (Rosengren 1993:6). Theoretically speaking, *paradigm* has always been a term which lacks a clear definition. Being “most responsible for bringing that concept into our collective awareness”, Thomas Kuhn has himself used it in different ways (Guba 1990:17). Thus, Guba defines it as simple as “a basic set of beliefs that guides action” (1990:17). In line with many scholars before them, Wimmer and Dominick have offered a more intellectual definition: “[A]n accepted set of theories, procedures, and assumptions about how researchers look at the world” (2006:113). Their definition implies that in essence paradigm is more like a sort of “research kit” which comes to shape our worldview.

The paradigms in McQuail’s typology (1994:3) appear to be more appropriate to social sciences. In comparison with Burrell and Morgan’s fourfold typology, McQuail’s compact and straightforward typology primarily focuses upon a relatively smaller scope in relation to media-and-society relationship rather than a wider social philosophical territory. Similar to Burrell and Morgan, McQuail also formulates two intersecting dimensions, with “media-centric vs. society-centric” as the

vertical dividing line, and “culturalist vs. materialist” as the horizontal. Each of the four paradigms can be easily interpreted just as its name implies. The “media-centric” perspective concentrates on the media’s own sphere of activity while the “society-centric” approach views the media as a reflection of political and economic forces. The culturalist interest lies in the realm of culture and ideas whereas the materialist emphasises material forces and factors. In his interpretation of the divide between the “culturalist” and the “materialist”, McQuail goes further by offering us a heuristic reference: “This divide corresponds approximately with certain other dimensions: humanistic versus scientific; qualitative versus quantitative, and subjective versus objective. ...they often involve competing and contradictory claims about how to pose questions, conduct research and provide explanations” (1994:3).

In accordance with the position of interpretive sociology in Burrell and Morgan’s typology, it is reasonable to pitch this study somewhere toward the spectrums of both the “*society-centric*” and “*culturalist*” perspectives in McQuail’s typology. From a wider social philosophical level to a media-and-society level, the subjective feature of this study has come to the surface, with more research emphasis to be placed on the values, attitudes, and beliefs of cross-strait journalists. Moreover, all of its assumptions have been based on the precondition that they come into existence in a particular cross-strait context. In other word, the particular subject acts in a particular situation within a particular time period.

### (3) Frey, Botan and Kreps’ Typology (2000)

The distinction of “subjective versus objective” or “humanistic versus scientific” addressed by the previous two typologies also has resonance in Frey, Botan and Kreps’ typology (Frey, Botan, and Kreps 2000:18-20). The latter, however, can be characterised by its dichotomous tendency. Frey et al. contend that social science research has only two major paradigms: the positivist and naturalistic paradigms, although they go by many different names.<sup>56</sup> They then go on to advocate the particular term “worldview” as the equivalent to “paradigm” to capture the essence of the two different perspectives of the world. Their more telling argument is that: “[P]erhaps the best way to think about the difference between these paradigms is that while the positivist paradigm stresses the word *science* in the term ‘social science,’ the naturalistic paradigm stresses the word *social*.” Accordingly, they define the positivist paradigm as something preoccupied with applying “some of the methods used in the physical sciences to the study of human behavior”, while the naturalistic paradigm as “the family of philosophies that focus on the socially constructed nature of reality”. Similar to some other scholars, they also espoused the categorisation that the naturalistic paradigm is labeled as “qualitative

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<sup>56</sup> For example, Guba and Lincoln, the co-authors of *Naturalistic Inquiry* (1985), also term the naturalistic paradigm as “the constructivist paradigm” (1990: 22; 73).

paradigm” while the positivist paradigm as “qualitative paradigm”, mainly due to the different research methods they adopt.

Frey, Botan and Kreps’ typology provides an insightful guide for this study, not only because they have pithily clarified the huge differences between two paradigms/worldviews with just two little words “social science”, but also because they have offered a timely transition in this intellectual journey by relating the two paradigms/worldviews to two corresponding methodologies. Consequently, this study will follow (1) at a paradigm-level, the naturalistic paradigm, and thus (2) at a method-level, the qualitative methodology.

Through these three typologies, I have been trying to refine this study by traversing through different key paradigms. Although all of them are “human constructions” (Guba 1990:19), these three typologies have been selected because in my view they are intellectually pertinent to this study. In a chronological order, these typologies constitute a “journey” from the point of departure of Burrell and Morgan’s social philosophy to McQuail’s middle point of media and society, then to the journey’s end of Frey, Botan and Kreps’ dichotomous worldview and methodology. With an open mind, the three-stage travel usefully refreshes the research question and proposition in the manner of crossing disciplinary borders.

After this challenging while exciting intellectual journey, “the big communication pie” is being served on the dinner table and the hour has come for “defining the precise slice” (Frey, Botan, and Kreps 2000:28) and selecting the appropriate approach to enjoy it.

## **A Matter of Communication: Defining Approaches**

Methodologically speaking, defining paradigms is closely associated with defining research approaches. Harrison asserts that “a strong relationship exists between theoretical beliefs and underpinnings that prompt our research and the methods which we find most ‘appropriate’” (2001:8). As a consequence, it is not uncommon to see that there exists a prevailing “research culture” (Frey, Botan, and Kreps 2000:17), or in other word, “‘clubs’ of researchers who share common assumptions about what counts as quality in research” (Somekh and Lewin 2005: xiii-xiv). Thus two camps of research methods — *qualitative* and *quantitative* — emerge as what Kvale calls “an ideological dichotomization” (1996:205). From an Australian perspective, the qualitative research culture may be classified as the “European” approach which means “heavily interpretive and holistic in scope” whereas the quantitative research culture as the “American” approach, being “strongly empirical and micro in its scope” (Sinclair 2002:23-24). Over the years many debates have arisen across the



research community about the respective advantages and disadvantages of the two camps. More recently, along with the paradigm shift from positivism to postpositivism, the dividing line between the quantitative and qualitative at the research method level has become blurred to such an extent that “the qualitative versus quantitative controversy” may be viewed as “a pseudo-issue” (Kvale 1996: xvi). Miles and Huberman even argue that “an increasing number of researchers now see the world with more pragmatic, ecumenical eyes” (1994:5).

In this study, such an ecumenical posture is not crystallised by the combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Rather, it has inspired the integration of some core ideas of research design from other associated disciplines, such as history, sociology, anthropology, education, political science, and management science, although this study has pitched camp in the field of international communication. This point has been best interpreted by Simon and Burstein as that “[o]ne should not let one’s discipline determine the choice of method; rather, one should fit the method to the problem” (1985:37). Given the particular research question at hand, this study tends to align itself with qualitative techniques rather than quantitative ones. Clearly, for such a political and communication conundrum, it is very difficult to create a totally experimental environment like the positivist does, “living in the safe hope that, were our scenario to occur in the real political world, our political actors would behave in exactly the same way” (Harrison 2001:4). Moreover, it would also be unethical to control these environments to any great extent. Therefore, this study underpins the thinking of being *in situ* which informs naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln 1990:69; Lincoln and Guba 1985) and assumes that “phenomena should be studied in their natural setting” (Norris and Walker 2005:132). In light of this, this study is concerned more with interpretation of the phenomenon in the real-life setting rather than with measurement and quantification in the laboratory or other artificially constructed circumstances.

To accommodate a history-based, event-oriented, and I-matrix/individual-centred research question, therefore, this study is to employ a mixed methodological approach, characterised by two major research methods: case studies and intensive interviews. The utility of these two research methods actually signifies two stages (and also two chapters) of the thesis project, in which case studies act as the primary illumination with heuristic value (Chapter V) whereas intensive interviews help to gain deeper and sharper insights into the research question with journalistic value (Chapter VI). Accordingly, the coming section is to elaborate in turn how to operationalise these two research methods in this study.

## 1. Case Studies: An Approach for Illumination

As a previous cross-strait journalist, I was particularly intrigued by some key media events that happened at historical junctures when the journalist played a remarkable role in building up friendlier relations across the Taiwan Strait. This curiosity and obsession gestated the current thesis project. Therefore, I chose to examine these events as the first step of the study. In a methodological sense, what I did at that time (and still do) was case study research, an illuminating while inclusive research tool normally conducted “when a researcher needs to understand or explain a phenomenon” (Wimmer and Dominick 2006:136-137). In this sense, it is not an exaggeration to say that originally I approached this thesis project as a case study researcher.

Serving as “a vehicle for learning”, the case study is “an exemplar” (Kvale 1996:273). Babbie defines it as the “in-depth examination of a single instance of some social phenomenon” (2004:293). In the fourth edition of his best-selling text *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, Yin offers a twofold definition of case study research whose scope is identified as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (2009:18). These definitions highlight two advantages of case studies: an in-depth study and a real-life context. In this respect, case study research shares a common ground with naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln 1990:70-74; Lincoln and Guba 1985; Norris and Walker 2005:133). To a larger extent, it is because of these advantages that the case study method has attained unprecedented popularity in a variety of academic disciplines, ranging from history, political science, and management science, to medicine and clinical psychology, the latter being noted for Sigmund Freud’s engaging and Goethe Prize-winning case stories of his patients (Kvale 1996:273). Meanwhile, a large number of theses and dissertations in the social sciences have been found relying on case studies as well (Yin 2009:167). Apart from case studies’ cross-disciplinary ability, one may be further impressed by its pervasiveness in the applied fields. Increasingly becoming a commonplace, case studies is being used everywhere.

Numerous case studies have been accumulated in the literature of mass media and communication studies and political science. In his classic work of media diplomacy, Yoel Cohen undertakes three case studies (as three chapters), on the TWA hijacking to Beirut in 1985, and the 1982 Falklands and Lebanon wars, to examine different aspects of media diplomacy (Cohen 1986). Sharing the same media focus with Cohen, Dayan and Katz floats the concept of “media event” with which they draw

on empirical case studies of a series of key events, “on the anthropology of ceremony, the sociology of national integration, and the aesthetics of television” (1992: x). Remarkably, in his seminal work on strategic public diplomacy and American foreign policy, Manheim conducts an array of exhaustive case studies over fifteen years of research. In this nine-chapter monograph, he devotes four chapters to case studies of strategic public diplomacy, which are “based principally on elite interviews with lobbyists, political consultants, journalists” (1994:12). It is worth noting that, even within such a case study-oriented project, Manheim is nevertheless aware of the obvious drawback of the case study approach — limited generalisability. Seeking more trustworthy research findings, he has to resort to “a more expressly quantitative examination of one aspect of the same question” as a “remedy” (1994:94). While constructing a theoretical framework for mass communication and diplomacy, Gilboa applies various case studies of significant diplomatic processes to illustrate six conceptual models that serve in defining and analysing the role of the media in contemporary diplomacy (2000). In a global context of *International Communication: Continuity and Change*, Thussu undertakes a wide variety of cases studies, stretching from *Reuters*, *CNN*, and *Al Jazeera* to the Indian Bollywood and the global “war on terrorism” (2006). By contrast, in the pioneer book of *De-Westernizing Media Studies*, leading media critics from around the world powerfully undertake a series of case studies from Asia, Africa, Australia, Europe, North and South Americas to explore relationships between media, power and society (Curran and Park 2000b), among which, interestingly, Ma (2000) conducts his systematic case study of China’s media whereas Lee (2000b) presents his case study of Taiwan’s state, capital, and media. Obviously, the case studies in this treatise has been organised “around national media systems” (Curran and Park 2000a:12). As a specialist of public diplomacy and propaganda with particular focus on mainland China and Taiwan, Rawnsley chooses the “exceptional” case of Taiwan to investigate the relationship between the media and security (Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001:4) and treats Taiwan’s landmark 2000 presidential election as a case study of campaign communication and organisation (2003:103) in the exploration of political communication in Greater China.

Like other research techniques, the case study research is by no means easy and perfect. Its popularity should not obscure the challenge posed by “exemplary case studies” (Yin 2009: xi). Then how to conduct case studies rigorously? For the sake of careful research design and implementation, a set of customised seven-step procedures have been developed to operationalise case studies in this thesis (see Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1 Seven Steps for Operationalising Case Studies**

Steps	Task Descriptions
1	Defining the case: drawing the boundary
2	Conducting case studies with online documentary research
3	Conducting case studies with literature review
4	Employing theory and crossing cases
5	Composing initial case studies narrative and cross-case analysis
6	Upgrading documentary sources and cross-validating with transcripts
7	Revising case studies and producing final report (Chapter V)

#### Step 1: Defining the case: drawing the boundary

What constitutes “a case”? As a case study may investigate individuals, groups, organizations, or events, the boundary for a case in this thesis will be drawn around the significant media event. Furthermore, I would argue that the history over the past two decades has prepared a rich source of events for undertaking case studies on the journalist’s involvement in cross-strait relations. As the historical background research in Chapter II shows, in 1987 Lee Yung-teh and Hsu Lu, the two Taiwanese journalists, conducted their first reporting mission across the Taiwan Strait since 1949. Although it initially occurred as a historical event of media exchange, it has turned out to be the starting point of the journalist’s openly and substantial participation in cross-strait relations. Undoubtedly, the 1987 event can serve as a useful case study of how the journalist stepped into the sphere of media-broker diplomacy. More than this, the richness of the historical source is even more reinforced by a comparative case happened four years later in 1991 when Guo Weifeng and Fan Liqing, as two Chinese journalists, gained access to Taiwan for their reporting mission. This was the very first time that the journalists commissioned by the CCP government set foot on Taiwan since the KMT retreated from mainland China. In reality, when it comes to the question about the role of the journalist in cross-strait relations, quite a few veteran cross-strait journalists would take these two classic examples as the benchmark.<sup>57</sup> Indeed, there have been scores of other media events in which journalists also played a significant role. In terms of political clout and theoretical relevance, however, the 1987 and 1991 cases are two landmark events without parallel in the history. Thus, this thesis will exclusively treat these two classic events as case studies. With two comparative cases associated with each side of the Strait, this thesis is to undertake multiple case studies, or in other term, “comparative case study research”, which is frequently used in political science (Wimmer and Dominick 2006:137).

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<sup>57</sup> The observation is based on intensive interviews of cross-strait journalists.

## Step 2: Conducting case studies with online documentary research

With two classic cases in hand, the case study research actually started at the very early stage of the whole project. As both cases are history-based, the inquiry of their causes and effects in a broad historical context considerably facilitated the relevant historical research and literature review of this study. More importantly, the case studies have demonstrated strong orientations towards documentary research, what McCulloch terms as “largely the preserve of historians” (2004:29). Based in Sydney, Australia, however, it may be not that easy for one to travel large distances frequently for the documentary sources<sup>58</sup> produced some twenty years ago in mainland China and Taiwan. Thanks to the Information Age, the documentary problem<sup>59</sup> was greatly eased by the “virtual documents” (McCulloch 2004:34) on the Internet, “in some respects a gigantic archive” through which “you can retrieve even decade-old print news” (Jamieson and Campbell 2004:6). At the early stage of this project, it seemed that “the resource as a whole is fully searchable” (McCulloch 2004:38). For example, just searched “cross-strait media exchange” (“*Liang’an Xinwen Jiaoliu*”, “两岸新闻交流”) on *Google*, a variety of virtual archives would appear on the computer screen. These archives included newspaper articles, magazine articles, published interviews, some official documents and photos. The relevant newspaper and magazine articles were basically composed by cross-strait journalists years or even decades after the 1987 and 1991 cases, although some of them may not be the witnesses or participants of these events. As the four journalists who took part in the classic events have largely become journalistic celebrities, there have been scores of their published interviews available on line. The official documents, in terms of English-version laws and white papers, mainly derived from the websites of the related government departments in charge of cross-strait affairs on both sides, namely, the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) ([www.gwytb.gov.cn](http://www.gwytb.gov.cn)) on the mainland, and Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) ([www.mac.gov.tw](http://www.mac.gov.tw)) and the Government Information Office (GIO) ([www.gio.gov.tw](http://www.gio.gov.tw)) on Taiwan. Remarkably, Sydney (or other metropolises in democracies that are free of internet access control) turns out to be an ideal location to gain access to Taiwan’s online sources in comparison with mainland China where the public access to Taiwan’s online sources have been either blocked or filtered for ideological and security reasons. This strange information advantage of remoteness over proximity may help to justify the saying that perhaps the best place for China studies is outside China. However, at this stage I did find some sorts of China-based online archives very useful, which were mainly associated with two journalistic seminars held in mainland China respectively in 2006 in remembrance of the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the two-way media exchange across the Taiwan Strait, and in 2007 to

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<sup>58</sup> This thesis addresses the type of documents directly rather than follows the controversial categorisation of “primary sources” and “secondary sources” in documentary research for the reason that, as McCulloch (2004:29) points out correctly, the conventional distinction between the “primary” and the “secondary” source appears to be “increasingly problematic” in the face of rapid social and technological changes which have transformed the nature of documentary research.

<sup>59</sup> Before commencing my PhD research, I collected in mainland China a small amount of personal documents, consisting of some Chinese-language historical monographs and newspaper articles.

commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Taiwan journalists' ice-breaking visit of mainland China. All of these virtual documents, in McCulloch's words, "constitute a source that is potentially of immense significance for documentary research" (2004:38).

### Step 3: Conducting case studies with literature review

Compared with online archives, scholarly works also constitute a source of documents. Having happened some twenty years ago, obviously, these two historical events are not something new to us. Initially, I thought there should have been some elaborations about them in the literature of cross-strait relations in general, and of media and communication in particular. While conducting the literature review, however, it seemed to me that there had been little systematic examination on them, with the classic cases still remaining under-analysed, under-theorised. In some relevant works, taking two examples of Berman's (1992) *Words Like Colored Glass: The Role of the Press in Taiwan's Democratization Process* and Bush's (2005) *Untying the Knot: Making Peace in the Taiwan Strait*, the 1987 and 1991 cases were not even mentioned. Concerning the literature of journalism history in particular, a pertinent monograph such as *Taiwan Journalism History* co-authored by three Chinese scholars (Chen, Chen, and Wu 2002) did not address the 1987 event. By comparison, in *Taiwan's Journalism and Communication History*, a comprehensive historical text produced by Taiwanese scholar Wang Tian-bin, the 1987 event was highlighted under the section of "Mainland News Fever" (2002:303-304). In most circumstances, however, one or both of the two events were cited briefly and sporadically in the literature (cf. Clough 1993:80; Hong 1996:195-196; Long 1991:207-208; Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001:57; Vanden Heuvel and Dennis 1993:49; Yahuda 1995:48). None of these references adopts the perspective of media diplomacy, let alone media-broker diplomacy which was formulated by Gilboa in the late 1990s. Thus, the interface between media/communication and cross-strait relations requires more in-depth and updated research. As "complement of facts was renewed every time a new problem emerged or a new question was asked" (Postan 1971:52), the new research question and theory adopted in this study provide an opportunity to seek new interpretations and fresh insights into these two cases. There is no doubt, however, that this study has benefited considerably from these existing scholarly works, whose useful comments have been integrated into the case study report in Chapter V.

### Step 4: Employing theory and crossing cases

To achieve an ideal understanding of the research question, the case studies are conducted in combination with Gilboa's theoretical model of media-broker diplomacy (1998; 2000; 2005b), treating cross-strait journalists as *media brokers*. To illuminate how media-broker diplomacy arose in cross-strait context, the 1987 case and 1991 case are presented as two interrelated comparable cases

and thus examined comparatively and systematically around four analysing dimensions — *initiation and motivation, awareness, action and consequence* — in the section of cross-case analysis. The employment of theory is of the utmost importance. Not only does the theory provide the theoretical reference to compare the two cases with each other, but also offers the channel to compare the two cases with those media-broker cases in other global contexts. Consequently, some comparable data — similarities and dissimilarities — emerge from the cross-case analysis and facilitate the theorisation of the characteristics of cross-strait media-broker diplomacy, which in turn help to refine and enrich the theory.

#### Step 5: Composing initial case studies narrative and cross-case analysis

Although placed as the 5th step, the compositional phase has been actually gone through the whole process of case studies. Case study analyst Yin even argues that “[t]he smart investigator will begin the case study report even before data collection and analysis have been completed” (2009:165). In the form of a conference paper, the initial case study report (Chapter V) was drafted prior to the chapters of historical background (Chapter II) and literature review (Chapter III). The initial draft, however, was basically “pure” cases through which the media-broker phenomena were described. Beyond the description, there is still an integral demand of “moving from being descriptive to becoming analytical” (Oates 2008:2). Having been strengthened by theoretical framework and cross-case analysis, the scrupulous case studies began to generate a wealth of analytical accounts and theoretical arguments and thus demonstrates its “ultimately heuristic” power to illuminate (Stark and Torrance 2005:33). The format of the case study report will be elaborated at the introduction of Chapter V.

#### Step 6: Upgrading documentary sources and cross-validating with transcripts

The initial case study report is mainly developed on the basis of those virtual documents through remote access, which may not make much sense from the critical eyes of historians. In “a hierarchy of documentary sources” (McCulloch 2004:30), “those sources that are closest in time and place to the events in question” will usually be preferred by historians (Tosh 2002:57). The pursuit of these “state-of-the-art” documents thus has become one of my major tasks during my personal visits of homeland and 2009 field research in mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Together, I collected a variety of valuable Chinese-language documents in the field: (1) Memoirs, being composed primarily by the four cross-strait journalists and their colleagues participating in the events and published immediately thereafter. The memoirs, collected from the Guangzhou Library, also incorporate an array of media reports and commentaries on the events being discussed; (2) Peer articles and commentaries, being drafted by journalistic peers during or rightly after the events, some

of which were provided in person by the cross-strait journalists being interviewed; (3) Scholarly works published in Taiwan in Chinese-language, being authored by Taiwanese media and communication scholars and collected from the National Taiwan University (NTU) Library; (4) A TV program transcript of *The Strait Forum* (海峡论坛) broadcast nationally and cross-strait by SETV<sup>60</sup> on 11 November 2007, in which Fan Liqing, the participating Chinese journalist in 1987 case, was one of the guest speakers. Having being upgraded by these multiple documentary sources of evidence obtained from the field, the case studies were also complemented and supplemented by intensive interviews transcripts. Hsu Lu, one of the 1987 case's witness, was interviewed in Taipei in October 2009. She provided some insightful remarks on the 1987 case. In the interviews, some other cross-strait journalists also rendered constructive comments, though they did not participate in these two events physically. All of these transcripts have been used as cross-validating evidence to improve the authenticity and reliability of case studies.

#### Step 7: Revising case studies and producing final report

Building on the foregoing six steps, the final step of case studies is more straightforward — revision and finalisation. However, as one part of the larger, mixed approach study, the case studies have no quick ending because the research question still needs to be transmitted to intensive interviews for further examination in Chapter VI. Only when intensive interviewing research and the whole project is finalised will the ultimate completion of case studies be achieved.

There is no doubt that different researchers may undertake their case studies in different ways. The seven-step procedure elaborated here is to serve as a “manual” for other researchers to replicate the study so as to test whether the procedure will produce the similar results. Notably, for those sharing similar research interests or also struggling with documentary-based studies, this procedure is supposed to demonstrate some usefulness for methodological reflections during their own intellectual journey.

## 2. Intensive Interviews: An Approach for Communication

Serving as what Simon and Burstein called “the jumping-off point” (1985:37), the case study research in Chapter V sheds important light on the research question, in particular as an approach of

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<sup>60</sup> Based in Fuzhou City, Fujian Province, *Fujian Southeast Satellite TV (SETV)* is one of the leading satellite TV stations in mainland China and has become one of the first regional mainland media outlets which were permitted to deploy reporters in Taipei in 2008 (also see the footnotes in Chapter I, II).



illuminating subtle points of the role of cross-strait journalists. Then, how to observe these journalists more directly? How to handle the historical periods which come after the two cases? The next stage is therefore to gain access to the journalist. Given the accessibility, intensive interviewing, as an approach for communication, appears to be a helpful technique to tackle a research problem at hand.

As a research technique, interviewing may be traced back to Socrates who used dialogue for obtaining philosophical knowledge (Kvale 1996:8). The pervasive interview format in modern journalism, however, was said to be “an American invention” and thus Berman remarks that it “represents a glorification of the individual” (1992:8). In general terms, Kvale produces a pithy definition for this individualised approach: “An interview is literally an *inter view*, an inter change of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest” (1996:2,14). More academically, Harrison defines it as “an encounter between a researcher and a respondent, where the respondent’s answers provide the raw data” (2001:90). Although having shown tremendous potential of acquiring human knowledge and capturing the complexities of the human world, interviewing has lived with singularly sharp criticism for being subjective and unscientific over the years. The value of interview research, however, has been acknowledged by more and more academics to be “as much an art as a science” (Manheim et al. 2008:381).

Nowadays, research interviews have abounded in many related disciplines. While exploring the role of the news media in the 1989 Tiananmen pro-democracy movement, He adopts what he calls “a combination of methods”, among which, relevant to this study, he uses traditional document analysis as a principal method to examine the performance of Chinese press and the *Voice of America* (VOA), coupled with several intensive interviews with Chinese journalists, VOA staffers and other participants in the movement (1996:6-7). To examine the relationship between the PRC government and the Tzu Chi Foundation (慈济功德会), Taiwan’s largest charity which has been providing disaster relief for mainland China since 1991, Laliberté builds on interviews conducted with local government officials, and representatives of various charities in mainland China in 2004-2006 and also with Tzu Chi volunteers and members in Taiwan and in Canada over a period of seven years (2008:79). In his comprehensive exploration of Chinese foreign relations, Robert Sutter travels to China and seven other Asia-Pacific countries and undertakes interviews with 75 diplomatic, economic, intelligence, and military officers, and other government specialists who deal regularly with Chinese foreign policy (2008:12). Regarding some studies with particular focus on journalists, in China’s context, Polumbaum conducts a pioneering interviewing research project of Chinese journalists in the Era of Reform in 1980s, in which she interviews with a variety of newspaper editors and reporters, journalism educators and communication scholars (1990:33-68). In their effort to localise the “normative” professionalism in China’s media reforms around the turn of the new millennium, Pan and Lu conducts intensive interviews with selected journalists in Beijing, Wuhan, Shanghai and Guangzhou (2003:215,232). In other contexts, for example, Statham has interviews with journalists from a range of European countries and of different types for the topic of *Journalists*

as *Commentators on European Politics* (2007). To investigate how those in positions of power use and are influenced by the media in their everyday activities, Aeron Davis conducts over 200 high-profile interviews in the UK with politicians, journalists, public officials, spin doctors, campaigners, and captains of industry to generate first-hand accounts (2007).

As this study concerns itself solely with cross-strait journalists, it deems as appropriate to use intensive interviews (one-on-one conversations) rather than group or survey interviews. Meanwhile, proposed intensive interviews may be also rebranded as *elite interviews*, in which the elite status of the journalists “depends not on their role in society but on their access to information that can help answer a given research question” (Manheim et al. 2008:372-373). While justifying my choice of intensive interviews as the second research method, some other alternative techniques will also be evaluated around the following considerations:

Firstly, there may be some potential sensitivities involved in this study. Within cross-strait relations, everything is politics. This is particularly the case in mainland China, where there exists scant regard for freedom of speech/press whereas, from the orthodox CCP’s perspective, the media have always been used as the party’s mouthpiece (Chapter II). Therefore, it is understandable that a research project concerning both the media (journalist) and cross-strait relations may be ranked as “the sensitive among the sensitive”, not to mention that it is also implicated with some undesirable security and intelligence concerns. With this ethical consideration, a face-to-face communication in intimacy appears to be central to generating the intended data. Compared with other forms of interviewing, intensive interviewing has a proven track record to provide “more accurate responses to sensitive issues” (Wimmer and Dominick 2006:135). Focus groups, as group interviewing, are not suited to elicit the journalist’s “real views” because a group session is fundamentally “a social process through which participants co-produce an account of themselves and their ideas which is specific to that time and place” (Barbour and Schostak 2005:43). Regarding survey interviewing, it appears to be less desirable due to its excessive emphasis on standardised data rather than individualised insights. It may be “particularly useful in understanding the media audience” (Oates 2008:197) rather than cross-strait journalists. Clearly, intensive interviewing has an advantage over the other two ways of interviewing.

Secondly, intensive interviews can be used as an evocative approach to inspire different perceptions and jog individual memories. Due to the remarkable differences between the Chinese R-matrix and the Taiwanese A-matrix, there exist considerable disagreements between the two journalistic circles in terms of how to perceive the journalist’s role in cross-strait relations. This argumentation is also backed by a more general finding derived from Pan, Lo and Chan’s 1996 comparative survey of journalists in mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, which reports that there are “significant differences in journalists’ perceptions of media roles” (Pan, Chan, and Lo 2008:200). Being either participants or witnesses of some key events, the interviewees in this study are “a select few people”

knowing about the events being studied and have “something unique to offer” (Manheim et al. 2008:372; 375). Thus, each interviewee deserves elite and individualised treatment in an interview. Meanwhile, we may note then that what they can uniquely offer is significantly based on their individual memories, which is “the capsule of the past and the major determinant of the future” and “no matter how personal, exists in relationship to ideas, values or feelings” (Teer-Tomaselli 2006:226,241). Compared with content analysis, the asset of intensive/elite interviews is being capable of stimulating and capturing these individual memories through one-on-one communication. In this respect, the word “*inter view*” coined by Kvale (1996) offers a symbolic relevance to this study.

Thirdly, cross-strait journalists are a special group of professionals, normally busy, mobile, intelligent, communicative and diplomatic. As these journalists are physically based in metropolitan cities and often travel across the Taiwan Strait, neither is it an effective way to convene a focus group for them nor does it allow for lengthy field observations, “a technique common to sociology and anthropology, but it is employed relatively rarely in political research” (Harrison 2001:4). Under such a circumstance, a face-to-face interview customised to individual journalists’ intensive working schedule may be the only practical way of communication for the research question.

Although intensive interviewing has many benefits to offer, applying intensive interviewing in this study poses great challenge. In parallel fashion, therefore, the operationalisation of intensive interviewing will also be elaborated in seven steps shown in Table 4.2:

**Table 4.2 Seven Steps for Operationalising Intensive Interviews**

Steps	Task Descriptions
1	Selecting cities: five cities in three regions
2	Identifying journalists: 16 interviewees
3	Contacting interviewees: rapport and trust
4	Posing interviewing questions: top 10 questions
5	Conducting interviews: journalistic interviews and social context
6	Transcribing and analysing interviews: integration
7	Cross-checking transcriptions and producing final report (Chapter VI)

#### Step 1: Selecting Cities

As this thesis focuses upon cross-strait journalists, it is essential that the journalists on both sides are incorporated into the interview. This design allows for cross-strait comparisons. More than that, to control the habitual self-serving tendencies of two sides, it would also be advisable to recruit journalists from a third party — Hong Kong for balancing and benchmarking purposes. As the traditional intermediate location between mainland China and Taiwan, Hong Kong appears to be the

best option because most of those cross-strait relationships had been conducted through Hong Kong prior to the fulfillment of “three links”. Despite its current status as one of the SARs of PRC since 1997, Hong Kong still customarily acts as the third party in cross-strait relations. Given the selection of three regions, some particular cities have been singled out accordingly. In the mainland, three cities were selected with the view to demonstrating both the administrative presentation of national media and regional/provincial media, and the geopolitical presentation of the North and the South.<sup>61</sup> The final list consists of five cities, namely Hong Kong, Taipei, Fuzhou, Guangzhou, and Beijing (in the sequence of actual field research).

### Step 2: Identifying Journalists

In theory, a careful selection of the informants should be implemented to reduce the “real scientific risks” (Manheim et al. 2008:373) of intensive interviewing. In practice, I adopted three principles to guide the recruiting process: (1) Identifying key journalists who participated or witnessed significant historical events based on documentary research. Thus, Susie Chiang, a prestigious Taiwan-originated, Hong Kong-based journalist who visited the mainland secretly in the early 1980s, was selected as the first interviewee. (2) Identifying journalists from media institutions with different political tendencies, notably in Taiwan’s case. Thus, not only the *China Times* and *United Daily News*, as the traditional “Blue” media, but also the *Liberty Times*, as the leading “Green” media, were approached for informants (Chapter II). (3) Identifying journalists from different types of media, including newspaper, news agency, radio, TV and online media.

### Step 3: Contacting Interviewees

Gaining access to people turns out to be the most challenging task in this research project due to the supposed political sensitivity. The correspondence process may be roughly divided into two stages: First, before the interviewer’s departure from Sydney, Australia, the correspondence targeted the journalists in Hong Kong and Taiwan as the interviewer comes from mainland China and thus mainland journalists may be contacted at a later stage. Through emails and telephone calls, four

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<sup>61</sup> According to my cross-strait journalistic experience, there has been an unofficial distinction between the so-called “northern faction” (*Beipai* 北派) and the “southern faction” (*Nanpai* 南派) in the mainland’s community of Taiwan studies and cross-strait journalists. The “northern faction”, characterised by some leading beaters of the war drum, acts pretty much like the “hawk”. Represented mainly by the CCP’s central government and those research and media institutions in Beijing (such as the Academy of Military Sciences, *Xinhua News Agency*), this faction is more inclined to observe cross-strait relations from the perspective of politics and hence prefer hawkish views towards Taiwan. Owing to the geographical proximity, the “southern faction”, however, is preoccupied with more pragmatic economic and cultural cooperation with Taiwan and subsequently perceives cross-strait relations in a moderate manner. In the image of the “dove”, the latter may find its presence in the research and media institutions located in the southeastern coastal provinces/cities of the mainland, such as Fujian, Guangdong, Shanghai, and Jiangsu, etc.

interviewees (two in Hong Kong and two in Taiwan) accepted the interview request based on the establishment of rapport and trust. Second, during the actual field research, the recruitment was taken in consultation with the initial interviewees, who normally had a better understanding as to who should be approached for the proposed interview topic. In these cases, the interviewees appeared to be willing to provide contact details for the relevant person or even make a phone call on behalf of the interviewer. Thus, a majority of the interviewees were actually approached with the assistance of snowballing technique. Additionally, 3 out of the 7 journalists interviewed in mainland China are the interviewer's previous colleagues at different media institutions. Hence, the process of building up rapport and trust was significantly shortened within a limited period of field research, although the interviewer did encounter resistance in some cases. It is worth noting that the communication with the journalists in Hong Kong and Taiwan, both of which the interviewer is not very familiar with, proceeded fairly smoothly. The basic facts of the 16 journalists are shown as below in Table 4.3:

**Table 4.3 Basic Facts of the 16 Interviewees in a Comparative Perspective**

<b>Comparative Dimensions</b>	<b>Mainland China</b>	<b>Taiwan</b>	<b>Hong Kong</b>
Geographical Distribution	Journalists 7 (Fuzhou 3; Guangzhou 1; Beijing 3)	Journalists 7 (Taipei)	Journalists 2
Media-Type Representation	Newspapers 2 News Agency 1 Radio 2 TV 2	Newspapers 5 News Agency 1 (Online Media) TV 1	Newspaper 1 News Agency 1 (Online Media)
Gender	Males 4 Females 3	Males 4 Females 3	Male 1 Female 1
Age	30 up		
Seniority as Journalists	More than 6 years (two of them stopped pursuing their journalistic careers)		
Cross-Strait Journalists	A few at senior level with more than twenty years of experience		
Educational Background	Most of them at middle level with their working period ranging from 6 years to 15 years		
	Undergraduate Degree in Journalism, Chinese, English, Law, History, etc.		
	Postgraduate Degree in Political Science, etc.		

#### Step 4: Posing Interviewing Questions

How to pose interviewing questions plays a significant role in directing the process of interviews and provoking the information in relation to the research question. The interviews were basically semi-structured, in combination with some predetermined and open-ended questions, which allowed both comparability among interviewees and flexibility to access unexpected issues and information. In effect, posing interviewing questions is a matter of craftsmanship and the questions are subject to

change in the interactive and improvising environment. The top 10 Interviewing Questions are listed here for a general reference (see also Chapter VI).

- (1) How many years have you been reporting cross-strait affairs?
- (2) How many times (roughly) have you been to Taiwan/mainland China as a journalist? When did you go there for reporting mission for the first time?
- (3) What major cross-strait events did you report?
- (4) What is your definition/description of cross-strait relations?
- (5) Conducting the reporting mission across the Taiwan Strait has been categorised as cross-strait media exchanges. From your perspective, what are cross-strait media exchanges?
- (6) What are your role perceptions of cross-strait journalists?
- (7) What are the government's perceptions of cross-strait journalists?
- (8) It is widely acknowledged that there has been long-standing propaganda warfare across the Taiwan Strait since 1949. What do you think if the news reporting you have been conducting may be viewed as a sort of propaganda by the other side of the strait?
- (9) Are there any factors affecting your journalistic independence while conducting reporting mission?
- (10) What prospect do you have for the journalist's future participation in cross-strait relations?

#### Step 5: Conducting Interviews

The fieldwork was conducted during seven consecutive weeks in October and November 2009. Compared with the spadework of preparations, conducting actual interviews appeared to be much more appealing as each interview offered fresh insights into the knowledge of the research question. Due to the distinct nature of cross-strait journalists, the interviews in this study were remarkably similar to journalistic interviews conducted routinely by the journalists themselves. In this sense, research interviewers can "learn from good journalism" (Kvale 1996:272).

Typically the interviews occurred at two types of social contexts: the interviewee's office or a public café. Before the interview, the interviewee was asked to read and sign a Consent Form (Chinese Version), which was characterised by explicit statement of the research project, with a concluding section of asking the interviewee if he/she wants or does not want to be an anonymous subject. It is worthy of note that 6 out of the 7 mainland journalists requested anonymity whereas 6 out of the 7 Taiwanese journalists consented to be identified. In Hong Kong case, the issue of confidentiality was

easily resolved as both of the interviewees authorised the interviewer to use their real names and institutional titles. As all of the 16 interviewees speak Mandarin, the interviews were conducted in Mandarin and recorded by a mini digital audio recorder with their consent. For the convenience of the journalists, the interviews were scheduled on both weekday and weekend, with a special one happening at midnight in Taipei to accommodate a journalist's night shift. Each interview was accomplished around one hour, with the longest 66 minutes and the shortest 25 minutes.

#### Step 6: Transcribing and Analysing Interviews

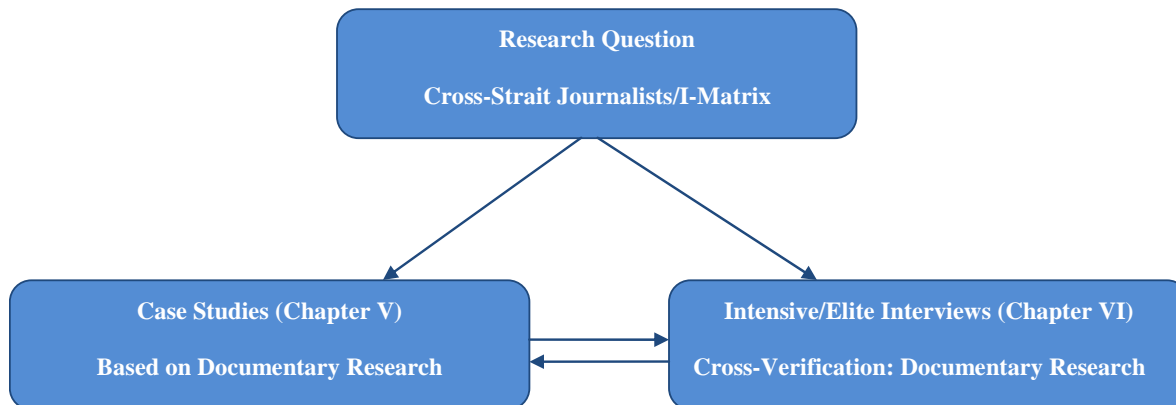
“Qualitative data are sexy” (Miles and Huberman 1994:1) whereas transcribing and analysing them may be knotty. The interview researcher thus may easily get “lost in a jungle of transcriptions” (Kvale 1996:178), be they thousands of words or hundreds of pages. To avoid such a perplexing problem, this study has resorted to the integration of transcribing and analysing data as a remedy. By this, it means that equal emphasis has been placed on both original oral speech and subsequent written texts. In this integrating process, extensive review and intensive analysis are combined together. Hence, working directly on the recorded interview alongside the transcriptions is central to guarantee effective selections and sensible judgments. Thanks to the professional attribute and linguistic competence of the journalist, most of the interviewees could express themselves coherently and logically so as to make the language of the transcriptions more readable. Considering the academic purpose of this thesis, the translation of the original Chinese texts into English adopts a standard written style based on the interviewer's English proficiency. Thus, the transcriptions may be stylistically edited and consequently involve the deletion of repetitions, fillers, etc. from the final report. Meanwhile, to give the reader an idea of sociolinguistic and psychological context in which the conversations occurred, indications of some intonations, obvious pauses, emotional expressions are placed as italics into parentheses.

#### Step 7: Cross-Checking Transcriptions and Producing Final Report

This study endorses the understanding of the role of the interviewer “as a coproducer and a coauthor of the interview” (Kvale 1996:183). Therefore, it is indispensable to check the validity and reliability of the information gathered from those interviews. The cross check involves three different sources. First, the transcriptions may be checked by the interviewer's personal judgment based on his cross-strait journalistic experience. Second, a further check is made to see if the related historical facts correspond to the documents which have been elaborated in the case study method. Third, some particular points mentioned by one interviewee, be they complex or ambiguous, may be cross-checked with other interviewees' transcriptions. In principle, the version provided by a particular interviewee from one side of the strait may be compared with an interviewee from the other side of

the strait for validity. With the assistance of cross check, the interviewing data will be presented in the form of a final report in Chapter VI.

**Figure 4.1 Mixed-Method Research Design**



In the foregoing, I outlined and operationalised the two key research methods used in this thesis. In doing this, I intend to “lay my cards on the table” (Kvale 1996:209) for inspection instead of keeping them in the “black-box”. With the utility of mixed-method research design, this study proposes to reinforce its validity and reliability in a triangulating fashion (see Figure 4.1). Complementing one another, case studies and intensive interviews will be crafted as an interactive methodological recipe whose dynamics may increase the opportunities of reaching valid conclusions. Albeit how intriguing these research techniques may be, they would be nevertheless criticised for their “common” shortcoming<sup>62</sup>— small samples or lack of generalisability. In essence, being “concerned about how authoritative the study will be in drawing broad conclusions” (Oates 2008:200), generalisability on the other hand may be “seriously” doubted by the naturalistic paradigm, which views “relevance rather than rigor as the quality criterion” (Lincoln 1990:68-69). I have no intention to question the scientific legitimacy of generalisability. Rather, this study has been trying to define the related methods as “credible, dependable, and replicable in *qualitative* terms” (Miles and Huberman 1994:2). As this study is primarily history-based, I would like to echo Postan’s comprehensive introduction of *Fact and Relevance in Historical Study*, in recognition of “the special difficulties and peculiar shortcomings of social investigation”, the central approaches employed by this study may be modestly categorised as “the microcosmic method”, being “capable of reflecting worlds larger than themselves” and “relevant to the wider issues of social science”(1971:21;32).

<sup>62</sup> While intensive interviewing is positioned as “a primary instrument of qualitative research” (Manheim et al. 2008: 372), case studies, as Yin asserts, “can embrace both quantitative and qualitative data” (2009: x).



## Summary

Within the whole thesis, this chapter serves as a defining one. Through defining personnel, paradigms and approaches, it is actually defining (and also defending) itself. In this step-by-step defining process, this chapter has been seeking its methodological roots, insights and interrelations with neighbouring fields and disciplines, in order to pinpoint where it is from, where it is positioned and where it is going to be in its investigation. As Robert G. Burgess claims, the driving force behind any investigation, “is not the methods or techniques that the researcher chooses to use but rather the questions that he or she poses in the investigation” (2005:ix). To answer its particular research question, this study will travel from this defining chapter to the next stop — Case Studies.

## Chapter V First off the Post: When Media Brokers Crossed the Taiwan Strait

In theory, historians and journalists are cousins, because they both seek the same thing. The difference is that the journalist is governed by deadlines measured in hours, minutes, and now seconds in “real-time,” whereas the historian has the luxury of a greater length of time to sift, reflect, and cross-check (Taylor 2001:252).

...[I]n contemporary international conflicts reporters function as important participants and not only as observers. This places a heavier responsibility on journalists to report more accurately on what they see and hear (Gilboa 2005a:24).

### Introduction

As a geopolitical boundary, the Taiwan Strait has profound implications for both mainland China and Taiwan. In the term of international communication and international relations, this strait may be portrayed as an *arena*, which “is established whenever interactions affecting power outcomes and effects become stabilized” (Lasswell 1965a:19). Since the CCP came to power and the KMT withdrew from the mainland to Taiwan in 1949, the “tug-of-war” between the two sides has faced each other for six decades. During the first three decades, the cross-strait arena had been largely characterised by military conflict, what Joseph S. Nye calls hard power (2004; 2008). Comparatively, starting from the 1980s, the dominance of hard power has undergone a sea change and soft power has begun to play an expanding role. In this profound and prolonged shift, the mass media has perceived itself to be increasingly involved in a continuum of historical cross-strait events, not only as the disseminator in the traditional sense but more remarkably as the mediators between the two political rivals: the CCP and KMT governments.<sup>63</sup> This extraordinary political phenomenon was initially illustrated by two dramatic media events within which the journalist emerged as the media broker. In

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<sup>63</sup> Also the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) acted as the counterpart of the CCP during 2000-2008.

September 1987, two Taiwanese journalists Lee Yung-teh (李永得) and Hsu Lu (徐璐) from the *Independence Evening Post* (自立晚报), flouted the travel ban to mainland China imposed by the KMT government for a two-week long reporting mission. Lifting a 38-year-old political taboo, this bold act fulfilled the first visit of the mainland that ROC's journalists had ever made since 1949. Interactively, this historic cross-strait visit was relayed by two mainland journalists four years later. In August 1991, Fan Liqing (范丽青) from *Xinhua News Agency* and Guo Weifeng (郭伟锋) from *China News Agency*, two mainland journalists commissioned by the CCP government, for the first time set foot on this thriving island, in order to cover a fisheries dispute between the two sides. When media brokers crossed the Taiwan Strait, the long-frozen ice had finally begun to crack. As a consequence, a new stage of cross-strait relations was unveiled with communication and diplomacy stepping out of the shadow of war.

As foreshadowed in Chapter IV, this chapter is devoted to case studies of these two media events which provide a good opportunity to examine how journalists acted as media brokers between two distinct political entities. Therefore, the significance of this chapter lies in four aspects: First, to serve as the primary illumination with heuristic value for the core research question posed at the outset of the thesis. Second, to delineate the trajectory of media-broker diplomacy in the cross-strait context. Third, to further a systematic academic inquiry of the interface of media/communication and cross-strait relations. Fourth, following the thawing of cross-strait relations since Taiwan's second transfer of power in 2008, revisiting these two historical cases may provide further illumination for the growing rapprochement between the CCP and KMT governments.

The illuminating power of case studies lies in their data display — description and analysis in reports. To this end, this chapter will follow a common multiple-case report format in the light of comparative case studies. Case study analyst Yin suggests that the report should “contain multiple narratives, covering each of the cases singly,” and also incorporate “a chapter or section covering the cross-case analysis and results” (2009:170). Correspondingly, this case study chapter starts with an individual case narrative section in which two media events will be presented separately in a descriptive manner as two interrelated comparable cases. Then drawing on Eytan Gilboa's conceptual model of media-broker diplomacy, the cross-case analysis section is constructed around what Gilboa identifies as the four parameters of *initiation and motivation*, *awareness*, *action* and *consequences* (2000; 2005b). To avoid repetition, some historical evidence may be cited sporadically in the cross-case analysis section rather than in the individual case narrative section. In this sense, the individual cases serve as “the evidentiary base” for the inquiry, whereas the cross-case analysis may be regarded as “the analytic narrative” (Yin 2009:173, 166). In the findings and discussions section, this chapter seeks to summarise four distinct characteristics of *cross-strait media-broker diplomacy* and consequently provide some implications which media-broker diplomacy poses for both the government and the journalist.

## Case Narratives: A Tale of Two Journalists

To some extent, the Taiwan Strait is a legendary channel where striking similarities burgeon in history. These striking similarities have presented themselves not only through the “curious parallels” of sociopolitical transformation on mainland China and Taiwan in 1980s-1990s, but also through the simultaneous rise to power of Deng Xiaoping in the mainland and Chiang Ching-kuo in Taiwan, both of whom used to be contemporary revolutionaries trained by the Soviet Comintern in Moscow (Lin 1991:4-5). When it comes to the role of the journalist in cross-strait relations, perhaps these striking similarities may be best illustrated by the 1987 and 1991 media events, both of which are essentially tales of two journalists making the Taiwan Strait crossing.

### Case I 1987: Two Early Birds Flying from Taiwan

*Although there is only a short distance between Taiwan and mainland China, at this moment we feel that our way to the mainland is as distant and mysterious as that to the moon. However, with great presence of minds, we know that what we are going to do is a tough reporting mission.*

—Lee Yung-teh and Hsu Lu (Lee and Hsu 1987:90)

#### *The First Contact*

15 September 1987 was a memorable day for the journalists on both mainland China and Taiwan. It was in a veritable blaze of publicity that Lee Yung-teh and Hsu Lu, two Taiwanese journalists of the *Independence Evening Post*, arrived, at 1: 10 AM, at Beijing Capital International Airport (Lee and Hsu 1987:210). The arrival of the Taiwanese guests was a political earthquake in cross-strait relations. Chen Zuo'er, the representative of the mainland's *China News Agency*, introduced into his greeting an exclamatory emotional touch — “Welcome! We have been waiting for our guests for 38 years!” (Lee and Hsu 1987:97; Zhang and Wu 1990:277) Although in Lee and Hsu's eyes such a greeting remark gave off an unpleasant odour of the CCP's “united front” (1987:98), it was soon emblazoned by the cross-strait media across front pages. All of the leading newspapers in Beijing, including the CCP's central organ the *People's Daily*, covered this news event, but it seemed that

they would not provide any commentary (Lee and Hsu 1987:210). Meanwhile, this unprecedented event also attracted wide international media attention in Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore (Wang 2002:403; Wu 1987:11). The *Reuters*' news report addresses Lee and Hsu as "the first Taiwanese journalists to openly visit the mainland since 1949" (Lee and Hsu 1987:91). In their memoirs, Lee and Hsu write: "finally, the two sides of the strait have got the first contact" (1987:4). In the transformation era of 1980s, however, no one had ever expected that the long-standing political impasse between the CCP and KMT would be finally broken by two early birds from the *Independence Evening Post*.

#### *The Independence Evening Post*<sup>64</sup>

As the forerunner of Taiwan's independent newspapers, the *Post* was founded by Wu San-lien (吴三连), a native Taiwanese on 10 October 1947, even predating the KMT's withdrawal to Taiwan. According to the 1993 ROC's official yearbook, the *Post* was not only the first evening daily but the first private newspaper published in the Taiwan area (GIO 1993:322). Furthermore, before the lifting of press restrictions in 1988, the *Post* was the only opposition newspaper on the island (Vanden Heuvel and Dennis 1993:49; Wang and Lo 2000:663) and had acquired "a reputation as one of the few newspapers in Taiwan not to blindly follow the KMT line" (Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001:49). As a foreign field researcher in Taiwan in the early 1970s, J. Bruce Jacobs also observed that he had found the *Post* "to be somewhat more 'independent'" than other evening newspapers (1976:783). In its early stages, however, a locally focused *Post* remained insignificant in comparison with the two daily giants *China Times* and *United Daily News*. Drastic changes occurred during the period (1981 to 1987) when Wu Feng-shan (吴丰山), the son of Wu San-lien, acted as the president of the *Post*. Being "a man of pioneering spirit and resolute action" (Zhang and Wu 1990:275), Wu inaugurated a complete makeover at the *Post* through two meaningful measures: placing great emphasis on the *Post's* motto — "No Party, No Faction, Independent Management" ("*Wudang Wupai, Duli Jingying*"),<sup>65</sup> and practising this journalistic doctrine by recruiting from the island's Taiwanese elite, among who were Li Yung-teh and Hsu Lu. Perhaps due to the strong Taiwanese characteristics of its personnel and absence of links to any political party (literally the ruling KMT in the martial law era), the *Post* distinguished itself from Taiwan's mainstream newspapers. Nonetheless, benefiting from Wu family's friendly relations with Chiang Ching-kuo, the *Post* was able to assume a liberal approach in its news coverage with relative freedom from KMT interference (Tien 1989:198). Wu's journalistic innovation coincided with the 1980s democratisation on Taiwan in which the *Post* began to serve the public as a watchdog for the people, earning journalistic credibility as Taiwan's "bastion

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<sup>64</sup> On occasion, the *Independence Evening Post* is also translated as *Independence Evening News* in the literature. See Jacobs (1976: 783).

<sup>65</sup> This motto was formulated by the *Post* in the 1950s (Rawnsley and Rawnsley, 2001: 49).

for free press and speech” (Fengyun Series 1988:192). The *Post*’s increasing popularity on the island inspired Wu, an emerging and ambitious media dignitary in his early forties, to instigate the ice-breaking visit to mainland China.

### *A Bold Initiative*

Although massive political and social changes were occurring on both mainland China and Taiwan, no major breakthrough had been achieved for media exchanges between the two sides until early 1980s (Chapter II). Given the olive branch of the “three links” offered by the CCP, the access for the journalist to cross the Taiwan Strait for a reporting mission was still tightly blocked by the KMT’s “Three Noes” policy. Especially on Taiwan, after more than three decades of the martial law era, relations with mainland China were the great taboo topic for Taiwanese journalists (Vanden Heuvel and Dennis 1993:53). Despite a freer media environment and greater latitude since the lifting of martial law in July 1987, no Taiwanese media institutions appeared to be bold enough to challenge the KMT’s travel ban to the mainland. According to a variety of sources in the early September 1987, however, Wu made his judgement that the KMT government was going to lift the travel ban very soon and the *Post* should make haste to send its journalists to the mainland (Wu 1987:7). His determination got immediate support from his Editor-in-Chief Chen Kuo-hsiang (陈国祥). Consequently, Lee Yung-teh and Hsu Lu were singled out as “the first ROC’s journalists” to conduct a reporting mission on the mainland. Born in 1955, Lee hailed from southern Taiwan with Hakka ethnic origins and studied politics at National Chengchi University (NCCU). He started his journalistic career at the *Post* in 1979 and was promoted to the post of director of political news in the 1980s. As a member of the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation of mainlanders migrants to Taiwan (Hsu 1989:16), Hsu was born in Chilung near Taipei; she was three years younger than Lee. Holding a degree in English from Tamkang University, she joined the *Post* in 1984 as a political and economic journalist. Wu rationalised his selection of Lee and Hsu as “ice-breakers” for the mainland mission, by stressing their capabilities and immediate availability to go to overseas (Wu 1987:8), whereas three Chinese journalists from *China Newsweek* interpreted this personnel arrangement twenty years later as being motivated by the fact that Lee was a politically astute journalist while Hsu possessed a good command of English (Huang, Huang, and Lu 20 November 2007).

### *A Breathtaking News Story*

For the *Post*, this bold journalistic initiative was to be handled in a journalistic manner. The departure date was scheduled for 11 September 1987, a Friday. As planned, Lee and Hsu would fly from Taipei to Tokyo via Japan Airlines (JAL) due to the absence of direct flights across the strait at that time. Before departure, the news was kept as top secret within a small circle made up of Wu, Chen and the

two journalists. In particular, they weighed when would be the best time to publicise this sensational news, knowing that premature release of the news would incur governmental intervention and the subsequent abortion of the plan.<sup>66</sup> On the day of action, Wu took Lee and Hsu to Taipei airport in person in order to make sure everything was fine. At one clock, when the cabin door of the plane which Lee and Hsu had boarded had just closed, Wu used the telephone to instructed Chen, who was standing by at the *Post*'s office, that the journalist had departed. Chen immediately released the news via the evening edition (Wu 1987:9). Late in the afternoon, the *Post* appeared on Taipei's news stalls with three-fifth of its front page headlined by this breathtaking news story. The story highlighted, "They (note: Lee and Hsu) are the first journalists who go to mainland China from ROC's Taiwan province for reporting mission since ROC relocated in Taiwan 38 years ago. This small step they have just made will drive history to move forward with a giant step" (Chen 1987:15; Wang 2002:403). Immediately after the news release, the *Post* became the leading actor on the journalistic stage (Chen 1987:17).

#### *A Vortex of Cross-Strait Relations*

Nevertheless, no journalistic stage is independent of politics. Since the very beginning, the *Post*'s proactive approach unavoidably drew itself into the vortex of cross-strait relations. Beneath the surface of the publicity was concealed an undercurrent of government involvement. In Taipei, the *Post* obviously offended the KMT government. On the same day of the news release, Taiwan's National Immigration Agency, the Ministry of the Interior issued a statement that the *Post* contravened the National Security Law<sup>67</sup> and the two journalists would be charged in court when they returned to Taiwan. Meanwhile, the Government Information Office (GIO), the KMT's regulatory body in mass communication, threatened to punish the *Post* if it would not recall Lee and Hsu who were by then on their way to mainland China via Tokyo. Confronted with immense pressure from the government, Wu stated in an interview with *United Press International (UPI)* that under no circumstances would he recall the first ROC journalists from their reporting mission on the mainland. However, in contrast with the government's public posture were high-level communications through a secret channel. After the two-day weekend, on 14 September, Monday, Wu Feng-shan was notified to attend a meeting with a high-ranking KMT official at a hotel. This meeting proved to be an appropriate occasion for Wu to inform Chiang Ching-kuo indirectly about the *Post*'s reporting mission on the mainland, with the possibility of probing the KMT's reaction. Wu did not identify this official in his 1987 memoirs (Wu 1987:9). In an interview conducted in 2009, Hsu Lu acknowledged that this person was James Soong, the then Vice Secretary-General of the

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<sup>66</sup> Interview with Hsu Lu on 22 October 2009 in Taipei.

<sup>67</sup> The National Security Law replaced martial law in 1987.

KMT's Central Committee and "a close aide to Chiang Ching-kuo".<sup>68</sup> During the meeting, Wu was told that Chiang seemed not to have been shocked and was of the view that the issue should be handled properly, implying that politics should not be touched by the journalists (Huang, Huang, and Lu 20 November 2007; Wu 1987:9).

In Tokyo, upon their arrival on 11 September, Lee and Hsu made a bee-line by subway to the Chinese Embassy. It was 8:50 PM Tokyo time when the two journalists rang the bell of the Embassy's "mysterious door" (Zhang and Wu 1990:276). Facing Lee and Hsu's "foray", the Embassy officer was astonished. Although they knew their Party was promoting its policy of "three links" with Taiwan, they were not sure about the appropriateness of this "journalistic link" (Zhang and Wu 1990:276). Lee and Hsu were told that the Embassy had to report to the leadership in China for approval. After a 32-hour wait in Tokyo, Lee and Hsu were notified by the Chinese Embassy that Beijing "warmly welcomed" them to the mainland. At that time, Lee and Hsu did not perceive that their application had actually obtained direct approval from Deng Xiaoping (Lee and Hsu 1987:92,156) (Chapter II).

On mainland China, *China News Agency* was carefully selected by the CCP government as the host of the two Taiwanese journalists. While Lee and Hsu were en route in the mainland, Chen Zuo'er, the director of the Hong Kong-Taiwan Department of *China News Agency*, shuttled among the mainland cities before them to inform the CCP's local governmental and media institutions about how to tackle this unprecedented visit in accordance with the CCP's Taiwan policy (*China Times* 22 November 2007).

### *A Non-Governmental Media Exchange*

Despite considerable political clout and governmental involvements, ironically, this unusual "landing" of the two Taiwanese journalists appeared to be just a non-governmental media exchange across the strait. Although the CCP government assigned *China News Agency* as the host, this particular media institution was positioned by the CCP as a somewhat "non-governmental" news agency which was purely in charge of providing news service for overseas Chinese and thus different from its state news agency *Xinhua* (Fan and Guo 1992:353; Lee and Hsu 1987:93,156). On the other side, the appearance of Lee and Hsu on the mainland posed a journalistic defiance of the KMT's policy, the KMT apparently had not authorised them to go there. As for the two journalists, although they were granted the reporting access by the CCP government, Lee and Hsu had no intention to follow the CCP's agenda. They insisted that for their reporting mission they would follow their own "three noes" policy — no interference from officials, no interview of officials and no reception by officials (*China*

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<sup>68</sup> Interview with Hsu Lu.



*Times* 22 November 2007; Clough 1993:80; Lee and Hsu 1987:93; *Reference News* 16 September 1987a) — the “officials” in this context, obviously, were meant to be those of the CCP government.

During the 13 days of their ice-breaking visit (15-27 September), Lee and Hsu travelled to five mainland cities including Beijing, Hangzhou, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, and Xiamen. According to Chen Zuo'er's account, Lee and Hsu proposed their own itinerary and interviewees' list; they were in fact permitted to interview such sensitive figures as Fang Lizhi (方励之)<sup>69</sup> and Wang Hsi-chuen (王锡爵)<sup>70</sup> who were on their list (*China Times* 22 November 2007). However, Lee and Hsu's memoirs show that at first their request for interview with Fang was not granted and only after continuous requests were made did *China News Agency* help to arrange the meeting for them (Lee and Hsu 1987:210). Lee and Hsu also observes that their news-gathering in the mainland was closely monitored by the CCP government and thus they portrayed their 13 days in the mainland as being surrounded by an invisible and inescapable “web” (1987:117). While the visit was unofficial in name only, the role played by mainland Chinese officialdom did not hinder the two journalists in their exertion of political influence on the “superstructures” of mainland China and Taiwan.

### *A Quantum Leap*

Journalistically speaking, Lee and Hsu's reports turned out to be influential across the strait. With no direct telecommunication service between the two sides, the two journalists had to fax their co-authored dispatches via Tokyo back to Taipei for publishing on the *Post*. As Hsu recalls, for the very first time in history, the Taiwan's public could read “the real first-hand news stories about the mainland filed by the fellow journalists”, because “before that, all we read about the mainland were utter propaganda”.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, the *Post* offered readers in Taiwan “a radical alternative of news and information from the style of reporting offered by other newspapers” (Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001:57). In the face of a real mainland China, Lee and Hsu made an optimistic observation:

When we saw a real mainland China with our own eyes, we came to realise that, over the past several decades, how rigid our government's anti-communist propaganda has been!... Having ruled the mainland for forty years, the Communist Party once plunged Chinese people into the ordeal of the Cultural Revolution and the Gang of Four. But nowadays, it has regained trust and positive feelings from the people. If its economic reform does not fail, undoubtedly, the CCP will continue to gain more popular support (Hsu 1989:17; Lee and Hsu 1987:3).

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<sup>69</sup> As China's well-known dissident astrophysicist, Fang fled to the American Embassy with his wife after the Tiananmen tragedy in 1989 in order to avoid arrest (Clough 1993:80).

<sup>70</sup> Wang defected to the mainland by skyjacking one of Taiwan's China Airlines (CAL) cargo aircraft to Guangzhou in 1986.

<sup>71</sup> Interview with Hsu Lu.

Despite this optimistic observation, Lee and Hsu severely criticised the mainland for its social backwardness and economic poverty, criticism which subsequently disgraced the CCP government. While their reporting adventure and “mainland fever” were being dramatised, inevitably, both Lee and Hsu earned immense publicity and praise across the strait. The *Post* also received dramatic stories that sold newspapers and boosted its journalistic prestige. As Simon Long, the veteran Asia Editor for *The Economist*, commented, the two journalists “wrote pieces typical of the type of coverage the mainland was to get on Taiwan when its wish to see reporters come was fulfilled” (1991:208). Clough, however, noted that their reports “painted a bleak picture of poverty and political repression” in the PRC (1993:80).

Meanwhile, some of the *Post*’s news reports were also reproduced on the *Reference News* (参考消息), the top circulation newspaper on the mainland published by *Xinhua News Agency*. In its issue of 16 September 1987, for example, the *Reference News* reproduced several news articles originally published on the *Post* on 12 September, one of which re-entitled “*NCCU Professors Said: It Is Not Wrong to Send Journalists to the Mainland*”. In this article, two renowned Taiwanese scholars were quoted:

Professor Hsu Chia-shih (徐佳士) from the Department of Journalism at National Chengchi University (NCCU) states that, the *Post*’s sending its two journalists to the mainland may be perceived as a test for the government to open its mainland policy. ... NCCU’s Professor of Journalism Wang Hung-chun (王洪钧) argues that, there is no doubt that at this stage the *Post* is running ahead of the current policy and regulation by sending its representatives to the mainland for the reporting purpose. ... This act should not be deemed wrong. Moreover, we should even welcome the CCP’s journalist to come to Taiwan for their reporting (*Reference News* 16 September 1987b).

Whether one liked their act or not, the two early birds from the *Post* served as the initial communicators between the two sides. As such, Lee and Hsu were nothing less than the ice-breaker of cross-strait relations. Accomplishing their reporting mission in the mainland, they returned to Taipei via Hong Kong on 27 September 1987, along with enviable journalistic triumph and impending legal penalty. As the *Post*’s circulation was soaring, Wu Feng-shan, Lee and Hsu were indicted for “filing false documents” (Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001:57). However, the KMT government eventually chose to “dismiss” this maverick *Independence Evening Post* in a “soft” manner, symbolised by the Taipei District Court’s pronouncement that Wu, Lee and Hsu were all acquitted on 24 March 1988. Decidedly, such a positive judgement has been viewed as an episode of Taiwan’s democratisation process, in which, as Professor Lin Chong-pin describes, the KMT

government “has moved Taiwan from an authoritarian regime toward budding democracy” (1991:10). Twenty years later, Hsu recalls her 1987 cross-strait visit<sup>72</sup> in this way,

While we were in Tokyo and in mainland China, how could we know those inside stories? We didn’t know it was Deng Xiaoping who made the decision to allow us to enter the mainland. We even didn’t know that it was Chiang Ching-kuo who, at the very beginning of our travel, had made the decision not to “process” us. If he had been displeased, we would have had problem. So actually it was the two top leaders who fulfilled this reporting mission.

## **Case II 1991: The First Step over Four Decades**

*For the very first time, I stepped across the Taiwan Strait.*

*Fan Liqing*

*The first step over four decades is a step of time and space. From political perspective, someone considers it as a big step forward in cross-strait relations. From emotional perspective, someone conceives it as a big step forward in mutual communication between the compatriots of the two sides. From professional perspective, it is regarded as a big step forward in media exchanges across the strait.*

*Guo Weifeng (Fan and Guo 1992:4,292)*

*Four Years Later*

It was at an airport again, but this time the wheel of history turned around Taipei.

At 4:50 PM on 12 August 1991 Taipei Time, Fan Liqing from *Xinhua News Agency* and Guo Weifeng from *China News Agency* arrived at Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport. Although being four years later than their Taiwanese peers, the first mainland journalists’ landing on Taiwan since 1949 received almost crazy publicity. When they had just planted their “communist” feet on the island soil and were passing the airport’s passenger exit, the two mainlanders found themselves suddenly being “devoured” by a roaring crowd of some two hundred Taiwanese journalists (Fan and Guo 1992:164,287), scrambling for on-the-spot media coverage. This body-to-body crowd was compressed so densely that, in a fearful mess, one Taiwanese journalist even had his costly camera

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<sup>72</sup> Interview with Hsu Lu.

broken and his finger bled (Fan and Guo 1992:164,294). Though totally “overwhelmed” by this “unprecedented event and uncontrollable occasion” (Chiang 1997:309; *The Strait Forum* 11 November 2007), Fan and Guo became “celebrities” throughout the island almost overnight because their “landing” in Taiwan promptly dominated the local media. This “first step over four decades” also attracted considerable international news attention. The crazy scene at the airport was portrayed by *United Press International (UPI)* as movie stars encountering their fans (Fan and Guo 1992:350). Other leading international news agencies, such as *Associated Press (AP)*, *Reuters*, and *L'Agence France-Presse (AFP)*, also dispatched their news reports about this historic event. In blunt language, Japan's *Sankei Shimbun* (产经新闻) commented, “This is an unusual way of communication” (Fan and Guo 1992:351).

#### *An Extension of the Ice-breaking Visit*

While Lee and Hsu's 1987 visit was still a living memory, the extraordinary visit of Fan and Guo to Taiwan appeared to be the extension of the cross-strait ice-breaking. In effect, the visit of the mainland journalists to Taiwan had been placed on the agenda as early as while Lee and Hsu were still in the mainland for their reporting mission. On 18 September 1987, Taiwan's Chinese Freedom Party members claimed that two mainland journalists would apply to enter Taiwan as guests of their party (Lee and Hsu 1987:211). On 25 September, Shao Yu-ming (邵玉铭), the then Director-General of GIO, stated that under the current circumstance the government would not admit mainland journalists to Taiwan (Lee and Hsu 1987:212). The KMT government's official rejection reflected both its resentment against the two Taiwanese journalists and its security concerns<sup>73</sup> relating to mainland journalists. After Lee Teng-hui came to power, the KMT government adopted a policy of upgrading “Taiwan's international stature and defense capabilities with a go-slow approach to enhancing relations with the mainland” (Sutter 2008:194). During the four years in the interim, the visits of Taiwanese journalists to the mainland totalled about 2000 (Yu 1997:245) whereas any reverse flow to Taiwan by mainland journalists was blocked by the KMT government. The CCP's Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) frequently complained about this “unequal” access to Taiwan<sup>74</sup> and heavily one-sided flow of media representatives (Clough 1994: 220). Unexpectedly, a fisheries dispute in 1991 paved the way for mainland journalists and turned the spotlight on an unusual episode of communication between the two sides.

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<sup>73</sup> For an in-depth research of critical security in Taiwan, see Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001.

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Yu Yu-lin on 20 October 2009 in Taipei.

### *The “Minshiyu” Incident*

On 21 July 1991, two mainland fishing boats *Minshiyu* (闽狮渔号) from Fujian Province had a dispute with a Taiwan-owned fishing boat *Sanxincai* (三鑫财号) in what Taiwan considered to be its territorial waters within the Taiwan Strait. The fisheries dispute ended up with the involvement of a military warship and helicopter from the ROC Navy. The mainland vessels were forced to anchor in the harbour of Taichung City. 7 out of 18 mainland fishermen who had been on board were charged on suspicion of piracy. Due to the absence of formal political relations and the differences of the legal systems between the two sides, the CCP government proposed to send two officials of the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC), its vice secretary-general Qu Zhe (曲折) and lawyer Zhuang Zhongxi (庄仲希), as the mainland representatives to handle this civil dispute. Remarkably, the mainland also demanded to “embed” Fan Liqing and Guo Weifeng into this delegation as two accompanying journalists, whose task was defined as visiting and interviewing the detained mainland fishermen. To tackle the proposed visit of the mainland representatives, the KMT government authorised the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) to work with the Red Cross societies of the two sides. In the process, however, it became evident that the CCP government intended to take advantage of this fisheries dispute to push the KMT government to resume cross-strait political talks. The CCP’s high-profile political scenario touched the KMT’s sensitive nerves. After the delegation arrived at Hong Kong Kai Tak Airport for their transfer on 12 August, the two Red Cross officials, Qu and Zhuang, found that they could not get visas from the Taiwanese authority to board the plane to Taipei. Dramatically, the entourage Fan and Guo were allowed to “go ahead” first. Then came the “uncontrollable” welcome at the Taoyuan airport. Failing to get to Taiwan in one plane, this four-member team had to be divided into two parts, with the chief representatives, two Red Cross officials, left behind in Hong Kong, staying temporarily at *Xinhua News Agency*’s Hong Kong Branch (Chiang 1997), and the journalists placed in the front line of the mission in Taiwan. Only after eight-day mediation through SEF, on 20 August, could the two officials finally get to Taipei to join with Fan and Guo.

### *Two “Upstaging” Journalists*

Indeed, the dramatic “Minshiyu” Incident offered a historical opportunity to Fan Liqing and Guo Weifeng in both journalistic and individual senses. Even before their departure from the mainland in early August 1991, they had become the news target of Taiwanese and Hong Kong media. According to Hong Kong *Ming Pao*’s (明报) coverage, with Fan and Guo’s photos released to the media, the Taiwanese female journalists commented, “Guo Weifeng is a handsome guy and Fan Liqing has nice

hairstyle” (Fan and Guo 1992:7). Beneath the attractive visages, in Po Yang’s (柏杨)<sup>75</sup> words, both Fan and Guo were the “generals” who had been selected carefully from thousands of common “foot soldiers”, in this case mainland journalists (Fan and Guo 1992:304). Born in southern Fujian Province and having graduated from Xiamen University, the then 36-year-old Fan had been a veteran journalist with a nine-year track record of covering cross-strait relations. While being assigned with this “honourable” task by *Xinhua News Agency*, perhaps Fan could have never expected that this assignment would augur for what may be called her brilliant career prospects within the CCP’s hierarchy. In 2001, she became one of the first mainland correspondents stationed in Taipei. In 2007, she was appointed by the CCP government as the first spokeswoman of the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO). Two years younger than Fan, Guo came from Guangdong Province and appeared to be more intellectual. Being trained at Wuhan University, he developed his journalistic career in *China News Agency* as a knowledgeable expert-model journalist (*China’s Sons and Daughters [Zhonghua Ernü] [Overseas Edition]* March 1996). In his case, it should also be a surprise that fourteen years later in 2005 he was able to launch an online medium *China Review News Agency* in Hong Kong in partnership with its Taipei branch headed by Yu Yu-lin (俞雨霖), the former Vice Editor-in-Chief of *China Times*, who was the coordinator of Fan and Guo’s reporting mission in Taiwan.

### *A News War*

To some extent, the arrival of the two mainland journalists may be conceived as the sign of peace across the strait. Ironically, this sign of peace engendered a “news war” throughout the dynamic island. Due to lack of direct communication over four decades, journalists on both sides knew little about each other. Almost all of the Taiwanese media showed great interest in the mainlanders’ visit. The then newspaper giant *China Times* won out in the competition by obtaining Fan and Guo’s endorsement to act as their exclusive “host” in Taiwan. In a historical sense, *China Times* could repay its loss in 1987 to the *Independence Evening Post* as the forerunner of cross-strait media exchange. At a pragmatic level, *China Times* could also earn some “bonus” for its newspaper sales in the fierce press market in 1990s. Being the “host” for Fan and Guo means *China Times* had the “privilege” of coordinating reporting affairs and helping them to approach interviewees and institutions in Taiwan. With this assistance, Fan and Guo interviewed the mainland fishermen and the fishing communities in Chilung, Hsinchu and Taichung. They also interviewed C.V. Chen (陈长文), the Secretary-General of the SEF, and Yu Chi-chung (余纪忠), the boss of *China Times*, who sat on the KMT’s Central Standing Committee (Clough 1993:85; Fan and Guo 1992:288-291). After the

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<sup>75</sup> Taiwan’s renowned writer and critic.

two Red Cross officials arrived in Taiwan, the four members could eventually operate as a team to handle the fisheries dispute with the SEF.

Facing *China Times*' monopoly of the "spoil" of the news war, other Taiwanese media adopted 24-hour approach to chase Fan and Guo. "Everywhere they went, they were followed by swarms of Taiwan and Hong Kong reporters" (Clough 1993:85). Fan and Guo were actually acting as "the mobile ads" for *China Times* (Fan and Guo 1992:292). Meanwhile, they were also "news paste" squeezed constantly to feed the newshounds. Interviewing others while being interviewed, they were almost "saturated in the sea of questions", at least a thousand questions raised by their Taiwanese peers (1992:293,298). Having made highly visible public appearances, Fan and Guo achieved sensational effect even though their reporting mission was confined to a fishing dispute. According to their record, Fan and Guo jointly filed fifty feature stories in total back to their news agencies, which were "widely adopted" by the media in both mainland China and overseas (Fan and Guo 1992:303).

### *Ambivalent Feelings*

The Taiwanese public seemed to have ambivalent feelings towards the mainlanders. During their stay in Taiwan, the mainlanders received both "warm" and "cold" responses (Chiang 1997:311). They could feel the friendliness and hospitality extended by the Taiwanese compatriots. Being perceived as the representation of the CCP government, however, they also encountered the attack of eggs and tomatoes and some people shouting to them with "Long Live the Republic of China!" (Chiang 1997:311). Concerning the real motive of their mission, a variety of negative sentiments spread over the island, ranging from terror, hostility to suspicion. Some suspected that the four mainlanders were actually spies commissioned by the CCP. While they were visiting the mainland fishermen held at the detention centre in Taichung, some independence demonstrators staged their protests with signs reading "Oust communist bandits, defend Taiwan" (*Quzhu Gongfei, Baowei Taiwan*) (Zhuang 21 August 2006).

With the completion of their mission, the four-member team left Taiwan for Hong Kong on 23 August 1991. On the following day, the two mainland fishing boats and 11 fishermen were sent back to Xiamen by SEF. On 27 January 1992, the remaining 7 fishermen being charged were acquitted by the Taichung District Court. Having been detained for half a year in Taiwan, they could finally return to their home via Hong Kong and thus resolved the "Minshiyu" Incident through "unofficial" negotiations. Though it may be one of the common cases in cross-strait fisheries frictions, "Minshiyu" Incident paved the way for the CCP's representatives to visit Taiwan, characterised by the two journalists' unusual participation. Therefore, this precedent-making visit was ranked as one of China's 1991 Top Ten News by the editors-in-chief from 11 mainland newspapers (Fan and Guo 1992:305).

## Cross-Case Analysis: Media-Broker Diplomacy in Cross-Strait Relations

The two ice-breaking visits have been widely applauded by media practitioners and academics on both sides as the landmark cases in cross-strait media exchanges.<sup>76</sup> Regarding this study, the two cases are also heuristic for the examination of media-broker diplomacy in cross-strait relations. Despite its conceptual development in the western academic literature discussed in Chapter III, the concept of media-broker diplomacy has not been applied to cross-strait relations. On the basis of two case narratives, the following conceptual analysis section is to conduct cross-case analysis around four parameters proposed by Gilboa: *initiation and motivation, awareness, action and consequences* (2000:301). To gain an insight into media-broker diplomacy in the cross-strait context, accordingly, four questions will be addressed: Who initiated the first journalistic visit, the media themselves or either of the two governments? What were their motivations? Were the media and their journalists aware that they were actually the media brokers between mainland China and Taiwan? What action did they take in terms of mediation between the two sides? What consequences did they have on cross-strait relations?

### 1. Initiation and Motivation

Perhaps the most remarkable attribute of media-broker diplomacy is that journalists themselves initiate and/or conduct the critical diplomatic move. Gilboa exemplifies this point with the case of “Cronkite Diplomacy” through which Walter Cronkite, a well-known US television journalist and anchor, helped to arrange the ice-breaking peace talks between Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in his two significant interviews in 1977 (2000:299; 2005b:4).

Ten years after Cronkite’s case, Lee Yung-teh and Hsu Lu, two Taiwanese journalists acted as media brokers in 1987 by initiating a journalistic visit to the mainland to break the political impasse. Much the same as Cronkite, they initiated the critical move by themselves rather than follow the policymakers of either the mainland or Taiwan. On the mainland’s part, although the CCP government was seeking a breakthrough in establishing the “three links” which the CCP had been trumpeting towards the KMT government for nearly a decade, it would be adventurous of the CCP to resort to mediation through the *Post*, a private Taiwanese newspaper possibly linked to Taiwanese nationalism. As for Taiwan, the lifting of martial law in 1987 contributed to a shift in media culture,

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<sup>76</sup> Interview with journalists on both sides of the strait in October 2009.



providing a political climate for Wu Feng-shan to launch his scoop-generating gambit. The real motivation for the *Post* may be a more journalistic one rather than a political one. In his memoirs, Wu provided his reflection on this dilemma:

As a newsman, at this moment I could not help thinking of my journalistic mission. As a businessman, I certainly considered business competition. As an honest citizen, I also weighed them all against the related laws. Then, I made the decision to post the journalist to the mainland (Wu 1987:7-8).

As Patterson observes, “[T]he first fact of journalistic life is that reporters must have a story to tell. They are in the business of gathering and disseminating the daily news, and they define themselves more by their professionalism than by their partisanship” (1998:17). This statement, though primarily about journalism in a democratic society, matches with the *Post*’s case. Inspired by media liberalisation on Taiwan, the *Post* decided to take this initiative in order that the expected sensational effect would help to boost its prestige and newspaper sales. Actually, many Taiwanese media were considering visiting the mainland at that critical time. The *Post* was literally and figuratively “first off the post”.<sup>77</sup> It was timing that made the great difference — The *Post* grabbed the historical opportunity to mediate across the Taiwan Strait.

Due to the particular media environment of mainland China, Fan and Guo were essentially commissioned by the CCP. While the CCP government was attempting to improve cross-strait relations with Lee Teng-hui’s administration, the participation of the journalist in resolving a tough problem like the “Minshiyu” Incident was supposed to be a good way of circumventing the “Three Noes” policy which the KMT inherited from Chiang Ching-kuo’s era. Accompanying Fan and Guo in their reporting mission in Taiwan, the then Vice Editor-in-Chief of *China Times* Yu Yu-lin remarked,<sup>78</sup>

The “Minshiyu” Incident was a conflict between the two sides. As no mainland officials were able to come to Taiwan, this conflict needed to be settled through media and communication. Anyway, both sides favoured a relaxed situation across the strait. The Taiwan Affairs Office (of the mainland) pulled strings behind the scenes. After the mainland journalists came to Taiwan, they made their news coverage and also learned the truth about the incident. This amounted to a sort of communication, which helped to improve mutual understanding and narrow the differences.

Nevertheless, Guo argued that their reporting mission was assigned by their chief editors (Fan and Guo 1992:303). It becomes evident that those chief editors actually acted as the CCP’s journalistic gatekeepers, “who were primarily Party functionaries rather than journalists” (Polumbaum 1990:52).

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<sup>77</sup> “First off the blocks” and “first past the post” are combined in this rendition.

<sup>78</sup> Interview with Yu Yu-lin on 20 October 2009 in Taipei.

Given the CCP's tight media control, it would have been impossible for them to take the initiative in sending their staff journalists to Taiwan without the official authorisation. Regarding the parameter of initiation and motivation, therefore, the *Post* not only initiated but conducted the critical diplomatic move whereas the two mainland journalists from the state-owned news agencies embarked on a journalistic journey with the CCP's endorsement.

## 2. Awareness

"We created the history" (Chen 1987:15; Huang, Huang, and Lu 20 November 2007), Chen Kuo-hsiang the then Editor-in-Chief of the *Post* commented in a grandiloquent tone while reviewing their historic move in 1987. Indeed, the glory of making history always belongs to the journalist who gets the scoop or breaks new ground. The journalists of the *Post* were keenly aware that they were treading on political quicksand and that the visit would have enormous political significance. More specifically, this totally Taiwanese initiative may be labelled as pro-communist (the united front) by both sides of the strait. There was always the possibility of being penalized by the government in Taipei. The interesting thing may be that, despite their awareness of the potential impact, they did not wish to mediate on the matter between Taipei and Beijing. Wu deliberately developed the *Post*'s version of 'three noes' as the guidelines for the two journalists, explicitly rejecting any contacts with the CCP officials. Perhaps the most telling effect of these self-imposed constraints was that Lee and Hsu even refused to interview Deng Xiaoping, the then paramount leader of the CCP (*China Times* 22 November 2007). However, Clough maintains that people-to-people interactions between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait "have had the effect of easing tension or improving understanding, whether or not the individuals concerned intended that result" (Clough 1993:2). Gilboa also argues, "[L]ack of motivation or special plan to engage in diplomacy, however, does not mean that, the reporter was not performing a diplomatic role" (2000:299). Likewise, the role of media brokers played by the Taiwanese journalists became manifest despite their indifference of mediating between the two sides.

The role of Fan and Guo is much more distinct. They should have been fully aware of the Party's purposes — to assist the two Red Cross officials in dealing with the fisheries dispute, to conduct de facto contacts with the KMT government via its quasi-official agent SEF and the pro-KMT newspaper *China Times*, and to stage the CCP's first on-the-spot public relations (PR) campaign on Taiwan. With so many important tasks on shoulders, it is reasonable that the two journalists should have been given a pre-travel education.<sup>79</sup> In a sharp contrast to their Taiwanese counterparts, the mainland journalists appeared to be more "cooperative" and obedient, not only in their awareness to

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<sup>79</sup> In the mainland, before a cross-strait reporting mission or media exchange is conducted, the relevant media representatives are normally required to receive briefings from government officials, focusing on the basic facts of Taiwan and more importantly how to follow the policies set by the party in dealing with cross-strait relations.

be the publicists and go-betweens across the strait to the end of unification, but also in their willingness to promote the CCP's image in Taiwan. This sense of journalistic mission can be testified by Guo's statement in his memoirs, "[W]e are two common journalists. We have deep passion for our country and nation. It is through this passion and this conviction that we set foot on the island of Taiwan. We also observe Taiwan from such a perspective" (Fan and Guo 1992:292-293).

### 3. Action

Evidently the major action that the *Post's* journalists took in 1987 was "jumping the gun" — initiating the journalistic visit to the mainland, whose implications could have been interpreted in two quite different ways — one perceived by the KMT government as a double-edged sword with one edge being the defiance of its travel ban and the other freedom of speech benefited from the KMT-dominated democratisation on Taiwan. In the CCP interpretation, there was "an irresistible tide of pressure of compatriots seeking unity with the mainland" (Yahuda 1995:48). Moreover, the CCP's leadership even reached an agreement that Lee and Hsu's "foray" was a "political balloon" sent up by the KMT government (Lee and Hsu 1987:156). Such a perception of this unusual visit bears directly on the role of media brokers. *China Newsweek*, a news magazine published by *China News Agency*, provided a somewhat boastful account 20 years later.

Confronted with these two unexpected Taiwanese journalists who demanded to cover news on the mainland, the then policymakers of the CCP adopted a confident attitude and welcomed them with outstretched arms. They rendered them sufficient assistance out of concern that it would facilitate the exchange across the Taiwan Strait and enhance the understanding between the two sides. The policymakers gave out definite directives: "Let the Taiwanese journalists make their coverage without interference. Whoever and wherever they want to interview, all their demands should be satisfied as much as possible." (Huang, Huang, and Lu 20 November 2007)

Obviously, the unexpected action of the Taiwanese journalists was handled by the CCP as some sort of mediation. Four years later, the CCP government followed suit by commissioning its own journalists to conduct cross-strait mediation. As two sophisticated journalists trained by the CCP, Fan and Guo appeared to be prudent in speech and knowing their stuff in handling a barrage of critical questions raised by their Taiwanese peers. Through the Taiwanese media, they managed to increase the favourability level of mainland journalists, who had suffered from the very negative image derived from "some intentional distortions", and enable the Taiwanese to learn that "the mainland journalists are also journalists" (Fan and Guo 1992:293). In this way, they did help to stage on-the-spot PR campaign for the CCP which had sought to promote unification between the mainland and Taiwan. Such a PR effect was captured by Yang So (杨索), a female journalist of *China Times*:

Always keeping alert, Fan was sophisticated in answering those sensitive questions concerned with politics. .... Humorous and open-minded, Guo Weifeng gave us an impression that “the mainlanders are very amiable”. With a favourable image in Taiwan’s journalistic circle, Guo has achieved a lot of PR. Actually, in a veteran Hong Kong journalist’s words, “the united front is PR” (Yang 24 August 1991).

#### 4. Consequences

Regarding the consequences of 1987 and 1991 cases, Susie Chiang, a prestigious journalist who witnessed the two events while she acted as the *China Times*’ correspondent in Hong Kong in 1980s-1990s, makes such remarks: “These first reciprocal visits were largely a journalistic formality and publicity. They agitated for a trend of crossing the strait and familiarised the two sides with the fact that breakthroughs had been made and taboos had been broken. As a consequence, the two sides needed to consider how to face the development of cross-strait relations.”<sup>80</sup> Categorising the journalistic visit into broad track-two diplomacy, Clough addresses its “beneficial effect on the political climate” on the two sides in which “[H]ostility and suspicion have been much diminished, and both governments have taken steps to encourage the steady broadening and deepening of people-to-people interaction”(1993:2-3;80).

Although no genuine negotiations were achieved between the two governments, the two journalists’ visits produced drastic impact on cross-strait relations. In the first case, by raising a significant question of how to respond to the public opinion for cross-strait civil exchanges, the Taiwanese journalists expedited the two governments’ interaction with each other indirectly. The *Post*’s “technically illegal reporting”(Clough 1993:80) went unpunished, perhaps due partly to their own alienation from political issues, and more importantly to the fact that in the process of rapid democratisation the KMT government considered the likely cost of such repression too high. Unexpectedly, the two journalists “painted conditions on the mainland in such drab colours [and this] emboldened the authorities to break the taboo on allowing visits to the mainland” (Yahuda 1995:48). Long even argues that their reports “helped encourage the KMT that, far from needing to worry about the pernicious ideological influences to which visitors to the mainland would be exposed, there were actually significant propaganda benefits to Taipei to be derived from letting people see ‘socialism with Chinese characteristics’ in action”(1991:208). Under “increasing pressure from the people of Taiwan” to relax the travel ban to mainland China, Chiang Ching-kuo authorised private travel through a third territory to the mainland on 15 October 1987 (Clough 1999:33), exactly one month after Lee and Hsu’s “landing” in Beijing. In response to the KMT’s policy shift, the mainland’s All-China Journalists Association officially extended its welcome to Taiwanese

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<sup>80</sup> Interview with Susie Chiang on 13 October 2009 in Hong Kong.

journalists to go to the mainland for news reporting. In a parallel move, the first administrative regulation<sup>81</sup> on cross-strait media exchanges was also promulgated by the CCP government. In the following years, Taiwanese journalists could rub shoulders in crossing the strait, reaching its climaxes when many of them witnessed the Tiananmen protests in 1989 (Chapter VI), and Huang Chao-sung (黄肇松), the then *China Times*' Editor-in-Chief, interviewed Chinese President Yang Shangkun, then the leader of the CLGTA, in 1990 in Beijing (Clough 1993:82) (Chapter II).

In the second case, the mainland journalist's visit of Taiwan has been hailed as a symbolic breakthrough in cross-strait relations, at least from the CCP's perspective. Having eluded the KMT's "Three Noes" policy, the four mainlanders (including two journalists), all of whom may be identified as the CCP government's representatives, finally set foot on the ROC's soil and had "contact" with the KMT through its "white gloves" of SEF. In August 1991, *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* (日本经济新闻) prophesied that this visit would "make great contribution to the reduced tensions across the Taiwan Strait" (Fan and Guo 1992:352). This situation is summarised by Sutter as "confidence-building contacts by unofficial organisations" when Lee Teng-hui's initial mainland policy "pointed vaguely toward closer, more official relations in the future" (2008:194). Indeed, the 1991 case was followed by a short period of stability in the history of cross-strait relations until Lee's fateful U.S. Cornell visit in 1995 (Clough 1999:1-7;31) (Chapter II). Parallel to the government interactions, at the media level, the landing of the mainland journalists also signified the emergence of two-way media exchanges across the strait. Being well-spoken journalists, Fan and Guo sowed the seeds for the favourable image of the mainland journalist. Even the SEF also commented in its report that their visit were instrumental in "removing the misunderstanding" and hence unfolding "a new page of cross-strait media exchanges" (Fan and Guo 1992:305). Perhaps based on this particular assessment, the SEF went even further by inviting 18 media representatives representing 17 mainland news organisations to Taiwan from 05 to 18 September 1992, dubbed "The First Mainland Journalistic Delegation to Taiwan". In August 1993, Fan and Guo paid their second joint visit to Taiwan together with Zhou Jianmin (周建闽), a veteran journalist from *China News Agency*. Different from their case in 1991 when they were preoccupied with civil dispute, the 1993 mission was typically a political one — to cover the KMT's 14<sup>th</sup> Party Congress in Taipei. For the first time, the mainland journalists could file their news reports on the spot about a major political event of the ROC's ruling party.

Parallel to the flourishing media exchange is the development of broader civil exchanges across the strait. While Lee and Hsu were still travelling in the mainland in 1987, the "mainland fever" began to spread like wildfire on Taiwan. After the revocation of the travel ban, "[J]ournalists, athletes, scholars, scientists, actors, singers, politicians, and tourists from Taiwan visited the mainland in large and increasing numbers" (Clough 1993:1). According to Long's account, the number of the

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<sup>81</sup> The CCP's administrative regulation (notably those appeared in the following years) was viewed as "the imposition of stricter conditions on reporting by Taiwanese journalists" (Clough 1993: 81; also Wang 2002: 404; Yu 1997: 242-243).

Taiwanese visitors reached 330,000 in total in 1988 (1991:218). Since then, civil exchanges have shown a drastic growth. The statistics from GIO shows that over 18 years the number of visits made by Taiwan inhabitants to the mainland skyrocketed to 4.1 million in 2005 (GIO 07 January 2008). The statistics from the mainland indicates that, up to the end of 2004, more than 10,000 visits had been made by Taiwanese journalists to the mainland whereas mainland journalists paid more than 500 visits to Taiwan (*The People's Daily* 21 September 2005).

## Findings and Discussions: Beyond the Boundary

### 1. Findings: Cross-Strait Media-Broker Diplomacy

The foregoing case narratives and cross-case analysis have presented striking similarities regarding the role of media broker played by the journalist on two sides. Given the political climate in 1980s-1990s, when the journalist crossed the Taiwan Strait, media-broker diplomacy emerged as a political and communication phenomenon. How to observe and evaluate this phenomenon? Being a concept floated in the context of international conflicts (Gilboa 2000; 2005b), media-broker diplomacy demonstrates its distinct characteristics while applied to cross-strait relations. As public diplomacy is “all about *context* and *relationship*” (Kiehl 2009:213), media-broker diplomacy in this study may be rebranded as a localised<sup>82</sup>construct — cross-strait media-broker diplomacy to address both the local milieu and global thinking. Four characteristics best describe this construct:

#### (1) Agenda Setting

Thanks to their profession as journalists, media brokers were endowed with the “attention-getting power” through the media. Placing the selected cross-strait issues on the agenda, they could act as the voices of the public, or “impact public opinion” with their “control of the topics of discussion” (Pratkanis 2009:130-131). Thus they produced their influence on the governments of both sides. In this respect, the role of Taiwanese journalists was more obvious.

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<sup>82</sup> In the comprehensive *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, Dr. William P. Kiehl, a US veteran diplomat, proposes the concept of “*localized public diplomacy*”, which advocates “field-driven” public diplomacy as a way of eluding the Washington-centred approach in the execution of U.S. public diplomacy (2009: 212-224).

## (2) *Starring*

Media brokers marked their début on the stage of cross strait relations with gripping stories. “Journalism is by nature an activity that promotes individualism through its emphasis on personalities, scoops, bylines and so on” (Berman 1992:8). Totally different from secret or closed-door diplomacy, media brokers actually conducted mediation under the spotlight. In this sense, we hear an historical echo of diplomacy “in the public view” advocated by Woodrow Wilson early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Chapter III). The sensational news stories, which media brokers produced in an expressive manner, and their performance before the camera, enabled them to become celebrities overnight and subsequently enjoy a high degree of publicity. It may be argued that they dramatised, popularised, sensationalised and revolutionised traditional diplomacy.

## (3) *Ice Breaking*

Cross-strait media-broker diplomacy possesses the dual function of destruction<sup>83</sup> and construction. On one hand, media brokers may be viewed as bold pathbreakers, for they distinguished themselves by their “destructive” capability of breaking the “ice” of status quo<sup>84</sup> — the prolonged political impasse. On the other hand, they impressed the public with their power to construct cross-strait relations by “moving” the government towards an interactive and constructive way. Notably this sort of power was highlighted at the outset of cross-strait détente when there were no other communication channels available. While the governments on the two sides refuse to acknowledge or speak to each other, cross-strait relations have proven to be a game of “indirectness”. No official contact and negotiation between the two sides does not mean that they have not engaged in any contact and negotiation at all. Destroying while constructing, media brokers happened to meet the need of indirectness.

## (4) *Timing*

Cross-strait media-broker diplomacy is a matter of timing. It was timing that made the great difference. Historically, cross-strait media-broker diplomacy emerged at those historical junctures when the two sides were transforming. Journalistically, it was handled by the media in a timely manner so as to win the race for scoops. Politically and symbolically, it symbolises the seasonal transition in political climate. Hence, it is not surprising that those metaphors used to capture the role

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<sup>83</sup> Linguistically, the term *destruction* means “destroying” or “ruin”. In this context, *destruction* (also *destructive* and *destroying* herein) focuses on change and refers to the ice-breaking function of media-broker diplomacy, i.e., breaking the political impasse of no open contacts between the two sides since 1949.

<sup>84</sup> It appears that in both of two cases the status quo was broken by media brokers in favour of the CCP because the CCP had been seeking to break the KMT’s “Three Noes” policy (no contact, no negotiations, no compromise) when the 1987 and 1991 cases happened.

of the cross-strait journalist have always been associated with the indicator of political climate change from “cold winter” to “warm spring”. Some people portray Hsu Lu as “the first swallow in spring” (Zhang 1989:2) while Huang Chao-sung, *China Times*’ former Editor-in-Chief, proposes to employ a verse from Su Shi (苏轼)<sup>85</sup> about another early bird — “The duck in the river is the first one to know the springtime is coming” (*Chunjiang Shuinan Ya Xianzhi* 春江水暖鸭先知) — to refer to their prophetic role of bringing springtime information relating to the future of the two sides across the strait (Huang 19 September 2005).

As its name indicates, cross-strait media-broker diplomacy consists of four integral elements: media, journalist, diplomacy and cross-strait relations. These four elements may be matched correspondingly with the above-mentioned four characteristics. Sharing a common ground with media-broker diplomacy happened in other global contexts, the driving force of cross-strait media-broker diplomacy derived from the *intrinsic* function of mass media as a disseminator and the *extrinsic* demand for mass media as a mediator. However, while crossing the Taiwan Strait, media brokers crossed not only the political boundary but also the journalistic boundary. Regarding this, cross-strait media-broker diplomacy may be perceived as an interactive process which poses profound implications for both the government and the journalist (Chapter VI, VII).

## 2. Discussions

Three consequent implications have been identified as below:

Firstly, a symbiotic relationship exists between cross-strait relations and media exchanges. The matter of cross-strait relations is the matter of politics. Politics has always been the decisive factor in all of the cross-strait activities. In practice, the reciprocal journalistic missions have been categorised as media exchanges between the two sides. Nevertheless, cross-strait media exchanges have never been a “pure” journalistic business. Due to the historical tendencies and their respective media systems, both the CCP and KMT governments employed the media in a large scale in handling their complicated relations. Despite the long-standing impasse, media exchanges have always been the most dynamic aspect of cross-strait relations, either in the form of *war of words* or *personnel exchanges*. Therefore, the media exchange was reflected not only by the cross-strait propaganda warfare in the 1950s-1970s (Chapter II), but by media-broker diplomacy in 1980s-1990s. Setting foot on the other side of the strait, the media brokers found themselves simultaneously fallen into a dual-framework within which they had to cope with various government involvements, characterised by

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<sup>85</sup> A famous poet in China’s Song Dynasty.



the censorship from both sides. The CCP government, in the way of direct involvement, adopted a much more supportive attitude towards the media brokers. This politically supportive attitude, however, was welded into its journalistic regulation through CCP's top-down media system and the presumably rigid censorship. Whereas the KMT government, in an indirect way, created a freer media environment, granted the *Post* some sort of tacit approval and assumed a liberalised approach afterwards by lifting the travel ban, and also allowed the mainland journalists to visit Taiwan. Though indirect the KMT may be, the censorship was still obvious. The GIO's threat of penalty in 1987 typically served as the evidence of "the continued intimidation of journalists by government agencies" in Taiwan's democratisation (Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001:12). This "sword of Damocles" decidedly influenced the *Post* and its journalists' coverage. Four years later, when Fan and Guo arrived in Taiwan, GIO's officials expressed their concern that they hoped Fan and Guo could make their news reporting honestly and professionally (Fan and Guo 1992:293-294). As Street asserts, "censorship can take a variety of forms, and it does not necessarily require direct intervention" (2001:105). Apart from the pervasiveness of censorship, interestingly, both of the two governments intended to score propaganda points for their own legitimacy through media-broker diplomacy. The CCP government perceived the media brokers' visits as a PR (united front) campaign to publicise its reunification formula while Taiwan intended to win the mainland by "being a 'showcase' for what an allegedly free market economy combined with political liberalisation can offer the Chinese people" (Long 1991:223).

Secondly, one needs to consider both historical and realistic implications which media-broker diplomacy poses to cross-strait relations. From an historical perspective, the unexpected visit of Lee and Hsu in 1987 brought illumination to the two contending parties with an alternative and additional mediation channel in the absence of official relations. Having discovered its great potential in easing tensions, the CCP government used this "Lee and Hsu" formula as a model to field two mainland journalists Fan and Guo to Taiwan in 1991. Within four years, media-broker diplomacy developed a momentum from infancy to maturity. The interactive utilisation of media-broker diplomacy, therefore, implied that it had been acknowledged by the government (notably the CCP) as the then emerging policy trend. Thus, pushing the journalistic boundary into cross-strait arena, media brokers helped to break political deadlock and consequently enlivened political détente. In this sense, this study argues that the key to observing cross-strait media-broker diplomacy is to see if it has the effect of easing tension or improving understanding between the two sides, and subsequently involving the two governments in interaction with each other — even if official negotiations have not been initiated or achieved. Actually, the official permission/tolerance of highly visible public appearances of one side's journalists on the other side itself was an intentional message. The journalist is the message, the diplomatic message. From a realistic perspective, political, social and technological developments in recent decades appear to have undermined the *raison d'être* of media-broker diplomacy because a variety of communication channels have become available across the strait.

Nowadays, the media on both sides are able to station their correspondents on the other side. Also thanks to the new information and communications technologies (ICTs), internet media have been flourishing across the strait impressively, which for sure will produce great impact on the government and the public on both sides. Nevertheless, given the intimate media-and-politics relationship in cross-strait context, there is little doubt that the media (within which the journalist) still play a pivotal role in the development of cross-strait relations, in particular as a participant and facilitator of conducting public diplomacy and staging PR campaign for the government. Such a prospect may be further reinforced by the fact that the crux of cross-strait relations lies in communication instead of coercion in a long run.

Thirdly, cross-strait journalists not only create the “myth” of media-broker diplomacy, but also present the major dilemma to themselves. This dilemma is that the role played by cross-strait journalists has affected their news coverage. What are the role perceptions of these journalists? A set of roles may be used to describe what they did, including disseminators, observers, profit-makers, initiators, catalyst, and more specifically, publicists, PR professionals, go-betweens, mediators, and media brokers. In his pathbreaking study of media and foreign policy, Bernard C. Cohen clarifies the duality of the reporter’s work — one as a neutral reporter and the other as an active participant in the policy-making process (1963:19-20). Perhaps the active participation of journalists is normally achieved at what Gurevitch calls “the cost of sacrificing some traditional norms” (1991:187). In the light of media-and-politics relationship, one of the intractable challenges posed to journalists might be whether they can act independently of government influence. Given its inherent attributes, media-broker diplomacy represents the most controversial interaction between officials and journalists. This controversy has been embodied in Walter Cronkite’s case. On one side, one may remark that Cronkite’s efforts to mediate in the Middle East draw no criticism because they were consistent with broad public and political consensus. “Who, after all, opposes peace...” (Jamieson and Campbell 2004:114)? On the other side, Cronkite has been criticised for overstepping the bounds of ethical journalism (Frederick 1993:219; Gilboa 2000:299; Gilboa 2005b:102). While addressing the relationship between politics and television, Cronkite argues that “[I]t’s a stand-off between an attempt to use the medium and the medium’s determination not to be used” (1998:60). To answer Pool’s inquiry of “Newsmen and Statesmen: Adversaries or Cronies?” (1973:12), newsmen appear to be sided with their own governments in the cross-strait context. In Lee and Hsu’s case, obviously they perceived themselves as independent journalists based on the *Post*’s precept of “Independent Management”. It was this very professional self-image that inspired them to risk the mission to the mainland. In this sense, they did fulfil their role as “the eyes and ears of the public” (Cohen 1963:23) and set a pioneering example for the media on both sides of the strait by educating and informing two Chinese-speaking societies with free press rights. But, such journalistic stardom raised a tricky question: were the journalists really independent? Eschewing the CCP officials, including their refusal of interviewing the paramount leader Deng, presumably ensured that they would not be

swayed by the CCP government to its own ends. Nevertheless, packing the “three noes” policy in their travel bags amounted to an unambiguous claim to be emotionally and ideologically compatible with the KMT government. Partisan bias occurred, though the *Post* was a private and self-claimed politically-independent newspaper. “They (Lee and Hsu) offered little favourable comments to the mainland in their news coverage. We can even say that they regarded us with contempt” (*China Times* 22 November 2007), Wang Jinxi (王瑾希), the then Editor-in-Chief of *China News Agency*, complained that their coverage leaned towards the KMT government. In Fan and Guo’s case, Guo Weifeng moralised their 1991 reporting mission with the fact that, as a conscientious journalist, he had observed three principles: for the good of the development of cross-strait relations, for the good of the mainlanders’ understanding of Taiwan, and for the good of the unity of the people on both sides (Fan and Guo 1992:302). On the other side of the strait, however, Guo’s “three goods” ethics of journalistic detachment sounded not appealing to some Taiwanese media. As a leading role in 1987 case and a spectator in 1991 case, the *Post* in its editorial addressed Guo and Fan as the mainland delegation’s spokespersons, who “failed to report impartially about the ‘Minshiyu’ Incident” and “always took up an assertive partisan stance”. The *Post* challenged its audience with such a rhetorical question, “Is it possible that the news can exchange freely across the Taiwan Strait?” (*Independence Evening Post* 19 August 1991)

The two case studies provides an interesting testimony for what Mowlana called the major hypothesis in relations of the media to foreign policy which is “in international conflict, the media often sides with the perceived national interest of the system of which they are a part, making it difficult to maintain journalistic independence and neutrality in the face of patriotism and national loyalty” (1997:35). Within the conceptual model of media-broker diplomacy, therefore, it is likely that the role of media brokers led journalists into a media-and-politics dilemma in which their political participation brought constraints and detriments to their journalistic independence.

## Summary

While examining communication in war and peace, Frederick noted “one unmistakable fact” — media and mediate have the same Latin root (1993:219). This articulation can easily find its echoes in cross-strait relations. With political and military confrontation across the Taiwan Strait, the media has turned out to be a useful means of mediation between mainland China and Taiwan in the absence of official contacts. Before the emergence of cross-strait media-broker diplomacy, the media had been passively employed by the two governments as a tool of propaganda war. The unexpected twists of the media brokers in 1987 and 1991, however, enabled the media to play the role of

mediators in an active sense. Stemming from the backdrop of transformation on both sides, media-broker diplomacy also holds the seeds of transformation by itself which involved the two governments in interaction with each other based on different perceptions of their own legitimacy and consequently eased tensions and introduced an epoch of exchange to cross-strait relations. Starting from an unexpected media event, media-broker diplomacy was “upgraded” to an alternative and additional approach which may be orchestrated by the two governments to their own ends. For the journalist, however, media-broker diplomacy poses a great challenge to journalistic independence. In the journey of media-broker diplomacy, the journalist crossed the professional boundary, beyond which independence, neutrality and objectivity seems to be excess baggage for the journalist because his perception of the professional task is basically swayed by the milieu in which his media institution operates. Based on the 1987 and 1991 case studies, these evaluations will be deepened and sharpened by the journalists themselves in the following Chapter VI.

## **Chapter VI Mediating at the Crossroads: An Interviewing Investigation of Cross-Strait Journalists**

But the journalist's life is an absolute gamble in every respect and under conditions that test one's inner security in a way that scarcely occurs in any other situation (Weber 1948:98; Weber 2001:27).

Official control of the press in the PRC contrasts sharply with the virtual freedom of the press in Taiwan, making cooperation in this area particularly difficult (Clough 1994:220).

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to present the data mined through interviews with 16 participants of cross-strait media diplomacy history and document analysis, according to methods described in Chapter IV. The core research question of this thesis was addressed in interviews through 10 Interviewing Questions. Rather than present the interview results in a fragmented form under these ten questions, I have presented them separately under Five Historical Events and Four Key-Concept Groups, the two categories constructed from historical data mined in this research. The Five Historical Events arise from Interviewing Question No.1-3 which centres around "what major cross-strait events did you report?" as well as from the two case studies that were discussed in Chapter V. The other Interviewing Questions (No. 4-10) are distributed among the Four Key-Concept Groups. As the report of intensive interviews, this chapter has been fashioned out of concern that different voices should find their way out for expression with regard to the same question. As a consequence, the readers can formulate their own opinions and judgements. Generally, Historical Events and Key Concepts are constructed from historical data derived from document analysis and memories of participants obtained through interviews — from both the mainland and Taiwanese sides, but in the instance of Historical Events (1) and (2), there was a need to rely only on Taiwanese statements, for

reasons provided below. Based on the data presentation, six key findings will be highlighted. This chapter then proceeds with discussions of three theoretical implications and concludes with a summary.

## **Interview Data Presentation<sup>86</sup>**

### **1. Narrative: Five Historical Events**

In the field, the intensive interviews normally started with some questions regarding the interviewees' cross-strait reporting experiences (see Chapter IV for the list of main Interviewing Questions). Consequently, the interviewees were inclined to direct the interviewer to those major historical events which they covered or witnessed. As interview analysis can be treated as a form of narration (Kvale 1996:199), the first section of data presentation will be structured through narrative. Thus, five key events have been selected and presented chronologically as a series of mini case studies. Cast in a story form, these condensed and coherent stories are expected to yield essential insights into the role of cross-strait journalists.

#### **Historical Event (1) 1984: A Secret Guest**

Interview data was drawn only from the Taiwanese participant who was the principal actor in this historical event.

Building on the case studies of the 1987 landmark event in Chapter V, Lee Yung-teh and Hsu Lu have been acknowledged as the first Taiwanese journalists who openly visited mainland China since 1949. Historically, however, the genesis of the Taiwanese journalists' visit may be dated back further

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<sup>86</sup> In the following data presentation, the thesis is to adopt an easy way of coding to assist the reader in evaluating the quotations of 7 anonymous interviewees (out of 16 interviewees, 1 in Taiwan and 6 in mainland China requesting anonymity, see Chapter IV). Being placed in parentheses, all of the codes start with "J", standing for the anonymous "journalist", and are linked through dashes with specific abbreviations for geographical locations, media types and genders. For example, (J-BJ-NP-f) refers to a journalist, based in Beijing, from a newspaper, female. In Fuzhou's case, two male TV journalists' codes will be differentiated with the suffix numbers of 1 or 2. More coding abbreviations are grouped as below:  
Geographical locations: BJ (Beijing); FZ (Fuzhou); GZ (Guangzhou); TP (Taipei)  
Media types: NA (News Agency); NP (Newspaper); RD (Radio); TV (television)  
Genders: m (male); f (female)

to 1984 when Susie Chiang (江素惠) went to the mainland as a “visitor”.<sup>87</sup> With her ancestral home based in Fujian province and a track record of being a capable journalist in Taiwan, Chiang was posted to Hong Kong in 1980 by the *China Times* as its correspondent. Benefiting from Hong Kong’s adjacent location, Chiang was able to step onto the mainland soil much earlier than her contemporaries. At the time of 1984, while the CCP leadership had just begun to adopt its open door policy in the mainland, the other side of the strait was still under the martial law imposed by the KMT government. Naturally, from a Taiwanese perspective, going to the mainland approximated to entering the enemy territory held by the communists.

As for me, mainland China was totally strange at that time. When I first got there, it seemed to me that I had just arrived in another planet. While I grew up in Taiwan, I received anti-communist education so that my mind was filled with instinctive fear towards the mainland. When I just got off the plane at Beijing airport and saw the five-star flag,<sup>88</sup> I could feel my feet trembling continually.

Although Chiang had to disguise her real status in her visit, the clandestine Taiwanese guest from Hong Kong received a warm welcome from the CCP’s United Front Work Department<sup>89</sup> as the officials knew that Chiang was actually a renowned journalist from Taiwan. In this sense, Chiang may be viewed as the first Taiwanese journalist who entered the mainland without journalistic accreditation (Chiang 1997:17).

## Historical Event (2) 1989: Tiananmen

Interview data was drawn only from the Taiwanese participants because 1989 Tiananmen is a sensitive issue for mainland journalists.

In sharp contrast with Chiang’s lone and surreptitious travel, five years later, scores of Taiwanese journalists flocked to Beijing to cover the 1989 Tiananmen democracy movement, which has proven to be a turbulent sociopolitical transformation with repercussions on both sides of the strait. Some twenty years later, while the image of the huge ocean of student protestors and banners in Tiananmen Square still remains fresh, the CCP leadership has refused to reconsider the verdict handed down on the student demonstrations (Laliberté and Lanteigne 2008:1). Therefore, “04 June Incident” itself has become taboo as a subject of discussion in any context in mainland China. In all of the reports about the history of cross-strait media exchanges produced by mainland journalists (or mainland media in a broad sense), 1989 Tiananmen has always been omitted. Nevertheless, this political turmoil was, “to

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<sup>87</sup> This fact is supported by Chiang’s memoirs *Susie Chiang’s Passion for the Two Sides of the Taiwan Strait and Three Areas*, published in Chinese in Taipei (1997: 17).

<sup>88</sup> The PRC’s national flag.

<sup>89</sup> At that time, the State Council’s Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) had not been instituted.

a great extent, a media-aided conflict” (He 1996:1), in which not only Chinese journalists played a very important role against the backdrop of the CCP’s declaration of martial law, but also Taiwanese journalists, who had just been released from the 38-year martial law imposed by the KMT government in Taiwan, actively engaged in this spontaneous mass movement for democracy. Yu Yu-lin, the President of *Taiwan China Review News Agency* (台湾中评通讯社) and the then Vice Editor-in-Chief of the *China Times*, offered a gripping account:

“04 June Incident” is an “unofficial” case in cross-strait media exchanges. Since the passing of Hu Yaobang (胡耀邦)<sup>90</sup> in April 1989, Taiwanese journalists began to stream to Tiananmen Square to report this big event. It was the first time since 1949 that Taiwanese journalists went to mainland China in a large number to cover news. ...I know the situation clearly because I was the person based in Taipei to organise those journalists (with the *China Times*) at that time. We dispatched three groups, more than a dozen of journalists to Beijing, including Hsu Chong-mao (徐忠茂) who was shot in the head at Tiananmen Square. Virtually, I could have dispatched as many journalists as I wished because it seemed that nobody in the mainland cared under that circumstance. Basically, it was pretty much like the stage of anarchy in cross-strait media exchange. (*in an excited voice*) Very open, no restrictions! However, it was because of this incident that the mainland authority afterwards imposed stringent regulations on Taiwanese journalists’ reporting activity in the mainland.

Relevant accounts of the participation of Taiwanese journalists in the infamous “04 June Incident” may also be found elsewhere. As Clough notes, over 100 media representatives from Taiwan arrived in Beijing in early May 1989 for the Asian Development Bank (ADB) meeting, and many stayed on to cover Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev’s visit and the students demonstrations in Tiananmen that culminated in the bloody suppression of 04 June (1993:81). According to Hsu Lu’s memoirs (1989:15-23) and interview, she arrived in Beijing on 06 June as a journalist with the *Independence Evening Post* to cover the aftermath of the Tiananmen tragedy. As opposed to the warm welcome she received in 1987, her 1989 visit ended up with her being expelled<sup>91</sup> by the CCP government on 11 July as she had been accused of illegal news coverage and meeting with one of the student protesting leaders, Wang Dan (王丹).

Through these foregoing historical accounts, we can gain some essential insights into the significance of “04 June Incident” in cross-strait media exchange history. In retrospect, the Taiwanese journalists’ extensive and in-depth coverage of this event has cast a heavy shadow over the minds of the Taiwanese people.

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<sup>90</sup> The disgraced former General Secretary of the CCP, Hu died on 15 April 1989.

<sup>91</sup> He’s documentary research shows that at least three Western journalists, including the *Voice of America’s* (VOA) Beijing bureau chief, were also expelled right after 04 June 1989 (1996: 3-4).



### Historical Event (3) 2001: Conciliation

After fifty years of KMT governance, the Taiwanese people eventually made a choice with their votes. With the ascendancy of Chen Shui-bian as the first DPP-supported President on 20 May 2000, a “new political order” was envisaged as a crisis in cross-strait relations (Sutter 2008:196). Surprisingly, the DPP government sent a series of conciliatory signals to Beijing (Tubilewicz 2006:245) during Chen’s first term. One of the conciliatory moves was that the Chen administration lifted the ban, in 2001, on mainland journalists staying in Taipei to cover Taiwanese news. As a journalistic goal which had been pursued by the media on both sides for a decade, the liberalisation of stationing mainland correspondents was actually fulfilled by the independence-leaning DPP instead of the unification-oriented KMT. Being one of the promoters of this process, Yu Yu-lin analysed the background:

Having just assumed power in 2001, the DPP virtually had no ruling experience while was confronted with a wide range of tough issues. It had not got time to touch the press with its so-called “political hand”. Moreover, it was with the political slogans of “democracy”, “free speech” and “free press” that the DPP had been seeking to mobilise the public and rise to power. Therefore, at the beginning, the DPP dared not to restrict the media.

Having lacked equal access to the media in its contention with the KMT, the DPP as a ruling party authorised the presence of the CCP’s media representatives in Taiwan. As a consequence, four of the mainland’s leading media agencies, including the *People’s Daily*, *Xinhua News Agency*, the *Central People’s Radio* and the *China Central Television (CCTV)* were authorised to station their correspondents (*Zhudian Jizhe* 驻点记者) in Taipei. In March 2001, *Xinhua*’s Fan Liqing (范丽青) and Chen Binhua (陈斌华) became the first mainland correspondents in Taipei. According to the rules set by the GIO, each mainland journalist was allowed a one-month stay in Taipei where they could only stay in hotel instead of renting apartments. This meant that the related mainland media had to post their correspondents in rotation. In December 2001, one interviewee from *Xinhua* went to Taipei to take on his role of correspondent. He (J-BJ-NA-m) made a comparative analysis of his reporting experience:

As a mainland journalist, if you have never been to Taiwan or have little understanding of Taiwan, you can only observe Taiwan from a mainland perspective. Only after you have been there, dipping yourself into Taiwan’s society and contacting the people there, can you observe Taiwan from a Taiwanese perspective. It is not only a matter of distance, but a matter of stance.

#### Historical Event (4) 2005: Anti-Secession Law

There is little doubt that the liberalisation of mainland journalists' reporting activities in Taipei is instrumental in promoting conciliation and mutual understanding. This seemingly simple journalistic practice can never be independent of cross-strait relations. At the annual meeting of the National People's Congress (NPC) in March 2005, Beijing enacted the Anti-Secession Law (反分裂法) which formalised the CCP's long-standing position of using "non-peaceful means" against Taiwan if Taiwan made moves toward de jure independence (*Taipei Times* 06 August 2010). On Beijing's part, the law reflected its "pessimism about long-term trends in cross-Straits relations" (Tubilewicz 2006:248) whereas on Taipei's part, it "angered Taiwanese public opinion" (Sutter 2008:203) and the Chen administration was particularly unhappy with the manner in which Beijing responded to Taipei's goodwill. The following month — April 2005 — saw that the presence of *Xinhua News Agency* and the *People's Daily* correspondents on the island was suspended because of alleged "distorted news reports". In the interviews, the journalists from both sides claimed a direct link between this happening and the Anti-Secession Law.

Yu Yu-lin: Following the Anti-Secession Law, the DPP government made *Xinhua* and the *People's Daily* as the first targets of attack. Actually, the DPP government had nothing to play as a warning against the mainland and so it had to resort to punishing *Xinhua* and the *People's Daily* instead.

A *Xinhua* journalist (J-BJ-NA-m): Certainly it was a political event. To our understanding, the DPP authority intended to take this event as a small retaliatory measure against the mainland because it had few cards in hands at that time. This one, however, was supposed to have small damage but big influence. Although it may not incurred substantial damage to cross-strait relations, it did help the DPP authority to achieve sensational effect — just letting the public know that Taiwan was very angry.

Relating to the Historical Event (2) in 1989 Tiananmen, the suspension of the presence of *Xinhua* and the *People's Daily* in Taipei is similar to the expulsion of correspondents which has also been happening all the time in modern diplomatic circles.<sup>92</sup> It was not until 2008 when the KMT regained ruling power that the two mainland media resumed stationing their correspondents in Taipei.

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<sup>92</sup> Yoel Cohen documented a case in 1985 when six British correspondents were expelled from the Soviet Union. Treating it as an example of media diplomacy, he further elaborates that the measures which the Soviet Union used to control these foreign correspondents ranged from monitoring their news reporting, to keeping watch over their activities, to not granting requests for interviews, and finally to non-renewal of visas or expulsion (1986:3). Strikingly, these were also what the mainland China and Taiwan governments did in dealing with journalists from the other side.

## Historical Event (5) 2008: Clash

The year 2008 appeared to be a transition in cross-strait relations. Rapprochement was significantly reinforced by the election of the KMT charismatic Ma Ying-jeou as President of Taiwan. It was against such a backdrop that Chen Yunlin (陈云林), the Chairman of China's nominally private Association for Relations across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS) and previous Director of the CCP's Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO), visited Taiwan on 03-07 November to meet with his Taiwanese counterpart Chiang Pin-kung (江丙坤), the head of the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF). Being the de facto highest-ranking Chinese official to visit Taiwan since 1949, Chen's visit was thus the highest level meeting between the CCP and the KMT in six decades. Within the Chinese top negotiator's grand delegation were remarkably embedded some 30 mainland journalists.<sup>93</sup> However, Chen's 5-day stay in Taipei turned out to be "a tumultuous visit marred by violent protests" (*Asia Times Online* 08 November 2008), culminating in a clash between Taiwanese independence supporters and Chen's entourage — some mainland journalists — on the evening of 05 November outside the five-star Grand Formosa Regent Taipei hotel where Chen was staying. In an interview in Fuzhou, Wang Yi'nan (王轶南), a mainland journalist from the *Voice of the Strait Radio Station* (VOS, 海峡之声广播电台) told her startling tale of intimate contacts with Taiwanese:

After we finished our coverage of Chen's meeting with the KMT leaders and were waiting for GIO's van to pick us up, I suddenly saw a journalist from *China News Agency* was thrown down to the ground by a couple of Taiwanese protestors. Then, when I looked back at the entrance of the hotel, three woman journalists with the *CCTV* and Hong Kong-based *Phoenix Satellite TV* were manhandled and chased by some protestors coupled with insulting and offensive languages. The *Phoenix* journalist was actually a young lady, whose hair, in a fearful mess, was torn down violently by the protestors. You know, all of us were wearing ID badges at that time, so definitely the protestors knew we were mainland journalists. It seemed that what they wanted was just media exposure. The protestors shouted, "Go away, communist bandits!"

This violent scene sent shock waves among the mainland journalists on the spot. One of the interviewees (J-BJ-NP-f) recalled the event in Beijing with some emotion, "When this clash sparked off, two sorts of people were distressed bitterly. One was the mainland journalist and the other was the Taiwanese journalist. From a mainland journalist's viewpoint, Taiwanese are basically cordial and friendly. When you are familiar with both sides, you do not want them to be at odds with each other."

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<sup>93</sup> According to Wang Yi'nan's statement, the mainland journalist team in which she participated numbered 35, including 26 journalists departing together from Beijing, and 9 from the mainland press corps in Taipei, who joined the team when the delegation arrived in Taiwan.

Regarding the violence, a Taiwanese journalist (J-TP-TV-f) made her remarks, “Those people were actually radicals. They hated the mainland official Chen Yunlin and this hatred was spread to the mainland journalists. No matter where it would be, this kind of thing should not have happened. It was of bad quality for us to transfer anger unreasonably to the mainland journalists.”

The violent protests against the visit by Chinese emissary Chen Yunlin also attracted international attention. *Asia Times Online* commented in its news report: “Chen may also return to the mainland with a more realistic understanding of China’s uphill battle to win the hearts of Taiwanese people” (*Asia Times Online* 08 November 2008). Reporters Without Borders (RSF) deplored the violence against journalists in Taipei. It said,

Opposition activists have the right to demonstrate, but it is regrettable that they did so with such violence and with no thought for the safety of journalists. Relations between China and Taiwan are very controversial, but the media have a right to talk about them without being the target of violence or pressure (Reporters Without Borders 08 November 2008).

## **2. Conceptual Investigation: Making Coherence**

Through the two parallel case studies conducted in Chapter V, the condensed narratives of five historical events are laid out in the previous section. These offer us an overview of the phenomenon investigated. Apart from the narratives, the interview analysis can also be handled as a form of conceptual investigation, through which the interview data are employed as a logical chain of evidence for building up conceptual coherence. With the established conceptual frames of reference (Chapter III, IV), therefore, in this section interview results will be structured around a series of key concepts, with a view to opening up new vistas for understanding the research question.

### **Key-Concept Group (1): Cross-Strait Relations and Cross-Strait Media Exchanges**

During the intensive interviews, perhaps the most frequently used concept was *cross-strait relations*. This conundrum not only provides a general sociopolitical environment in which historical events occurred and cross-strait journalists operated, but also shapes a variety of constraints and opportunities. Before moving to the activities of journalists, a brief examination of how the journalists define and perceive this concept is in order. Generally speaking, conventional journalistic wisdom holds that, as a complex concept, cross-strait relations have been closely associated with international factors and subject to the particular historical and political realities of mainland China

and Taiwan. In an improvised interview setting, the interviewees were more inclined to interpret these relations from a journalistic perspective rather than to offer some definitions of scientific and intellectual rigor. Some of their statements, however, are still worth presenting, as has been done below, for conceptual formation and clarification.

Based in Hong Kong and originally working as a scholar of Taiwan studies, Luo Xiangxi (罗祥喜), the Vice Editor-in-Chief of *China Review News Agency* (中国评论新闻社), set forth a more academic view,

Literally, cross-strait relations refer to the relations between the two sides across the Taiwan Strait. However, any strait in the world may involve such relations between the two sides. If you have no idea about the politics of China and Taiwan, you would not make sense of these particular relations. During the Cold War era, in a narrow sense, it meant the relations between the two sides of the strait. In a broad sense, it even implied the confrontation between the East and the West. Virtually, without the US intervention, there might not have been such a problem.

It is because of these historical and political complexities that Wang Ming-yi (王铭义), the senior journalist with the *China Times*, interpreted it from the angle of journalistic and intellectual qualifications,

Being a cross-strait journalist, you are supposed to have a basic understanding of the main sequences of both Chinese and Taiwanese history. Put simply, the grievances and affections between the two sides may be traced back to 1949. Put more exaggeratedly, it originated as early as 1895.<sup>94</sup> Cross-strait relations involve various kinds of relationships, such as those between the CCP and the KMT, China and Japan. Therefore, cross-strait journalism is a field which is fraught with complicated backgrounds and intellectual knowledge.

As a journalist from the *Liberty Times*, a leading newspaper which has overtaken the *China Times* and the *United Daily News* to enjoy the lion share in Taiwan's newspaper market, Su Yung-yao (苏永耀) addressed this issue with a rhetorical question: "Without Taiwan's de facto independence, how could we speak of unification?" He went on to reinforce his stance with a cross-examination, "We have never heard that Canada seeks unification with Quebec because Quebec is still one province of Canada." Different from these male journalists who tended to observe cross-strait relations from historical and political perspectives, a woman journalist in Beijing (J-BJ-NP-f) sees it through a more emotional lens: "The complex cross-strait relations may include both official and unofficial relations. From my point of view, however, the policy problem between the two sides can be solved easily

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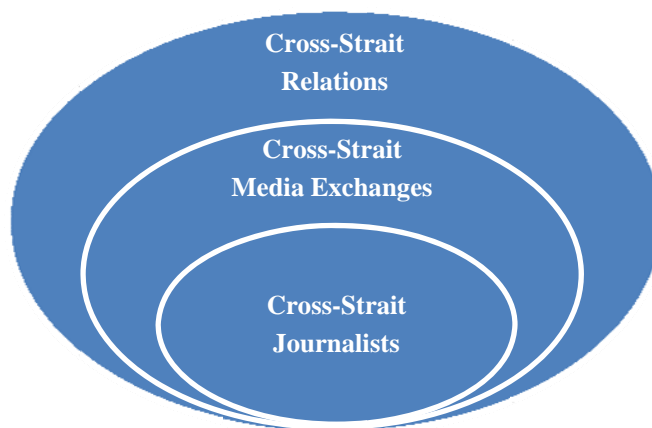
<sup>94</sup> The reference here is to the Sino-Japanese War in 1895 in which China's declining Qing dynasty was defeated and forced to cede Taiwan to Japan (see Chapter I).

whereas the hostility between the minds of the people on both sides is hard to remove. It is a very slow process of accumulation of understanding rather than a matter of signing a certain agreement.”

Alongside the concept of cross-strait relations is *cross-strait media exchanges*, another term frequently appearing in the interviews. The interview data back up the implication derived from case studies in Chapter V which reveals that “a symbiotic relationship exists between cross-strait relations and media exchanges”. Although acknowledging that media exchanges are an integral part of cross-strait relations, most of the interviewees have a wide range of differing views on how to assess its standing in this overall political setting. In a rare case, one Taiwanese TV journalist, who is the youngest interviewee with six years in this field, claimed that she had never heard about this particular term. Nevertheless, most of the interviewees from mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong suggested a multi-levelled approach for defining cross-strait media exchanges. Perhaps the most representative one was formulated by a veteran mainland journalist, who had served as a cross-strait journalist for 19 years. He (J-FZ-TV-m-1) observed this concept from a three-levelled perspective: “In this politics-media system, cross-strait relations may be perceived as the macro level, media exchanges as the middle level, and the journalists as the micro level.”

The journalists’ main viewpoints may be summarised graphically as a three-ring stratification (shown in Figure 6.1), within which journalists, media exchanges and cross-strait relations interrelate to one another and operate at three levels. Level I corresponds to the inner ring, where individual journalists, the I-matrices, reside as the core of the research presented in this thesis. Level II represents the middle ring, where cross-strait media exchanges exist in the form of media interactions and cooperation, notably through the institutional channel. Level III, as the outer ring, embraces the vast sphere of the multitude of cross-strait relations. Obviously, within this journalist-focused stratification, media exchanges have been positioned as a subfield of cross-strait relations.

**Figure 6.1 A Journalist-Focused Stratification of Cross-Strait Relations**



While answering the question concerning cross-strait media exchanges, most interviewees were inclined to link it to the overall cross-strait relations at Level III: “Media exchanges are a sort of

cross-strait relations. Though it may be categorised as cultural exchanges, their influence may extend far beyond cultural and into political and economic spheres” (Wang Yinan, VOS, Fuzhou). “Media exchanges are to open doors to each other in journalism” (J-BJ-RD-m). “For two sides, media exchanges are just like a tube of toothpaste — to be squeezed bit by bit” (J-BJ-NP-f). “The premise of media exchanges is political tug-of-war. Nowadays, they have become a topic on the political agenda where journalistic professionalism is not that important” (Lee Chih-te 李志德, *United Daily News*, Taipei). Few journalists confined media exchange exactly at Level II, the only one statement recorded was that “media exchanges are the cooperation between media institutions on both sides to accommodate their demands of self-development” (J-FZ-TV-m-2). Regarding Level III, the interview data will be presented under the subtitle of Cross-Strait Journalist.

## Key-Concept Group (2): Cross-Strait Journalists

### (2.1) Field

In Chapter IV, the term *cross-strait journalists* was conceptualised for the purpose of research. In the field work, the interviewer purposely sought the answer for the accepted working title of these journalists. Surprisingly, there seems to be no single, formal title for this type of journalists and the journalists themselves do not care that there is no title. Nevertheless, they acknowledge that there exist some customary ways of addressing this journalistic cohort on the two sides. Those on the mainland are called “*journalists covering Taiwan*” (*paoduitai de* 跑对台的) whereas those on Taiwan island are termed as “journalists covering the mainland” or “journalists covering two sides of the strait” (*paodalu de* 跑大陆的; *paoliang'an de* 跑两岸的). However insignificant the working title may be, most journalists believe that they are working in a highly political and specialised field. Having served in this field since 1998 (previously for cable news station *TVBS* and currently for the *China Times*), Chou Pei-fen (仇佩芬) held a sanguine view that this “challenging but engaging field” enabled her to observe the world with unique “height and angle” in comparison with when she covered normal news beats in Taiwan. With the same seniority in this field as Chou, a mainland journalist (J-BJ-RD-m) claimed that “[W]e are a group of journalists who are more professional, more specialised and with more profound understanding of Taiwan.” He went on to say that it takes at least two years to be a qualified journalist in this field.

### (2.2) Roles: Self-Perceptions in Metaphors

The role played by the journalist in cross-strait relations is the central inquiry in the interviews. Regarding this inquiry, the interview data find a major discrepancy between how the journalists

perceive themselves and how the two governments perceive them. These two different sets of perceptions will be presented separately. First of all, interestingly, quite a few journalists constructed their collective self-images in the form of metaphors. Therefore the following data is structured around the key metaphors extracted from the interviews.

#### “Bridge of the Bridge”

The communicating role across the Taiwan Strait is viewed as journalists’ most noticeable force of influence. Among various statements, Wang Ming-yi from the *China Times*, who arguably boasted the longest time working as a cross-strait journalist (from late 1980s to 2009), recalled, “In 1990s, while I was covering the talks between the SEF and ARATS, I told those Taiwan’s SEF negotiators that ‘You are praised as the bridge across the strait. Actually, we, the media and journalists on the two sides, are the bridge of the bridge.’”

#### “Messenger, Eyes, and Feeler”

An echo of the communicating view of the journalist was also heard on the other side of the strait. A *Xinhua* journalist (J-BJ-NA-m) asserted that “news reporting itself is also a sort of communication.” Portraying the Taiwan Strait as “a strait of communication”, Wang Yi’nan from the *VOS* offered three metaphors to depict her job, viz. “messenger, eyes and feeler” — for the two sides. Thus, she saw her task as “communicating between the two sides — for reconciliation”.

#### “Forerunners” and “Ice-breakers”

Despite the ups and downs of cross-strait relations, journalists’ participation in cross-strait historical events was emphasised in the interview. In this respect, some interviewees from both sides considered the journalists as the “forerunners” and “ice-breakers” of cross-strait relations and thus claimed that they also acted as significant players and “honourable witnesses” of cross-strait history.

#### “Jingle Bells on Tambourine”

A mainland radio journalist (J-BJ-RD-m), who might be professionally sensitive to sound, used “jingle bells on tambourine” to capture the essential role of the media and journalists in cross-strait negotiations and harmony. “We are not the central player in cross-strait relations,” he asserted, “As one of the multiple channels of communication across the strait, our task is to make the communications good for ears and pleasing to eyes.”



“Raven”<sup>95</sup>

A novel insight was provided by Su Yung-yao from the *Liberty Times*. Being traditionally associated with the DPP, the *Liberty Times* has been widely acknowledged as oppositional in developing cross-strait relations. “Thanks to the *Liberty Times*,” Su argued, “in a situation which we are overwhelmed by the KMT’s one-sided political agenda favouring compromises with China,<sup>96</sup> it is the *Liberty Times* that assumes a greater role of being a raven to check and balance Taiwan’s public opinion. Only with different voices can we strengthen Taiwan’s ability to bargain with China.”

### (2.3) Roles: Government’s Perceptions in Comparison

The interview data identify a significant gap between the journalists’ self-perceptions and the governments’ perceptions of them. In other words, the relations between the government and cross-strait journalists present a more complex picture. Although no government officials were recruited in the interview, the statements from journalists do provide valuable insights into how the governments on the two sides perceive these journalists. Table 6.1 is presented here for a comparative analysis:

**Table 6.1 Governments’ Perceptions of Cross-Strait Journalists in a Comparative Perspective**

Governments	Mainland Journalists	Taiwanese Journalists
Chinese Government (the CCP Party)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Mouthpieces</li> <li>➤ Propagandists/Promoters</li> <li>➤ Public Relations Practitioners</li> <li>➤ Journalists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Journalists outside the PRC (Troublemakers sometimes)</li> <li>➤ Targets of the united front</li> <li>➤ Suspected intelligence agents</li> </ul>
Taiwanese Government (the KMT Party or the DPP Party)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Official instruments and representatives</li> <li>➤ Journalists</li> <li>➤ Suspected intelligence agents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Journalists (with partisan tendencies)</li> <li>➤ Informants</li> <li>➤ Propagandists</li> </ul>

Table 6.1 shows that the governments on the two sides view cross-strait journalists quite differently. The bulk of the reasons for these differences may be attributed to their respective media systems in

<sup>95</sup> In Chinese culture, the raven is regularly a metaphor for the critic or the opposition.

<sup>96</sup> In the interview, the interviewer had a brief discussion with Su about nomenclature which the *Liberty Times* employs to address the other side of the strait. Su said that the *Liberty Times* normally prefers “China” instead of “mainland China”, unless the informants declare that they are happy with specified terms, such as “mainland China”, or “the mainland”.

particular and political systems in general (Hallin and Mancini 2005:216) (also see Chapter II). Based on the positioning of the media in the CCP's statecraft, the CCP government has been basically following the path of employing its media and journalists as the mouthpiece, in particular as the propagandist and promoter of the CCP cause of unification. Due to such perceived symbiotic relations, Taiwanese authorities, both in the cases of the KMT and that of the DPP, tend to regard mainland journalists as official instruments and representatives and consequently subject their activities in Taiwan to strict regulations.

Regarding Taiwanese journalists, constant unease has remained in the CCP government (both central and local) over potentially sensitive issues: First, Taiwanese journalists come from a pro-western political system, one which the CCP government holds a negative view partly due to what is characterised as a so-called "press freedom". Second, since they may not be as "tame" and "obedient" as mainland journalists, Taiwanese journalists are inclined to cause problems for authorities rather than follow the CCP's journalistic rules of the game. Third, although they do not fall within the category of western journalists, they are still perceived as journalists outside the PRC (*Jingwai Jizhe*). Fourth, however, the CCP government may see some benefits for cooperation by authorising the presence of Taiwanese journalists in the mainland, for after all, they are a group of people to be won over. The CCP's ambivalent feelings towards Taiwanese journalists may be best described in this way: "Even if Taiwanese are considered compatriots, in the end," the government looks at them "as outsiders, not really foreigners, but not entirely Chinese either" (Laliberté 2008:97).

Due to the media liberalisation in Taiwan, it appears to be difficult for the ROC's ruling party to expect Taiwanese journalists to fulfill a political role as was the case in the martial law era. Conversely, the ROC authorities tend to view Taiwanese journalists as independent of the government although in effect media institutions may be subject to their traditional partisan tendencies<sup>97</sup> whereas journalists may have personal political tendencies towards the Pan-Blue or Pan-Green camps (Chapter II). However, in the eyes of the government, journalists are excellent informants. Four out of seven interviewees in Taipei mentioned that the government officials, notably those from the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), are likely to seek some useful information from those journalists who have greater opportunities to visit the mainland. In a more political sense, the authorities still hold the view that Taiwanese journalists may be instrumental in propagating Taiwan's democratic values in the mainland.

The governments on the two sides bear striking similarity in their assumption that the journalist from the other side may be the potential intelligence agents. This strangely "common ground" was testified by most of the cross-strait journalists interviewed because they had been under constant surveillance by the secret agent of the (local) government while conducting their reporting missions on the other

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<sup>97</sup> As the cases of *United Daily News*, *Liberty Times* and *Formosa Television Corporation (FTV)*.

side.<sup>98</sup> This has been especially true for the mainland correspondents in Taipei since 2001. “Since the day of our very first appearance in Taiwan as mainland correspondents, Taiwan’s authorities have always assumed that we have some other purposes in our travel to Taiwan,” a mainland journalist (J-BJ-RD-m) complained, “I am really not a spy. Almost all of us have an unstained personal background in the mainland.” By comparison, sometimes this surveillance may be executed in some provinces in the mainland softly through convivial receptions and accompaniment by local Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) officials, who are detailed to assist Taiwanese journalists with their news coverage. This accompaniment, as a Taiwanese interviewee (J-TP-TV-f) portrayed her travel in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the heartland of China, “followed you as a shadow.” Actually, this following shadow had been already documented by Lee Yung-teh and Hsu Lu as an inescapable “web” (Chapter V) as early as 1987. Although the interview data reveal a declining trend of surveillance, on both sides, due to eased tensions across the strait after 2008, the journalists were uniform in believing that the two governments will keep close watch over the journalist from the other side in the foreseeable future. In Hong Kong, Susie Chiang observed this phenomenon by offering two critical points: on the mainland side, it is hard for the CCP government to believe that Taiwanese journalists could be really free of performing political tasks for their government; on the Taiwan side, the purity of mainland journalists has been doubted because indeed some of them were assigned by the CCP government with the mission to write “internal references” (*Neican*) for the leadership. Yu Yu-lin, the President of *Taiwan China Review News Agency*, summarised this ubiquitous surveillance with his insightful comments, “On one hand, these perceptions are the product of the ideological confrontation across the Taiwan Strait; on the other hand, of course, there exists somewhat of a trio of news-information-intelligence.”

### Key-Concept Group (3): Propaganda and Media Diplomacy

The governments’ perceptions on the cross-strait journalist have a great impact on how they manoeuvre or interact with the journalist and media. This is closely associated with those theories of propaganda, media/public diplomacy elaborated in Chapter III. In the field research, however, the interviewer found that the interviewees on both sides appeared to be more familiar with propaganda than media/public diplomacy. This differentiation may be partly due to the fact that cross-strait propaganda has existed as a common practice for several decades (Chapter II), partly due to the academic difficulties and political sensitivities derived from media/public *diplomacy* in the cross-

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<sup>98</sup> Unexpectedly, this point has also been verified by a Taiwanese journalism scholar. In a conversation with him in Taipei on 16 October 2009, he informed the author that, as a TV journalist from Taiwan, he also experienced this kind of surveillance when he conducted his reporting travel in Shanghai in the late 1990s.

strait context. Accordingly, the actual conversations with the interviewees were undertaken with more focus on propaganda (see Chapter IV for the list of main Interviewing Questions). Even concerning this common concept, cross-strait journalists on the two sides hold sharply contrasting views.

On the mainland side, the interview data record positive opinions on propaganda, though some of the statements may seem to be not congenial to an increasingly market-oriented media environment. It has been shown that the manifest ideological and propaganda orientation remains unquestionable in the field of cross-strait news reporting and, undoubtedly, the ultimate goal of this propaganda is the CCP's uncompromising policy of "one China" and unification with Taiwan. In this circumstance, mainland journalists appeared to be committed to this somewhat sacrosanct role as the propagandist and nationalist. Regarding the significant policy issues or sensitive problems in cross-strait affairs, all of the media in mainland China copied the CCP's official voice (normally relayed by *Xinhua*) verbatim and thus leave no alternative option to the journalist. "Anyway, as a Chinese, who would oppose unification?" A mainland journalist (J-FZ-TV-m-2) posed such a rhetorical question. Another interviewee (J-BJ-RD-m) considered propaganda towards Taiwan as a mission, "Although it may sound strident to outsiders or foreigners," he argued, "As insiders, we are very accustomed to it." "In the era of confrontation, both sides' propaganda used to be untrue," A veteran journalist (J-FZ-TV-m-1) commented, "Nowadays, we have more often opted for 'news reporting on/towards Taiwan' and refrained from using 'propaganda towards Taiwan'. Though the terms may be changed, the nature of propaganda actually remains unchanged."

On the Taiwan side, propaganda (towards the mainland) appears to be more controversial and unobtrusive. Some Taiwanese journalists tended to keep a distance from this sort of political involvement. Others, however, faced with the perceived strong propaganda campaign staged by the CCP government, insisted that the KMT government should reciprocate with well-organised propaganda in order to safeguard Taiwan's interests. Wang Ming-yi from the *China Times* offered three pairs of adjectives to depict his observation of the propaganda discourse, namely, *subjective/objective*, *direct/indirect*, and *intentional/unintentional*. In his interpretation, the journalist basically conducts his journalistic task in a subjective, direct and intentional sense while he may actually achieve some objective, indirect and unintentional results for propaganda and media diplomacy. Maintaining that the media is a political player instead of pure media, Lee Chih-te from the *United Daily News* argued that Taiwan's propaganda effect has been primarily produced by Taiwan's media in a spontaneous manner whereas the mainland's propaganda towards Taiwan has demonstrated more policy strength and systematic vitality due to the CCP's increasing media manoeuvrability and economic power. He further cautioned that the feeler of the mainland's

propaganda had already extended into Taiwan's media themselves.<sup>99</sup> Su Yung-yao from the *Liberty Times* prescribed that there is a great demand for close coordination and cooperation between the government and the media in post-2008 Taiwan because cross-strait negotiations are not secret, not based on closed-door diplomacy, any more. He contended that both the DPP and KMT governments in Taiwan would assess carefully the impact of relaxing further the restrictions on *Xinhua News Agency's* establishing a regular bureau in Taipei, because Taipei does not want to see another "underground embassy" — like the one in Hong Kong.

Regarding bilateral disputes about propaganda towards each other, *Xinhua News Agency* has always been at the centre. A dialogue between the interviewer and a *Xinhua's* journalist is specially extracted from the interview transcriptions for a close look:

Interviewer: Do you think what you are doing is propaganda towards Taiwan?

Journalist: Well, I think one of the roles played by the media is to disseminate information. In fact, information has its own stance in many cases, except for extremely pure information. The majority of political and cultural news does have propagandistic and educational functions. Say you are reporting cultural news towards Taiwanese, in effect you may be implicitly telling Taiwanese that we share a common Chinese culture. Is this propaganda? In my view, essentially, it is.

Interviewer: If so, propaganda is everywhere?

Journalist: Yes. Even in the West, there is also a communication theory, which argues that actually propaganda is not a bad thing. Rather, it has been demonised.

Interviewer: That makes the sense. Propaganda goes beyond the boundary of the East and West. Propaganda was not monopolised by Hitler and Stalin.

Journalist: Indeed! (*laughed*) Having been demonised, "propaganda" has become a term which nobody dares to mention. Actually, Taiwan's media also conduct propaganda towards us. Just like the *Liberty Times*, is it not conducting propaganda? In its commentaries, it has been cursing the mainland every day. Is not that stuff propaganda?

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<sup>99</sup> In this context of conversation, Lee also mentioned a notable event in Taiwan's media industry in 2008 — the sale of the *China Times*, which is now owned by Tsai Eng-meng (蔡衍明), chairman of the Want-Want Group (旺旺集团), a Taiwan-invested food manufacturer with remarkable success in the mainland market and has been perceived as pro-CCP government.

#### Key-Concept Group (4): Journalistic Professionalism

For the journalist, political participation and journalistic professionalism signify the two sides of the coin. In this study, journalists' political participation has been confined to the sphere of media diplomacy, media-broker diplomacy and propaganda. Journalistic professionalism, on the other side, appears to be "a tricky concept". While conducting their comparative analysis of media systems in 18 countries, Hallin and Mancini define it in terms of three interrelated criteria, simply put, autonomy in exercising journalists' functions; distinct shared norms and standards of practice; and the function of serving the public as a whole rather than particular sectors or actors (2005:219). In modern journalism, journalistic professionalism has been viewed as the hallmark of a genuine and conscientious journalist whereas the credibility of the journalist has always been controversial in the midst of media diplomacy, media-broker diplomacy and propaganda (see discussion in Chapter V).

In the highly political field of cross-strait journalism, journalists tend to see journalistic professionalism through the lenses of detachment, objectivity, impartiality, and independence. Personally and professionally, all of the interviewees define their role as journalists and claim that they have always been trying to pursue professionalism. They deem professionalism as something desirable, but elusive and difficult to achieve. The statements made by two journalists in the interview provide us with sketches: "Don't be too idealistic," A mainland journalist (J-FZ-TV-m-2) cautioned, "What I can do is just to be relatively objective." Chou Pei-fen from the *China Times* highlighted the "awkward" dilemma which cross-strait journalists face, "We are living in a floating form through which we alternate constantly between two sets of different rules of the game." The main constraints turn out to be a variety of concrete factors derived from political intervention from both sides. Two of these factors are worth mentioning here. What concerns the mainland journalists most is the regime-oriented problem — how to fulfil the political mission imposed on the journalist. For the Taiwanese journalists, they are preoccupied with the market-oriented problem — how to survive in the tense media competition.

##### (4.1) "Serving the whole situation."

For mainland journalists, it is "fairly difficult" to balance journalistic professionalism and the political mission. Some of them, who hold journalism degrees, would impute such a "tribulation" (Polumbaum 1990) to journalistic education under the CCP regime. From their perspectives, the journalists were cultivated by a series of doctrines which were used to justify the media and journalists service to the Party. Responding to a question about journalistic professionalism, a journalist (J-BJ-NP-f) asked if the interviewer had ever read "Chinese press history", in which journalistic professionalism has been characterised as the "mouthpiece" of the Party. This kind of

political mission may bear directly upon the strong involvement of the CCP in journalistic practice, through policy guidance, administrative directives and official assignment. On the journalists' part, however, the sense of mission appeared to be a significant part of the driving force of their perceived journalistic professionalism. A *Xinhua* journalist (J-BJ-NA-m) defined this mission as "taking the whole situation into consideration" and "serving the whole situation of cross-strait relations". "Anti-China remarks have no way to be published," he added. Perhaps it is based on this judgement that some of the mainland correspondents in Taipei may "kindly" and "intentionally" filter out what they see as harmful to cross-strait relations in their news coverage. "I am used to the official guidance," A journalist (J-BJ-RD-m) declared, "Actually it has become a practice of self-discipline." In response to the interviewer's question about if there is any official intervention in his journalistic practice, a veteran journalist (J-FZ-TV-m-1) reminded the interviewer of media ownership, "When it comes to the intervention of the media, we should ask first who owns the media. If the media are owned by the Party or government, that involvement should be viewed as management and supervision instead of intervention." He went on to justify his position, "Intervention happens everywhere, actually throughout the world. The media don't operate in a vacuum." Faced with such a media-and-politics reality, the cross-strait journalists on the mainland tended to embrace "the banner of Party journalism" (Pan and Lu 2003:224). Female journalists seemed to be more pragmatic: "I am not that lofty. It is just a job for earning my livelihood" (J-BJ-NP-f). "The career life of a journalist in China is actually very fragile. You have to learn how to protect yourself." (J-GZ-NP-f)

#### (4.2) "Put our head and wallet separately."

On Taiwan, cross-strait journalists undergo a different kind of tribulation — to struggle with the market pressure, which, ridiculously, is far beyond an economic problem. Given growing media competition and a limited media market on the island, Taiwan's media have to seek their fortune in the larger market on the mainland with which they share Chinese cultural heritage and language. In cross-strait relations, this intended media market expansion into the mainland resembles the flocking of Taiwanese entrepreneurs to the mainland, lured by profit. Thus, the vortex of cross-strait relations renders media and journalists vulnerable, in a journalistic sense. The interview data reveal considerable concern that it has become increasingly difficult for the Taiwanese journalist to adopt a critical stance vis-à-vis the mainland if at the same time his/her media institution is attempting to enter the mainland market. With the key to the mainland market in the hands of the CCP government, journalists have to consider the warmth of their handshakes. Chou Pei-fen from the *China Times* captured the situation in an ironical metaphor, "We have learned to put our head and wallet separately". Although the journalists do not assume the responsibility of expanding the market, they are supposed to consciously identify with their proprietors' market ambitions. Lee Chih-te from the *United Daily News* analysed, the biggest constraint for Taiwan's media comes from the market

“carrot” on the mainland which the CCP government has been dangling cleverly with political goals in mind. Su Yung-yao from the *Liberty Times* pointed out that Taiwanese journalists are greatly circumscribed in reporting cross-strait affairs when many representatives of Taiwan’s media have been flocking to the mainland, notably in the way of stationing correspondents in Beijing or elsewhere in order to explore the mainland market. To maintain the presence of their correspondents, the media have learnt to adopt a moderate and cooperative approach in dealing with the CCP government. To avoid undesirable manipulation, Su contended that the *Liberty Times*, as the most popular newspaper in Taiwan, would neither station its journalists in Beijing nor seek access to the mainland market.

Due to the security and ideological concerns, it is not likely to see in any near future that the news media on each side may have its information products fully and freely circulated on the other side. However, the “carrot” of the lucrative mainland market is “purposefully hung just before your nose” (Lee Chih-te from the *United Daily News*). While covering news on the mainland, the Taiwanese journalists have to weigh the costs and benefits of pursuing journalistic professionalism. Of course, this has not always been the case in dealing with common news reporting. When it comes to something sensitive and significant, however, special attention needs to be paid. A conversation with a journalist in Taipei (J-TP-TV-f) may provide some insights into how market concerns impact on news production.

Interviewer: While you are producing news program at your TV station, is there any possibility that you are influenced by the political factors of cross-strait relations?

Journalist: Mostly not, except those special cases, such as the publication of Zhao Ziyang’s (赵紫阳)<sup>100</sup> memoirs. Our company would consider if we should cover this topic.

Interviewer: Then, did your company cover it?

Journalist: Yes, we did.

Interviewer: Was it you who undertook the coverage?

Journalist: Yes, it was.

Interviewer: In what way? You know, these memoirs have been banned on the mainland.

Journalist: Since our company has some considerations of the mainland market, we changed our angle of covering this news. We reported that this book was banned in the

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<sup>100</sup> Former CCP’s Secretary General, Zhao is widely acknowledged as the CCP’s liberal and reformer, who lost his power at the time of the 1989 Tiananmen tragedy for his sympathetic attitude towards the student protestors. Entitled as *Prisoner of the State: The Secret Journal of Zhao Ziyang*, Zhao’s memoirs are reportedly reconstructed from his hours of tape recordings which provides “the most intimate knowledge” of how the Tiananmen tragedy arose.

See *The Times*. 15 May 2009. Secret Tiananmen Square Memoirs of Zhao Ziyang to be Published. Accessed on 05 July 2010 at <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article6284837.ece>



mainland, whereas it was allowed to be published in Hong Kong, given the scheme of “one country, two systems”; and this difference may be interpreted as a sort of democracy that Beijing was trying to demonstrate. In fact, we didn’t touch the contents of the memoirs directly.

...

Interviewer: If so, in covering particular news topics, your company would care for the perceived influence on the mainland, or care if the mainland government is happy with that?

Journalist: (*with hesitation*) Actually, yes.

Interviewer: Why is that?

Journalist: Because everybody wants to do business with the mainland.

Interviewer: (*laughed*) A TV station is also a business rather than a news medium?

Journalist: The TV station not only needs to cover news, but also intends to manage relationships (*guanxi*). From my viewpoint, the highly practical question is that quite a few (Taiwan) TV stations are seeking the opportunity to gain access to the mainland’s TV market.

...

Interviewer: My question is that, since none of Taiwan’s TV stations has been authorised to broadcast on the mainland, how can the mainland know what sort of news you have broadcast in Taiwan? Should you be that cautious?

Journalist: Because the (mainland’s) Taiwan Affairs Office system<sup>101</sup> can receive our broadcast. Their officials may watch our TV programmes through satellite dishes. Actually they are fully aware of what we are doing here.

## Key Findings

Based on the previous sections of the interview data, six key findings have been summarised as below:

1. With profound historical and international implications, cross-strait relations are perceived by cross-strait journalists as a highly political complex, which also incorporates media exchanges and the journalist as integral parts. A three-levelled stratification (as shown on Figure 6.1) may be of heuristic value in this relation.

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<sup>101</sup> Here it refers to those both at the central government level and the provincial/local level.

2. Reporting cross-strait relations is a specialised field as well as a highly politicised task (in the case of mainland journalists), calling for journalists' sophisticated grasp of intellectual knowledge of both sides. Due to the remarkable differences between the two sides, journalists are actually walking the tightrope between two sociopolitical structures/cultures in general and two media systems/cultures in particular. Therefore, the journalists are supposed to express greater intellectual adaptability and system tolerance in their reporting missions. On the mainland side, much stricter restrictions have been imposed on the media and journalists by the CCP government in dealing with cross-strait affairs. On the Taiwan side, though the media and journalists enjoy much freer latitude, they have been susceptible to market forces and the transition of ruling power between the KMT and the DPP (in 2000 and 2008 respectively).

3. There appears to be a glaring gap between journalists' self-perceptions and the government's perceptions on the journalists. On one hand, professionally and instinctively, cross-strait journalists are inclined to define their job from the journalistic perspective. Their self-perceptions are characterised by a rich variety of metaphors, among which the communicating role is the most noticeable. On the other hand, the government on both sides appears to be reluctant to view cross-strait journalists in the same professional way. Rather, they tend to look on them through the lens of politics and ideology. As a consequence, the media are no longer just the media and journalists are no longer just journalists.

4. In comparison with those journalists in 1987 and 1991 cases, the interview data reveals a declining historical trajectory of the role played by individual journalists in achieving breakthroughs compared with a rising trend of the journalists' collective participation in the expansion of cross-strait relations. Indeed, the ice-breaking age has been replaced by the extensive exchange age. Within this shift, cross-strait journalists and the mass media in general may be both instruments of peace and tools of conflict in different circumstances, such as the cases in 1987 Lee and Hsu's visit, in 1989 Tiananmen Square and in 2008 when Taiwanese independence supporters clashed with mainland journalists in Taipei.

5. Cross-strait relations may be viewed as a process of communication. While the governments on the two sides refuse to acknowledge and speak to each other, the media and journalists have been working as the intermediary — the channel of communication — between the two sides. With such remarkable indispensability, the cross-strait journalist has been used by the government as a sort of communication message, a political trial balloon or even a *de facto* diplomat/negotiator. This particular application of the journalist has been illustrated by the 1991 case in Chapter V and the 2001 and 2005 cases in this chapter.

6. Being a battlefield of political tug-of-war, cross-strait media exchanges appear to be an emerging field of diplomacy,<sup>102</sup> closely associated with cross-strait propaganda and media diplomacy. In this respect, all three concepts are concerned with the usage of mass media for the policy goal and the formulation of media policy in cross-strait relations. In particular, media exchanges focus on mutual opening doors in the mass media by the two polities, and thus relates to highly political issues concerning legitimacy, ideology, security and press freedom. Thus, it is quite natural that media exchanges have always been susceptible to the fluctuations of cross-strait relations, coupled with bargaining and negotiation, some of which has been conducted through the unofficial or semi-official agents such as ARATS and SEF.

## Theoretical Discussions

The role of cross-strait journalists is a multidimensional phenomenon for both empirical inquiry and academic investigation. Building on the empirical results presented above, the following theoretical discussions are to centre around three main dimensions: historical, political, and journalistic.

### 1. Historical Dimension

Firstly, the journalist's participation in cross-strait relations may be viewed as an historical phenomenon. By reporting cross-strait affairs, cross-strait journalists are virtually recording history.

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<sup>102</sup> This finding is grounded upon the particular situation of the cross-strait context where *diplomacy* is a sensitive term (see also Footnote No.103). Generally speaking, media exchanges are included in the broad category of international exchanges. In both diplomatic practice and international relations theory, international exchanges are considered as a traditional tool of public diplomacy, characterised by the government-run international exchange programmes, such as the Fulbright Scholarships of the USA. In particular, Cull (2008) lists exchange as the five components of public diplomacy (Chapter III). However, the future critical research on exchanges, as Scott-Smith suggests, should address "the importance of context" (2008:189). In the cross-strait context, as noted earlier, there had no virtual media exchanges (not to mention government-run exchange programmes) prior to 1987, except the traditional war of words — propaganda. In the light of cross-strait détente, a variety of barriers on media exchanges have been gradually dismantled. As a consequence, increasing media exchanges produce new political (diplomatic) effects, something with which the antagonistic governments on the two sides have never dealt before. Thus, media exchanges, though with a business and journalistic orientation in the cross-strait context, appear to be an emerging field of diplomacy. For more background of international exchanges in the US context, see among others, Snow, Nancy. 2008. International Exchanges and the U.S. Image. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616 (March 2008):198-222. Snow, Nancy. 2009b. Valuing Exchange of Persons in Public Diplomacy. In *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, edited by N. Snow and P. M. Taylor. New York: Routledge.

Such an historical phenomenon, therefore, demands historical considerations for both *cross-strait relations* and *cross-strait journalists*.

On one hand, it is important to consider in which direction cross-strait relations have developed over the period of 1987-2009. Clearly, having been almost totally isolated from each other for three decades, mainland China and Taiwan departed from an historical juncture, in the 1980s, where there was “virtually no trade, no investment, no travel, no political dialogue, or cultural exchange in either direction” (Harding 1994:236) (Chapter II). Against the backdrop of a diminishing Cold War and a world of interdependence in the 1980s, the two sides were drawn closer by their common history, language, family ties and economic interests in an interactive process, which has been greatly facilitated by modern transportation and telecommunications. Undoubtedly, the state of mutual isolation has gone forever whereas cross-strait relations have been evolving in a direction that will be more supportive of communication and cooperation, although always coloured by contention and conflict. It is in this historical process that the journalists stepped into the cross-strait arena in the 1980s. The journalists have been in the vanguard of the expansion of people-to-people relations. It is also in this historical context that the journalists have been conceptualised as cross-strait journalists in this study.

On the other hand, it is worthy of note that cross-strait journalists, as a journalistic cohort, have undergone a formative stage over this historical period, starting from jumping the gun, with their cognitive vacuum and ideological terror of the other side in the 1980s, to regularly alternating between the two matrices (R- and A-) for their reporting missions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Amid this historical evolution, these journalists have moved from “childishness” to “maturity” in a better understanding of how to position themselves in cross-strait relations and how to deal with the government on each side. It has been a painstaking, sometimes confusing while basically rewarding process of “growing up”. Arguably, cross-strait journalists have become a group of media insiders who have a much clearer idea of the difference and similarity between the two matrices than those “outsiders”. Chou Pei-fen from the *China Times* articulated a cynical view based on her 12 years of experience (1998-2009), “Eventually, you will find out that the governments on both sides treat us in the same way.” A mainland journalist (J-FZ-TV-m-1) with 19 years of seniority (1991-2009) cautioned, “If a medium would not listen to the government, I believe, its funeral day is near.” Nowadays, Taiwanese journalists would not share the same views on their reporting missions in the mainland with Lee and Hsu in the case of 1987, nor would mainland correspondents in Taipei envisage the same crazy media exposure as Fan and Guo received in the case of 1991 (Chapter V). A few historical media-broker icons and heroes have retreated from this journalistic stage whereas the younger generation is surging forwards for their routine reporting missions. “As in the Yangtse River, the waves behind drive on those before,” prescribed Susie Chiang, who quit her job as the Hong Kong correspondent with the *China Times* in 1992 and currently acts as the Chairwoman of CS Culture Foundation (香江文化交流基金会) to promote cross-strait exchanges, with Hong Kong as

the intermediary. “It was a personal transition,” she recalled, “As a journalist, I used to ‘fight’ with my pen. But afterwards I wanted to shift to a new angle — promote cross-strait relations directly and personally — so as to see my own achievements.” The shift in her role, from an academic perspective, approximates to a transition from media (broker) diplomacy to public diplomacy.

## 2. Political Dimension

Within such an historical context, the role of journalists in cross-strait relations may be also viewed as a political phenomenon. Since the retreat of the KMT government to Taipei and the establishment of the CCP government in Beijing in 1949, the two sides have been utilising the media as a propaganda tool to justify their own legitimacy and propagate respective policies on cross-strait issues. For over three decades, this kind of propaganda had been characterised by war of words and untrue reporting (Chapter II). Since the 1980s, due to the transformation that occurred on both sides, notably the democratisation on Taiwan and economic reform on the mainland, the mutually provocative propaganda has been largely welded into the expansion of the growing people-to-people interactions in general and the rise of media personnel exchanges in particular. This process, as discussed in case studies of Chapter V, was well demonstrated by media-broker diplomacy in the 1980s and 1990s. Since cross-strait relations evolved into the new millennium when the DPP liberalised the restrictions on the mainland journalists’ presence in Taipei in 2001, media exchanges have been treading the path of media diplomacy through which the two sides are trying to employ the media to achieve their policy goal. All of these transitions would be totally impossible without the involvement of cross-strait journalists. As the interview data reveal, although the journalist’s participation in cross-strait relations has been addressed in practice as media exchanges and categorised as a type of cultural exchange in a broad sense, both the government and the journalist would not doubt that the political impact of media exchanges have extended far beyond the media and cultural spheres.

Therefore, in theory, it could be argued that media exchanges are an unrecognised<sup>103</sup> field of diplomacy in the cross-strait context. In this sense, cross-strait media exchanges are a battlefield of political tug-of-war, a battlefield of gaining the hearts and minds of the people on both sides. Ultimately, it is a site for demonstrating soft power towards each other. Such a highly political and sensitive battlefield should “well” justify the government’s perception of journalists as *not* being

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<sup>103</sup> The term “unrecognised” is employed here for two reasons. In the academic sense, it claims the intellectual linkage between cross-strait media exchanges and media-broker diplomacy/media diplomacy (and even public diplomacy in a broader sense). In the empirical sense, it cautions the political obstacle of this linkage in the cross-strait context due to the sensitivity of *diplomacy*.

purely journalists. Thus, the role of cross-strait journalists may be redefined in political terms as media brokers, mediators, negotiators, go-betweens, propagandists, publicists, PR professionals, and so on.

Carrying such extraordinary implications for politics on both sides, it is not surprising to see that the cooperation in this area has been “particularly difficult” (Clough 1994:220), characterised by constant twist and turns, bargaining and negotiation. To borrow a term from a mainland journalist (J-BJ-NP-f), media exchanges are the political “toothpaste to be squeezed”. Particularly regarding media personnel exchanges, as Clough notes, “[T]he authorities on both sides of the strait have restricted the presence of media representatives from the other side. Both feared that correspondents might be used by the other side for political purposes” (1999:60). Nevertheless, both sides have been gradually opening the door and offering the “toothpaste”. While discussing Greater China in 1990s, Harding argued that “it is increasingly likely that the unity of China will be expressed in economic and cultural interaction, rather than in political integration” (1994:263). After more than a decade, this observation still seems to be sensible. It can be envisaged that the emerging battlefield of media exchanges, with its extending capability of influencing all of these integrations, will be a touchstone of the prospect of cross-strait relations. Consequently, cross-strait journalists will continue to have multiple roles to play.

### **3. Journalistic Dimension**

Normatively, reporting cross-strait affairs should be a journalistic business and therefore cross-strait journalists should also be rehabilitated as journalists proper. In practice, however, cross-strait journalists may not be neatly classified as a prototypical profession. Rather, this journalistic cohort has always been found lingering around a clamouring and confusing crossroads, where it has to deal with the challenges posed by mediation and impartiality, political assignment and deviation from journalism, market pressure and journalistic professionalism, Chinese culture and Taiwanese identity, individualism and nationalism. It is no less than a Catch-22 situation. As long as one falls into this situation, it would be hard to escape.

As part of the cultural and intellectual elite, journalists on both sides have a shared cultural heritage, in Chitty’s term, a Chinese cultural E-matrix (2000:15; Chitty 2009b:67-68), within which the Confucian literati have acted as “the bearers of progress toward a rational administration and of all ‘intelligence’” (Weber 1948:416). Thus both sides inherit the tradition of Confucianism to commit themselves to the cause of serving the state and for the people. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, inspired by the

ideological appeal of what Hallin and Mancini conceptualised as “the liberal model”<sup>104</sup> (2005: 217; 227-231) media system, both sides have also engaged in longstanding struggle for journalistic autonomy, which was well demonstrated by their joint efforts to aid the 1989 Tiananmen democracy movement. Being “plugged into different political and economic systems”, however, the two subgroups of cross-strait journalists have been “carrying with them different role prescriptions” (Pan and Lu 2003). On the mainland side, following the sufferings of the journalists in Mao’s China and media commercialisation in Deng’s China, the mainland journalists’ understanding of Chinese intellectual tradition and journalistic professionalism has been welded with what Lee termed “Leninist-disguises” (1990:7-8; Lee 2001:247), which calls for the media’s complete submission to the Party as its mouthpieces. From a political-economy perspective, the mainland journalists “have begun to settle for the role of ‘hired’ publicity officers” (He 2000:143), “driven as much by the mission of political propagation as by the market impetus of profit making” (He 2004:191-192). It is worthy of note that, for cross-strait journalists on the mainland, the role of propaganda still remains dominant despite the rapidly expanding market forces. In this sense, they represent what Pan and Lu categorised as the journalistic discourse of Party-press system<sup>105</sup> (2003:218-219). Amid the rapid media commercialisation, however, they seem to have found a favourable vantage point to accommodate both propagation and market. “Don’t you know that our Taiwan news has always been good to sell the newspaper?” a mainland journalist’s (J-BJ-NP-f) self-content implies how such a popular topic appeals to the nationalistic sentiment in quest of unification. On the Taiwan side, the Confucian intellectual tradition was largely recast in the process of democratisation and media liberalisation since the 1980s. Owing to the legitimisation of “Free China”, Taiwan’s journalistic professionalism has been influenced more by the prevailing American journalistic standard. Thus, Taiwanese media and journalists tend to position themselves as the Fourth Estate, which, in the American context, defines the role played by the press as “advocate for educating the masses, protecting democracy, and forging the public interest outside the domains of the media owners or privileged classes” (Snow 2007:82). As such, the Taiwanese journalists and editors have a long tradition of battling against the political forces that would silence their voices, characterised by the opposition magazines which ultimately gave rise to the formation of the DPP, and the maverick *Independence Evening Post*, and to some extent the *China Times* during Yu Chi-chung’s (余纪忠) era and the establishment of the *Formosa Television Corporation (FTV)* in the 1990s. Nowadays, some Taiwanese journalists seem to be uncritical or tolerant of the status quo in which Taiwan’s media have to reduce their independence for the sake of market considerations. After all, with the invasion of journalism by commercialism, “it was wholly beyond their power to erect any effective barrier” (Carr-Saunders and Wilson 2001:40).

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<sup>104</sup> Primarily represented by the North Atlantic nations, namely Canada, Ireland, the UK, and the USA, this model is characterised by limited role of the state in media system and strong journalistic professionalism which advocates “a ‘neutral’ media serving the society as a whole” (Hallin and Mancini 2005: 230-231).

<sup>105</sup> Pan and Lu identify four journalistic discourses in China today: Party-press, Confucian intellectual, professionalism, and market economy (2003: 218-219).

Due to distinctiveness of media ecologies, it is not surprising to see different performance and behaviour between mainland journalists and Taiwanese journalists being interviewed. While most of the mainland journalists remained more prudent in their statements, disappointingly, only one journalist (J-GZ-NP-f) would question the rationality of the CCP's existing Taiwan policy and tight control on the media. Concerning their Taiwanese counterparts, they appeared to be more straightforward and outspoken, extensively criticising the policies of both the current KMT and the previous DPP administrations. Both sides considered, it is also no surprise that a sharp contrast arose regarding the issue of anonymity: while 6 out of 7 mainland journalists preferred to remain anonymous, 6 out of 7 Taiwanese journalists were willing to be responsible for their statements with full names. Obviously, the interviewer has no authority to intervene in the subject's exclusive right to make their own decision on anonymity, which is pertinent to research ethics. But, such a stark contrast does reflect marked differences between the two subgroups as to how to assess the perceived risk of expressing personal opinions in cross-strait affairs. Regarding the two journalists in Hong Kong, both of them gave credit to the relatively free media environment in Hong Kong and were happy with their real identities to be used in this data presentation.

## Summary

In this chapter, the interview data have been organised around a series of historical events and intellectual concepts, supplemented with case studies, documents and conversations. This kind of data presentation suggests a learning process in which the core research question — the role of the journalist — unfolds event by event, concept by concept. This learning process, in the form of an intellectual journey, accommodates the multidimensional nature of the research question. Through conceptualisation, description, interpretation, and theoretical discussion, this chapter is intended to contribute to the refinement of our conceptual apparatus in the cross-strait context, one of the most difficult international flash points. It also aspires to construct the collective image of cross-strait journalists, a journalistic and diplomatic cohort, highlighting their self-perceptions, self-satisfaction and self-criticism. Heading towards the terminal of this intellectual journey, the final Chapter VII is to conclude this thesis by showing how the research question and proposition have been addressed, discussing shortcomings and contribution to society/fields as well as pointing the way to future research.



## **Chapter VII Conclusion: Mediating Past, Present and Future across the Taiwan Strait**

The Chinese have a ferocious vocabulary but surely some distinction must be made between what they say and what they do, and between what they might like to do and what they are able or likely to be able to do (Fulbright 1967:151).

...Taiwan's status remained a deeply emotional and nationalistic issue for Chinese leaders and citizens (Sutter 2008:201).

### **Introduction**

While I was writing this concluding chapter, I attended the Melbourne Conference on China<sup>106</sup> held in July 2010. My role in this international conference was to present a paper based on Chapter VI — intensive interviews of journalists in mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong (SAR). Remarkably, this paper presentation generated vigorous debate during its Q&A session. Participants of Chinese origin accounted for a considerable portion of the audience. Perhaps the most debatable and controversial question was posed by a Chinese international student. Showing obvious disagreement with my application of media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy models in cross-strait relations, he was insistent that I should define the term “diplomacy” and also clarify if the relations between China and Taiwan are “diplomatic” relations. Immediately, the eyes of all of the audience were fixed on me, awaiting a “diplomatic” debate between two Chinese students. I answered this question by reminding him of the definition mentioned in the Literature Review (Chapter III), that recognised that diplomacy could occur whenever there were different identities present in a social interaction

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<sup>106</sup> A significant academic event initiated and hosted by the Asia Institute at the University of Melbourne since 2009. The participants came from Australia, China, Hong Kong (SAR), Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, the UK, and the USA.

(Constantinou 1996: xiv, 113). I also stated that drawing upon media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy models did not mean that my research weighed in on either side of Taiwan independence or “one China” positions (whatever my own position might be as a Chinese mainlanders). After the panel session, three participants (two from China and one from Australia) told me that this was a “too emotional” question that was being raised at an academic conference, and that they were very eager to learn how I would defend my academic stance on this “sensitive” issue. Indeed, the incident that happened in Melbourne, Australia serves as a firsthand demonstration of what I call the “major stumbling blocks” that exist in reality between the field of international communication and the study of cross-strait relations (Chapter III). This has been especially the case in mainland China, where research topics have been discouraged at the stage of a research proposal, by cautious colleagues in a department, as being politically inexpedient and academically questionable. To reach the stage of formalisation and theorisation as in this chapter, as a “conclusion”, however academically neutral (as in this case) would have been unthinkable. Nevertheless, it is from such a milieu that this thesis project derives, develops, and also benefits. One should also bear in mind that the Chinese approach to scholarship has not been stuck in the ruts of an old paradigm: The proposal for this thesis was presented, at an earlier stage, in 2007, at a conference at Tsinghua University in Beijing and no concern was expressed about any emotive nature or inadmissibility of the topic. As in the case of most diasporic communities, Chinese expatriates living in Australia tend to be hypersensitive and overzealous in relation to particular issues.

Being unique in the international arena, cross-strait relations are a process of communication for both the government and the public, academics and professionals. A hot topic for academic inquiry, cross-strait relations deserve a broader perspective (Chapter I, III). From such a broader perspective, this concluding chapter revisits the research proposition of this thesis, reviews its significance and offers relevant recommendations for mainland China and Taiwan with reference to how to undertake cross-strait media diplomacy in a global context, so that the sea lane to peaceful resolution (the outcome desired by the international community and both parties) can become less choppy.

## **Proposition Revisited and Prediction**

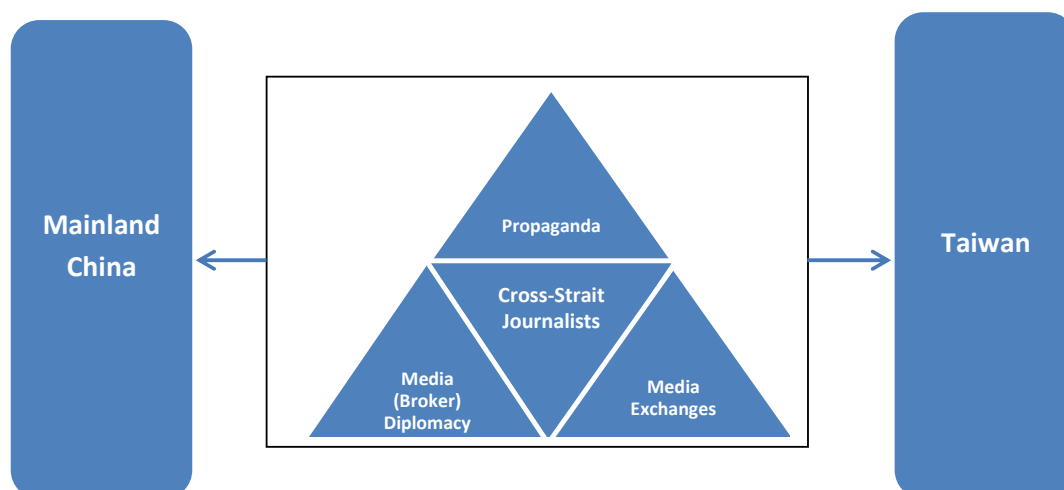
Throughout this thesis, I have been trying to examine the role of the journalist on both sides in encouraging and extending relations between mainland China and Taiwan through media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy models. At the outset, the thesis formulates a research proposition thus: cross-strait relations are a process of communication within which the news media act as the indicator of the political climate and journalists in particular have been important actors in been

important actors in constructing a peaceful climate. Historically journalists have been instrumental in improving cross-strait relations at times and at other times the news media have ratcheted up animosity. However, their role as mediators has been achieved at the cost of journalistic independence and neutrality (Chapter I and IV). Based on case studies and intensive interviews conducted in the previous chapters, this proposition may be revisited from four aspects. First, in order to depict the historical trajectory of the role of cross-strait journalists, the thesis explores the research question through a rich variety of historical events. Consequently, the research shows that journalists have aligned themselves closely with the history of cross-strait relations over the period from 1987-2009. Indeed, while covering those historical events, journalists played a significant role in promoting the relations between the two sides, notably as media brokers through the landmark events in 1987 and 1991. Second, the interview data indicate a declining role for individual journalists accompanied by an increasing trend of journalists as the collective force that participates in this historical process. Third, it appears that the role of the journalist (and the news media in a broad sense) cannot be confined to or simplified as exclusive facilitation of the expansion of cross-strait relations. Rather, the effects which the journalist has on cross-strait relations are much more diverse, resonating with what Paletz and Entman stated in their research on media and power in American context — the mass media have “contradictory effects”(1981:6). Journalists may help to improve the understanding and interactions between the two sides as shown by the case studies. Nevertheless, through their practice and their work on the news media, journalists may sometimes actually alienate two sides from each other just as did the Taiwanese journalists during the Tiananmen tragedy in 1989 and the mainland journalists encountered in the conflict with Taiwanese protestors in 2008 in Taipei. Fourth, the Taiwan Strait is a site of mediation. Journalists both benefit and suffer from the indispensability of the media in cross-strait mediation. What they benefit from is the historical standing they have attained as significant political actors in cross-strait relations. What they suffer from is the journalistic independence they have to sacrifice in the face of cross-strait problems which have been usually intertwined with nationalism, partisanship, ideology and personal identity. Undoubtedly, quite a few cross-strait journalists have been attempting to pursue their journalistic goals. They may frequently be frustrated by the conflict between cross-strait relations and the virtue of journalism. The journalistic goal may be desirable, but it is somewhat unfeasible. After all, it is under the broad umbrella of diplomacy — even if in this case the relations are not between two equal and sovereign (as recognised by the international community) political formations.

To capture the interactions between journalists and cross-strait relations, a typology has been developed as shown below in Figure 7.1. Theoretically informed by international communication theories and approaches discussed in Chapter III, this typology is more concerned with the historical situation after 1987, although its genesis may be traced back to 1949, or even further. Given the I-matrix as the research core of this thesis, cross-strait journalists occupy the central place in the picture. Painted in very broad strokes, the picture mainly represents a dynamic tri-polar plexus of

media diplomacy/media-broker diplomacy, propaganda, and media exchanges. Although this tri-polar plexus has been visualised in the form of three clear-cut triangles, it is evident that the three dimensions closely entangle within their overlapping field in which the journalist is central to all their key activities. From an historical perspective, as specified in Chapter II and VI, propaganda has been the most traditional form of cross-strait media interactions. Nowadays, propaganda still commands an important location, in particular on the mainland China side. With ebb and flow, media-broker diplomacy strikingly came into existence during the 1980s and 1990s, signifying the inception of media personnel's reciprocal visits in the name of media exchanges. As documented and analysed through case studies in Chapter V, media-broke diplomacy produced fairly positive impact on cross-strait relations in terms of signalling, building confidence, and promoting negotiations. Afterwards, media-broker diplomacy gave way to media diplomacy, which, according to Gilboa's definition, refers to the uses of the mass media by leaders on the two sides to build confidence and to mobilise public support for agreements (1998:62; 2002a:741). With more orientation towards journalistic and industrial practices, media exchanges have been highlighted on their own merits as the third dimension within this tri-polar plexus. Since 1987, media exchanges have advanced through a variety of channels and activities, including news exchanges, personnel visits, stationing resident correspondents, co-production of TV and radio programmes, and journalism and communication education exchanges, etc. Considering the sensitivity of cross-strait relations, one should also be keenly aware that even the business-oriented media exchanges have profound political (diplomatic) effects on both sides.

**Figure 7.1 Typology of Journalists and Cross-Strait Relations**



Through the lens of conflict management, in particular Gilboa's (2006; 2009b) framework for media and conflict resolution (Chapter III), it is worthy of note that the cross-strait conflict, as one of the

most difficult flash points in the world, may move back and forth within the phases of conflict (prevention, management, resolution and reconciliation) and up to now no comprehensive resolution and reconciliation have been achieved between mainland and Taiwan. Regarding the phases of prevention and management, the tri-polar plexus, with the cross-strait journalist as the central player, has vindicated its positive functions of signalling, mediating, building confidence, promoting negotiations, and moderating/balancing conflict in cross-strait relations (Chapter V, VI). But, at times, the media and journalist also demonstrated dysfunctions by provoking animosity between the two sides.

Beyond this preceding typology exists an even broader territory of public diplomacy between mainland China and Taiwan, given the absence of official contacts. At a higher level, a semi-official diplomatic channel between the ARATS and SEF has been serving as two authorised “white gloves” of negotiating on practical issues (Chapter II). At a lower level, we can also locate a wide range of people-to-people exchanges, which may be also categorised as track-two diplomacy or in Clough’s terms “people-to-people diplomacy”<sup>107</sup> across the Taiwan Strait (1993; 1994; 1999), including business, academic, education, arts, religion, sports, tourism, and science and technology exchanges, which are not the focus of this study.

Ideally, this typology can serve as a “window” into the past, present and future. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the actual cross-strait relations may be even more complex than any abstraction of its intricacies. The most important value of this typology is that it helps to map the historical, political, and professional localities of the cross-strait journalist from a broader perspective. To this point, this typology gives us a realistic insight into the role of the journalist in one of the most difficult international flash points.

Being deeply rooted in the heritage of social sciences, this research project commits itself to being *predictive*, a function prescribed as one of the “five basic characteristics”<sup>108</sup> of scientific research (Wimmer and Dominick 2006:11-14). To fulfil this prescriptive function, I would borrow the idea of “a usable past” which espouses the usage of historical figures and events to “clarify the present and discover the future” (Edgerton 2001:4). Drawing on the usable past which has been investigated in the previous chapters, we should be keenly aware that the total insulation of the two sides against each other has become a sort of historical memory. A rich variety of cross-strait exchanges have consequently flourished against the backdrop of globalisation in the post-Cold War era in general and China’s economic boom in particular. Thus cross-strait relations have been largely fashioned in the forge of public diplomacy.

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<sup>107</sup> Clough also addresses these cross-strait interactions as “people-to-people cooperation” (1994: 216) and “people-to-people activities” (1999: 60).

<sup>108</sup> The other four characteristics are being *public*, *objective*, *empirical*, and *cumulative*.

Although it is hard to predict with certainty how long lasting the current mainland China-Taiwan modus vivendi is likely to be, the foregoing typology, which derives from the past and present, may illuminate the map of the future of the cross-strait journalist and media diplomacy. At the individual level, as the “feeler” and “forerunner” of the two sides, cross-strait journalists are no longer the exclusive mediators they used to be: they will find new courses laid out for them towards their original role of journalist and profession of journalism. Within this shift, some journalists may establish their journalistic credibility on both sides when cross-strait media exchanges abound. In the foreseeable future, “the diplomatic void between the PRC and Taiwan” (Lee 2000a:25) will be (actually has been) occupied by increasingly diversified participants from other walks of life as cross-strait civil exchanges have become easier.<sup>109</sup> Due to the attributes of their profession, however, journalists will continue to be the high-profile participants and contributors in this public diplomacy arena. While the Internet and new media come into vogue, those journalists who disseminate their ideas and thoughts on the World Wide Web will be likely to play a more active, aggressive and important role in mediating between the people on the two sides, notably netizens and the younger generation. Furthermore, in Taylor’s blueprint for our information age, the profession of journalism will be characterised by massive growth and fragmentation because “ordinary citizens are given greater opportunities to serve as eyewitness reporters” in terms of their access to the computer, mobile phone and palmcorder and thus “the rules that have traditionally governed the responsibilities of reporters as a profession have changed considerably” (2001:252,253). As cyberspace has become an increasingly influential public communication platform less affected and constrained by the government censorship, Lee Chih-te from the *United Daily News* noted during the interview in Taipei that a couple of mainland correspondents have their personal blogs on which they present themselves as being more outspoken, upfront, and also insightful in commenting on cross-strait affairs than they appear to be in their routine reporting for the media with which they are affiliated.

At the (media) institution level, media diplomacy will continue to gain momentum in cross-strait relations. Not only will the news media be a significant channel for cross-strait communication, more importantly, they will be what Snow characterises as “a battlefield” for the two sides to win the hearts and minds of the people (2007:134). In any attempt to promote economic and cultural interactions or pursue the possibility of political integration between the two sides, media diplomacy will be found to be indispensable and inescapable. As the most dynamic part of public diplomacy, media diplomacy is becoming “an important tool in the arsenal of smart power”, which in Nye’s terms combines both “hard and soft power resources” (2008:94). It is envisaged that it will be a long process for both sides to wrestle with each other in this smart power arena. Cross-strait understanding and trust may be cultivated through media diplomacy which will be likely to facilitate the solution of the problems between the two sides.

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<sup>109</sup> This situation may be illustrated by both the exodus of an estimated million Taiwanese residing in mainland China and increasing numbers of mainland tourists travelling to Taiwan after the travel ban was lifted by the KMT government in 2008.

After WWII, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) sponsored a first ever international survey entitled “How Nations See Each Other”. One of the observations framed by the survey report is that: “Perhaps two nations collide with each other in war because they are following different ‘maps,’ both of which show clear channels ahead” (Buchanan and Cantril 1972:3). Somewhat strangely, we have been constantly catching glimpses of such different “maps” in cross-strait relations, overcast by the shadow of war since 1949. Given the fluidity of cross-strait relations, the difference of these maps may be called a “mediation gap”. It is this “mediation gap” that has been driving media diplomacy over the past several decades. Therefore, based on public opinion and media systems on the two sides, I would like to put forward a further proposition: As long as there are different “maps” in the minds of the people on the two sides, there will be the “mediation gap” for media diplomacy; Moreover, as long as the CCP government uses the news media as “mouthpieces”, there will be a *raison d’être* for media diplomacy in cross-strait relations. Being highly appealing to mediation, professional journalists and what Taylor calls “eyewitness reporters” (2001:252), as those who perform media diplomacy, certainly have a “longstanding” role to play.

## **Significance, Limitations and Suggestions**

The elaboration of the typology of journalists and cross-strait relations visualises the research presented in this thesis as a subject of international communication. Such a topic, as argued in Chapter I and III, has continuing significance for us today and tomorrow. With the conclusion at hand, I would like to summarise its significance as such: First, within social science in general and the field of international communication in particular, this research project demonstrates a strong tendency towards the combination of human individual (the journalist) and historical perspective, which is viewed by Rosengren as “a welcome complement” (1993:7-8) in contrast with old social science approach (Chapter IV). Particularly, the journalist in this thesis has been treated not only as part of the elite, but also as part of the public with reference to undertaking public diplomacy. From a grass roots point of view, this I-matrix study (Chapter III, IV) has highlighted a largely “ignored” inquiry in the fields of international communication and international relations (Chitty 2004a:62) and thus is expected to make its contribution to advance knowledge in this direction. Second, this research tries to make the connection between the field of international communication and the study of cross-strait relations, and in doing so aligns itself with the view that political (East-West) and economic (North-South) dimensions within and between Asian social formations “will become increasingly important to Asian scholars of international communication in the future” (Chitty 2010:191). Hopefully, the study of cross-strait relations, on one side, may be enriched by this

research with a broader international communication perspective which in reality might incur some political problems. International communication along with its theories and intellectual rigors, on the other side, may prove their “legitimacy” and adaptability in cross-strait relations, a “grey area” in the international arena. Third, regarding the core research question, this research has showcased cross-strait media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy based on the assessment of the role played by the journalist. By conducting such an academic inquiry, this research has opened up the question of its academic and practical relevance to relations between fractures polities that are hot spots, such as South Korea and North Korea, Israel and Palestine, Greece and Cyprus, Sri Lanka and its Northern & Eastern Provinces, and Canada and its Quebec Province. Although it is not the task of this research to theorise media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy at the global level, the research on cross-strait media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy may help to better the understanding of the media/journalist as the global diplomat in these relevant contexts. Furthermore, in sharing common ground with other contexts, this research also commits itself to promoting the resolution of intra-national and international conflicts. Fourth, this research has always borne in mind that journalists are actually those with “a hard and exacting profession” (Paletz and Entman 1981:x). Thus, it not only focuses on their role in cross-strait media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy, but also concerns the dilemma to them presented by this diplomatic function. While examining the effects of global television news on U.S. policy in international conflict, Gilboa criticises the lack of scholarly exploration of “the effects global coverage is having on the work of journalists and editors” (2005a:15). Indeed, two-way effects demand interactive research. At that point, this thesis strives to strengthen such a two-way exploration by presenting some fresh, diversified and multidisciplinary visions in cross-strait context. Taken together, whatever the “effect” this thesis may claim by itself, the audience has the final say.

No research dares to claim to be perfect and this truism extends to any PhD thesis project in social sciences. As the UK Cambridge economic historian M. M. Postan argues, “Social science may be capable only of imperfect answers, but even imperfect answers have technological value” (1971:19). The technological (here meaning instrumental) value of this thesis, I believe, is that, despite its imperfection, it offers a preliminary map for others with relevant research interests, serving as a building block for *cumulative* knowledge building. Regarding the limitations of this thesis, the primary one actually derives from the researcher himself. Physically based in Sydney, Australia, despite my mainland Chinese provenance, I have striven to be *objective* and *impartial* in analysing cross-strait relations and to conduct an independent investigation of the role played by the journalists on the two sides. To that end, explicit rules and procedures have been developed and followed in research design (Chapter IV). However, from an interpretivist perspective, I, as the researcher, can no more be “detached” than can the informants (Miles and Huberman 1994:8). I can hardly have escaped the influence of the so-called “Reform Era” of China in which I grew up and of my own convictions and conceptual orientations (Chapter IV). Apart from these “human frailties”, this PhD



thesis project has been completed under a moderate time constraint of a 3.5-year candidature and a reasonable length of 85,000 words. As an academic apprentice, what I have achieved so far in this project differs considerably from what I had imagined before. Regarding the thesis project as such, the feasible approach to investigate the research question over a period of two decades is to present some “qualitative snapshots”. In terms of case studies and intensive interviews, the two major research methods used in this thesis, both are fundamentally constrained by limited samples and consequently lack the enviable power of generalisability. The results presented in this thesis, therefore, cannot claim to be exhaustive and should be open to further elaboration and scrutiny. Additionally, as the research is also concerned with the interactions between the journalist and government in the cross-strait negotiating process, it would be more constructive if some government officials had been recruited in the interview. In effect, however, as Laliberté complained while he was conducting interviews in 2004-2006 to explore a Taiwanese charity providing relief for mainland China, “relations between China and Taiwan are considered too sensitive” (2008:81) in mainland China. This thesis project may face even more important methodological challenges in mainland China where at worst the proposed recruitment of government officials would be fraught with difficulty while at best the officials within the hierarchy of Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) would tend to deal with the sensitive interview as though they were “treading on thin ice”.

Having explicitly discussed the limitations in light of the conditions under which this thesis project operates, it should be the right time to offer some suggestions as to how to advance academic inquiry within this particular area of research. From a perspective of communication and diplomacy, this thesis has presented the Taiwan Strait as a site of mediation. From an even broader intellectual perspective, the Taiwan Strait may be also viewed as a site of academic meditation and a microcosmic scene of the international arena, or of the P-Matrix (Chapter III). With mainland China and Taiwan on their respective sides, the strait conjures up the conflicts/interactions between the global and local, the East and West, communism and capitalism, unification and independence, history and culture, political disintegration and economic integration, military confrontation and diplomatic mediation. It is an exciting and fascinating geographical site to be used for academic inquiry in international communication, political communication and international relations (depending on one’s perspective) as well as a wide range of fields and disciplines in social sciences, not to mention the academic implications posed by the popularity of China’s market and Taiwan’s miracle. Given such a wealth of *empirical* resources, cross-strait relations may be justified as a promising area of research which deserves more systematic attention from academia.

Cross-strait communication and diplomacy is an intriguing phenomenon which may give rise to various possible focuses for study. Following this thesis’ particular course of inquiry, apart from the two landmark cases elaborated in Chapter V, there have been quite a few other cases in the cross-strait history which future research may scrutinise. Further research may also be devoted while not limited to: how the two sides developed their respective media diplomacy strategy and tactics in the

light of different periods or different ruling parties on Taiwan's side; how cross-strait media diplomacy is incorporated into a wider global public diplomacy of each side; and how the people on the two sides see each other and perceive the government on the other side; if possible, a cross-strait image test (public opinion poll) of the government may be conducted in the future. In the global context, international comparative studies of media (broker) diplomacy in some hot spots may be suggested as well.

It is worth noting that within this research area there even appears a school of thought in mainland China, which advocates the so-called "one country-two systems journalism". By its logic, the journalism under the political framework of "one country, two systems" deserves in-depth research. This school of thought first surfaced in 1995 when a monograph entitled *Cross-Strait Exchange and Journalistic Communication* was published in mainland China (Wu and Guo 1995). Guo Weifeng, one of the first mainland journalists visiting Taiwan in 1991, was one of the two co-editors. More recently, it has been actively propagated by Zhang Mingqing (张铭清),<sup>110</sup> the current Dean of the School of Journalism and Communication at Xiamen University<sup>111</sup> and the former Spokesman of China's State Council Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO), who used to oversee cross-strait media exchanges on the mainland side. Proudly sharing the same political argument with the CCP government, this orthodox study appeals to mainland China's academia. Meanwhile, however, such a partisan combination of journalism and Beijing's policy toward Taiwan has been questioned by some independent-minded scholars on both sides. Chinese renowned professor of journalism Chen Lidan points out that the concept of "one country-two systems journalism" is "still somewhat politicised" (Chen 28 November 2005). Taiwanese journalism scholar Wang Tai-li cautions that an effective way to understand this concept is to take a look at Hong Kong's journalism ecology after the takeover in 1997 (Wang 24 October 2008). To some extent, the emergence of such a school of thought may help to enhance the appreciation of the state of affairs and the attractiveness of cross-strait communication and diplomacy, which demands independent academic scrutiny.

## Recommendations: China's Rise and Taiwan's Value

The Taiwan Strait may be viewed as a showcase of miracles. Despite the looming war for several decades, miracles of modernisation have been presented alongside this narrow strait in the post-WWII and post-Cold War periods. While "Taiwan Miracle", characterised by both its economic

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<sup>110</sup> Zhang assumed his deanship in 2007. In an online published interview (in Chinese) of the same year, Zhang claimed that "our journalism" should be an integral part of "one country-two systems" theory. Accessed on 09 September 2010 at [http://www.xmnn.cn/xwzx/jrjd/200706/t20070606\\_224824.htm](http://www.xmnn.cn/xwzx/jrjd/200706/t20070606_224824.htm)

<sup>111</sup> For more information of this institution, see [www.xmu.edu.cn/english/index.asp](http://www.xmu.edu.cn/english/index.asp)

achievement and political modernisation in a so-called “Quiet Revolution” (Berman 1992:3,12; Copper 1988:ix), have continued to attract world attention, an even more “revolutionary” miracle, featured by an economic boom that has secured for China the title of “locomotive” of world economic growth, has unfolded on the other side of the strait. Although not perceived as desirable and complete as was Taiwan’s miracle, by Western countries, China’s economic miracle — exemplified by the purchasing power of its unparalleled market, for example — has already compelled these countries to develop a relatively pragmatic approach to the Chinese “communists”. In doing so, China has achieved a remarkable increase in wealth and prominence in the international arena. Within the “microcosmic” Taiwan Strait, the rapid rise of China’s economic power appears to be subverting the longstanding stereotype that Taiwan is “rich” and China is “poor”, at least from the perspective of the public. While describing people-to-people cooperation across the strait, Clough wrote in early 1990s: “Once the ROC lifted the ban on travel to the mainland in 1987, a flood of visitors made the trip...many of these travellers visited their poorer relatives to whom they brought substantial gifts in the form of goods and hard currency” (1994:216). Nowadays, it seems that such kind of visits no longer make sense. Rather, a flood of mainland visitors are flocking to Taiwan where they spend large sums of money in sightseeing and shopping. Regarding the media industry, during the intensive interviews I conducted in 2009, while some Taiwanese journalists lamented that the “good times” of Taiwan’s media had passed, one senior Chinese TV journalist even claimed that, through cross-strait media cooperation, mainland TV stations were virtually offering “relief” to their Taiwanese partners who were struggling in cash-strapped situations. It is this dramatic shift that has significant effects on how the journalists on both sides see and communicate with each other.

Regardless of the face value of wealth-power transformation, at least two real factors remain strikingly unchanged: insecurity and misunderstanding. At the official level, the governments on both sides are still vexed with a sense of being under siege, and consequently a profound concern for the regime’s survival. In Lasswell’s terms, their “tides of insecurity” are aroused by their “expectation of violence” (1965b:v,40). The CCP government in Beijing, though in part having popularised itself through economic success, “has had a peculiar and persisting sense of political insecurity...in a secure time” (Wang 2005:22,25), largely due to the fact that the CCP regime remains “an exception in the pattern of collapsing communist regimes at the end of the cold war” (Sutter 2008:2). On Taiwan side, either the KMT or the DPP as the ruling party, the ROC on Taiwan has taken pains in dealing with the insecurity over its survival as an independent political entity in the face of a giant neighbour, which has constantly voiced determination to use force in the case of the Taiwan contingency. At the public level, after cross-strait civil exchanges have been reinvigorated for more than two decades, the people on both sides still psychologically distance themselves from each other. There was a widespread while pessimistic agreement among the journalists interviewed that the two sides do not really understand each other at all. Is it the news media’s fault that the psychological barrier has always been there? Despite the shared Chinese culture, the real reconciliation across the

strait nevertheless seems to be an unfulfilled and impossible task. In the circumstances, then, it would be useful to make some recommendations for incremental actions on both sides to improve their cross-strait images and understandings. These recommendations have been formulated in a global diplomacy context, with a view that both sides may coexist peacefully and sustainably.

On mainland China's side, the status of Taiwan remains "a deeply emotional and nationalistic issue" (Sutter 2008:201), which is closely associated with a set of core Chinese interests, such as sustaining Communist Party rule, maintaining political stability and promoting economic development. The unification, on the surface, has been defined by the CCP government as its holy and "historical mission" of "reunifying the motherland" (Jiang 30 January 1995); it also serves as a means to enhance the legitimacy and standing of the government. Thus, it is natural that, in stark contrast with the "generally moderate Chinese diplomacy" (Sutter 2005:4; Sutter 2008:2), the CCP government has always presented itself as non-negotiating, domineering, and sometimes even reckless in handling the "Taiwan question". As Kim observes, the universal need for legitimacy "seems to have acquired salience in both traditional and contemporary Chinese politics" (1994:147-148). As a political formation, the CCP government should be well justified to seek its legitimacy through nationalism. In the course of decision-making and implementation of its policy toward Taiwan, however, this justifiable objective may be buffeted by the winds of world and local events, clouding judgement and perception on occasion. Perhaps the most undesirable effect is that the CCP government continues to have a negative image in Taiwan despite having addressed propaganda towards "Taiwanese compatriots" over several decades. Another stark reality is that its slogan exemplifying compromise, "one country, two systems", has been "long rejected by large majorities in Taiwan" (Sutter 2008:203). These unfavourable outcomes on China's side have been exacerbated by events, at some important historical junctures, with which the CCP government is associated. Examples include events at Tiananmen Square in 1989 and the PLA's military exercises in the Taiwan Strait in the 1990s during the presidential elections in Taiwan. In this respect, there has been a soft power deficit, on account of a paucity of attractive power and credibility, which is essential to generating soft power (Nye 2008:94), that has emerged as a challenge for the CCP in dealing with cross-strait relations.

Considering these setbacks, three general recommendations are made. Firstly, the tendency of powerful political formations to be trapped by the rhetoric of power should be avoided.<sup>112</sup> Despite China's rapid rise in its "comprehensive national power", the CCP government is still constrained by a variety of factors, notably the United States, which deters it from acting in Taiwan in the way it would in one of the SARs. In a practical sense, Taiwan is currently neither "a province" to which

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<sup>112</sup> Political formations may invest themselves with superordinate goals that are political and not linked with system survival. Goals of unification in a prescribed way or independence in a preferred manner may in fact stem from what US Senator James William Fulbright described in his thought-provoking book *The Arrogance of Power* as "a psychological need that nations seem to have in order to prove that they are bigger, better, or stronger than other nations" (1967:5 ).

Beijing can freely issue orders from the “Forbidden City”, or a SAR which it can rule more indirectly, nor a completely independent separate political formation. Taiwan is in limbo.<sup>113</sup> Thus, both at a regional or global level, the Taiwan Strait offers China with the opportunity for testing the constraints, imposed by world politics, on the behaviour of a rising power in its own backyard and the opportunities for negotiating a mutually acceptable relationship in a context that is under transformation. The effective management of “the Washington-Taipei-Beijing Triangle” (Copper 1992) or the US factor in China diplomacy has proven to be more constructive for serving China’s longer term interests than any all-pervasive attempt to isolate Taiwan in the international arena. Thus, a reconsideration of hard and soft tactics may be needed. Secondly, the use of force and threat of use of force should be avoided. The military planners in Beijing seem to embrace Sun Tzu’s (孙子) *The Art of War*, characterised by its telling argument that “to subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill” (Sun Tzu 1963: 77). Nevertheless, perhaps the most remarkable contradiction within contemporary Chinese diplomacy involves its “self-proclaimed strategic direction of peace and development” and its forthright articulation of use of force towards Taiwan (Sutter 2008:7, 10). This articulation has been further legalised by its 2005 Anti-Secession Law. The use of force in the Taiwan Strait is naturally not favoured by the smaller Taiwanese polity but also more generally by the international community. China itself is not keen on the use of force, among people it sees to be its own, in seeking unification. However the preventive posture does present the threat of force and this has done irreparable damage to China’s cross-strait and its image in some quarters internationally. Since 1949, history has demonstrated that force has not produced the desired results in the Taiwan Strait context (Chapter II). Indeed rhetorical threats and military build-ups have “hurt the feelings of the Taiwanese people”<sup>114</sup> (*Taipei Times* 03 August 2010) and have not helped advance the campaign to win hearts and minds in Taiwan. Psychological rifts between peoples perhaps need generations of time to cure. With little to gain from hard power, China is likely to bring Taiwan more and more into its soft power architecture. Thirdly, words need to be minded with care. The CCP government has a superb understanding of the power of words (Chapter II, III, VI), characterised by its track record of engineering propaganda campaigns and media diplomacy to serve its policy goals in cross-strait relations. It has been the CCP’s conviction that someday propaganda towards Taiwan may create a “miracle” in the hearts and minds of the Taiwan’s public. Nevertheless, the word is a double-edged sword. It can serve as “bombs and bullets to hearts and minds” (Snow 2004) so as to promote the CCP’s positive image and Taiwan policy. As a means of “mobilization of opinion” (Lasswell 1927:14), it may also backfire against the CCP government when it is used to revile the “devil secessionists” on Taiwan in the form of “war of words”. This was especially the case in 1995 when the furious CCP government mobilised its propaganda machinery with “a ferocious vocabulary”

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<sup>113</sup> This statement is grounded upon the international political status quo that: neither is Taiwan under the effective jurisdiction of the PRC, nor is it widely and officially recognised as an independent country by the majority of the members of the United Nations.

<sup>114</sup> The remarks were made by Ma Ying-jeou’s Presidential Office Spokesman Lo Chih-chiang (罗智强) while commenting on the removal of China’s more than 1,000 missiles targeting Taiwan.

(Fulbright 1967:151) against Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui who visited his alma mater Cornell University in the US.<sup>115</sup>

With the CCP's tight media control, the reverse flow of words from Taiwan has always been appealing. In an interview in Taipei in 2009, Su Yung-yao from the *Liberty Times* described how the mainland visitors competed with each other to grab free inflight copies of the *Liberty Times*: "Those who have successfully obtained a copy would demonstrate a sort of excitement as if they have got a banned publication". This scene on the flight, which has been shuttling regularly between the two sides since 2008, reminds us of the barometric variance on the two sides of the strait that makes word flows particularly interesting.

Faced with China's rising wealth and prominence, Taiwan's much-acclaimed miracle seems to have been overshadowed. What cards can Taiwan play? Does Taiwan still have anything of value to offer to "the Chinese on both sides"? Or simply put it, "Is Taiwan 'Over'?"<sup>116</sup> (Sutter 17 March 2008)? Given that Taiwan has remained an economic and cultural power, plainly, it is not expedient to turn a blind eye to Taiwan's influence. Rather, at least three values of Taiwan may be critically addressed. Firstly, the ideological value of Taiwan. In the post-Cold War and post-9/11 world, it appears that ideology is no longer a key factor in international thinking. However, for the international community, it is hard to deny Taiwan's ideological attractiveness, which has been achieved through its political development, and which has also significantly shaped Taiwan's media and journalists. Ma Ying-jeou claimed in his 2008 inaugural speech that Taiwan has become "a beacon of democracy to Asia and the world" (Ma 20 May 2008) and surely, if this is so, it can be celebrated as one aspect of the multifaceted genius of the Chinese. Being far from perfect, however, this "beacon of democracy" has been seriously tainted by the corruption of the DPP-backed Chen Shui-bian Administration. As Susie Chiang, the former Hong Kong correspondent of the *China Times*, declared in the interview, "Taiwanese have no complaints because this was the people's choice. They have learned their lessons of maturity in democratisation." In a broader sense, Taiwan's transformation experience has implications "for traditional societies everywhere" (Berman 1992:3). At that point, perhaps the most far-reaching value of Taiwan is to act as an illuminating model for mainland people with reference to democratic political system and core values because "Taiwan's democratic existence decisively disproves the dogma that Chinese culture and democracy are incompatible" (Jacobs and Hong 1995:215). Virtually, the influx of mainland visitors into Taiwan, at least in part, has been driven by their curiosity to see what "a Chinese society" is like under the rule of the KMT (and DPP) in the form of a Chinese version of "western democracy". Thus, a feasible way to be recommended to Taiwan would be to cultivate Taiwan's ideological value, which has always been Taiwan's trump card in enhancing its cross-strait image and global visibility. In the parlance of Ma's administration, the "Taiwan experience" and Taiwan's soft power are "vital bargaining chips when

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<sup>115</sup> For an excellent account of this event, see Clough (1999: 1-7).

<sup>116</sup> The full title of Sutter's article is "Is Taiwan 'Over'? – I think Not".

negotiating with China”<sup>117</sup> (*Taipei Times* 06 August 2010). Nevertheless, merely screaming “democracy” and “human rights” can only serve to “turn Taiwan into an abstract idea abroad, rather than an actual plot of land with 23 million people inhabiting it” (*Taipei Times* 16 August 2010). A lot more homework is thus required to boost not only Taiwan’s stagnant economy but also its cross-strait policies, in particular media diplomacy.

Secondly, the value of Taiwan’s media. As a central institution of democratic society, the mass media has become the icon of contemporary Taiwan. Although having suffered from painful experiences for almost four decades (1949-1987) during which the KMT administration practised harsh censorship (Chapter II), Taiwan’s media have produced a considerable impact on the sociopolitical transformation of Taiwan as well as the expansion of cross-strait relations, characterised by the positive role played by a series of opposition magazines in facilitating the formation of Taiwan’s first genuine opposition political party the DPP in 1986 (Berman 1992:11-12; Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2001: 50-59), and also by the crucial role played by the *Independence Evening Post* and *China Times* in 1987 and 1991 to initiate respectively cross-strait reporting missions (Chapter V). In the course of liberalisation and democratisation, Taiwan’s media have achieved a hard-earned freer media environment and greater latitude in the form of freedom of speech, something which Taiwan can boast and mainland China continues to struggle with. In this regard, Taiwan’s media themselves do have tremendous propaganda value. However, Taiwan’s media have been vexed with political partisanship and the deterioration of the island’s media market, culminating in the demise of the *Independence Evening Post* and the decline of the *China Times*, both of which were tortured by financial difficulties. Furthermore, due to electoral politics, Taiwan’s overall cross-strait and foreign policies have been subject to a fluid political environment, in which notably Taiwan’s policies of cross-strait media diplomacy and “propaganda towards mainland China” have been fraught with incoherence and fragmentation. Regarding broader foreign policies, it may be even disappointing to see that Taiwan tends to adopt what Sutter terms “self-absorbed diplomacy” (17 March 2008).

Thirdly, the value of Taiwan’s journalistic professionalism. Perhaps one of the most striking differences between Taiwanese journalists and mainland journalists is that the former were cultivated by different journalistic doctrines (Chapter VI). Although both Taiwanese journalists and mainland journalists may trace their intellectual origins back to the shared Chinese culture (E-matrix), it is evident that Taiwanese journalists are more strongly influenced by independent thinking and journalistic impartiality, which largely imported from the United States, and thus has made a great contribution to the formulation of the Chinese journalistic heritage. This particular journalistic professionalism used to be the forceful motivation for Taiwanese journalists to participate in the sociopolitical transformation, such as the case of two Taiwanese journalists in 1987, and thus also set

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<sup>117</sup> Taiwan’s Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) Chairwoman Lai Shin-yuan (赖幸媛) made the remarks while delivering a speech at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington on 06 August 2010.

a benchmark for their mainland peers (Chapter V). However, faced with growing commercial pressures and political maneuvering, the value of Taiwan's journalistic professionalism is being eroded and overlooked.

Taken together, Taiwan's value may be testified in a variety of areas far beyond the foregoing. Ma Ying-jeou has taken the view about Taiwan that, "[i]f we can make good use of our resources, astuteness and diplomacy, we can protect the country in a peaceful way. Why do we even want to resort to the worst plan of starting a war?" (*Taipei Times* 04 August 2010)

## **Conclusion: Peace, Prosperity and Prestige**

It could be argued that, in dealing with each other in one of the most difficult international flash points, both mainland China and Taiwan need to have an objective self-perception and see each other from a broader perspective so as to narrow their disagreements and misunderstandings. To this end, the role of the journalist and the media has a continuing significance. Throughout the seven chapters herein, this thesis has endeavoured to shed light on the role of the cross-strait journalist, through which the modus operandi of cross-strait media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy have been presented and theorised. In particular, this last chapter also makes some recommendations for the two sides, treating both of them as significant powers, if unequal (in several ways) political formations both of which conduct activities in the international arena. Although this thesis does not aspire to offer a comprehensive diagnosis for cross-strait relations, it does highlight the promises and perils of communication in solving cross-strait conflict, with a view that is open to different political argumentation from the two sides, be it unification, reunification, reconciliation or separation. Like all those ordinary people on the two sides, I am (and this thesis is) actually concerned with very simple and profound human values — peace, prosperity and prestige, which, I believe, are what communication and diplomacy are all about.



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23 June 2009

Mr Longqing Wang  
No. 41 Morshead Street  
North Ryde  
NSW 2113

**Reference: HE29MAY2009-D06567**

Dear Mr Wang

## **FINAL APPROVAL**

**Title of project:** The role of the journalist in the Cross-Strait relations

Thank you for your recent correspondence. Your response has addressed the issues raised by the Ethics Review Committee (Human Research) and you may now commence your research.

Please note the following standard requirements of approval:

1. Approval will be for a period of twelve (12) months. At the end of this period, if the project has been completed, abandoned, discontinued or not commenced for any reason, you are required to submit a Final Report on the project. If you complete the work earlier than you had planned you must submit a Final Report as soon as the work is completed. The Final Report is available at: [http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human\\_ethics/forms](http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/forms)
2. However, at the end of the 12 month period if the project is still current you should instead submit an application for renewal of the approval if the project has run for less than five (5) years. This form is available at [http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human\\_ethics/forms](http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/forms). If the project has run for more than five (5) years you cannot renew approval for the project. You will need to complete and submit a Final Report (see Point 1 above) and submit a new application for the project. (The five year limit on renewal of approvals allows the Committee to fully re-review research in an environment where legislation, guidelines and requirements are continually changing, for example, new child protection and privacy laws).
3. Please remember the Committee must be notified of any alteration to the project.
4. You must notify the Committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or of any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.
5. At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the guidelines established by the University [http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human\\_ethics/policy](http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/policy)

If you will be applying for or have applied for internal or external funding for the above project it is your responsibility to provide Macquarie University's Research Grants Officer with a copy of this letter as soon as possible. The Research Grants Officer will not inform external funding agencies that you have final approval for your project and funds will not be released until the Research Grants Officer has received a copy of this final approval letter.

Yours sincerely

Handwritten signature of Ms Karolyn White in black ink.

Ms Karolyn White  
Director of Research Ethics  
Chair, Ethics Review Committee (Human Research)

**Cc. Professor Naren Chitty, Department of International Communication, Faculty of Arts**

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ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE (HUMAN RESEARCH)  
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

[http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human\\_ethics](http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics)

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