

Counteracting Nationalism and Populism: scenarios of networks within a diasporic “Chinese” world

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Contents I

Influence of COVID-19
(student exchange,
academic exchange,
marriage migration, tourism,
religious exchange) on my
original research plan

Example: The Impact of
LGBTQ Issues and Same-Sex
Marriage in Taiwan on
Mainland China (and vice
versa)

Questions and Assumptions

Contents II

LGBTQ Developments in Taiwan

- Role of Transnational Movements and Internationalization
- Global vs. Local Values

History and Current Status of Cross-Strait LGBTQ Exchanges

Same-sex Marriage in Taiwan: Public Diplomacy and Media Reports on Both Sides

Conclusion

Influence of COVID-19 on Cross-Strait Exchanges

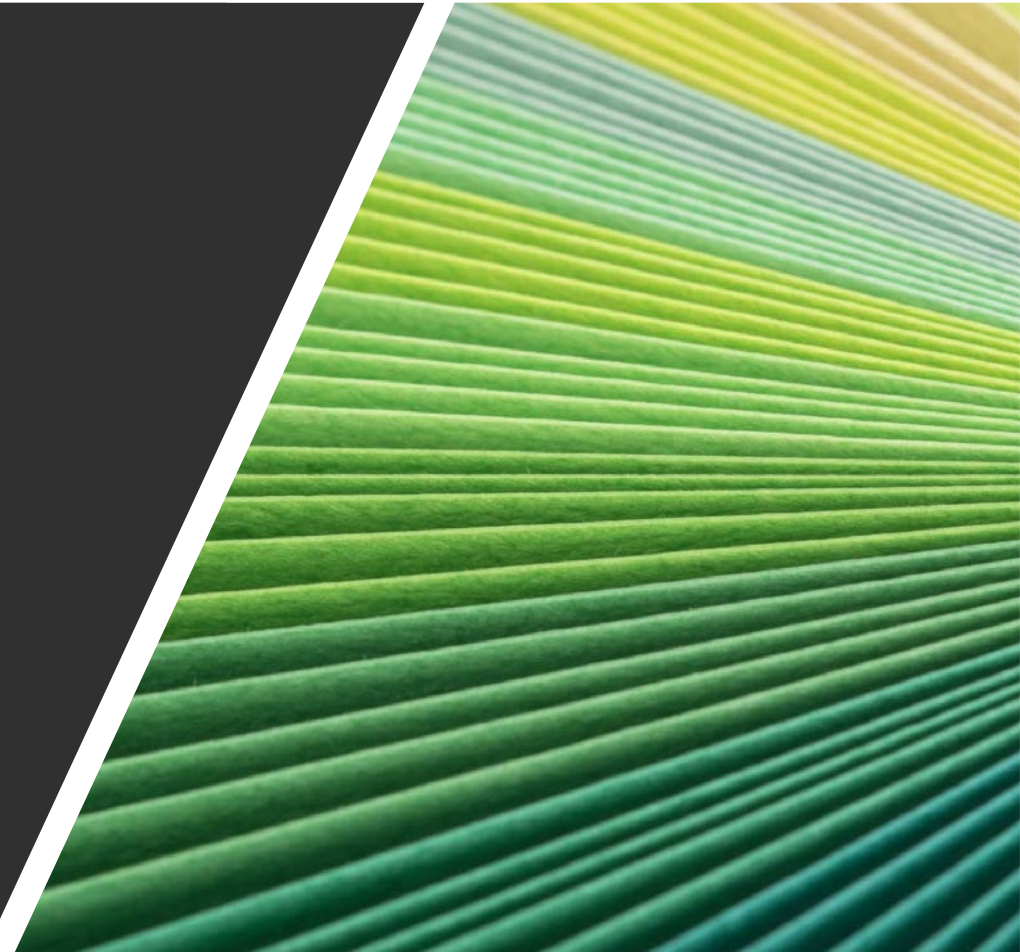
Student
exchange

Other
academic
exchange

Marriage
migration

Tourism

Religious
exchange



Questions and Assumptions I

In the global (Western) perception, Taiwan has become a vibrant democracy in Asia, with elements of multiculturalism, a strong civil society and maybe most astonishing with a strong emphasis on gender equality and most recently even marriage equality was achieved (cultural diplomacy/soft power: Taiwan as part of “us” [the West]).

China, however, describes Taiwan as an integral part of China, while downplaying social and cultural differences e.g. in the case of LGBTQ. Chinese activists, however, are eager to establish working relations with their Taiwanese counterparts

Questions and Assumptions II

However, polls and referenda showed that there is still a conservative majority in Taiwan feeling being thrown into a global discourse with which they cannot identify – Taiwan regarded as a Non-Western society (but also not as a Chinese society) while in many regards the Chinese society can be described as more open than its political leadership.

With regard to cross-Strait relations, mainland China (mass media, but especially LGBTQ activists) have observed Taiwanese developments and emphasized the “same-ness” of Taiwan and mainland China

Milestones towards Marriage Equality in Taiwan

- Domestic developments (D) and Transnational developments (T)
- (D) 1990s Social Movements: women's movement; HIV organisations (Awakening, Tongzhi Hotline, Between us)
- (T) Academic interest (He Chunrui, gender studies, foreign literature departments)
- (T) Pride Parade (attracting many, especially Asian visitors, and foreign media reports)
- (D/T) Politicians such as Chen Shui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou were more open when talking to foreign audiences.
- (T/D) Gender Mainstreaming as policy (adaption of UN policies despite not being a member)
- (D/T) 2014: Tsai Ing-wen emphasis on legal issues
- (D/T) Constitutional Court ruling 2017 (influenced by Obama)
- (D) 2019 Legalization of same-sex marriage, but in 2018 (D) referendum against LGBTQ issues



Screenshot of the website for the Center for the Study of Sexualities at National Central University (NCCU). The website features a red and black color scheme with large Chinese characters '性/別' (Sex/Gender) and '研究室' (Research Center). It includes a navigation menu on the left with links like '史與成員', '學術研討會', '出版資訊', '教學資料庫', '典藏資料', and '碩士班'. A sidebar on the right has links like '動物戀網頁事件簿', '地理位置', '活動寫真', '影音重現', '近期活動', and 'ENGLISH'. A banner at the bottom promotes the 'Re-Cognizing China: 5th Inter-Disciplinary Conference 2019' on June 15, 2019. The address at the bottom is 32001-桃園市中壢區中大路300號, TEL: 886-3-4262926, FAX: 886-3-4262927.

Marriage Equality Cleavages I

Pro marriage equality camp

- Feminist and LGBTQ movement (often transnational)
- New Power Party (transnational, anti-PRC)
- Academia

Anti marriage equality camp

- Formosa Alliance (also pro traditional gender roles, Confucian family structures), but pro independence
- Activist with strong ties to a global (US financed) evangelical network (anti-China)

Global vs. Local Values

- Next Generation Alliance

“The Alliance accused Western of undue influence in Taiwan’s affairs and called on Taiwanese to ‘resist’ foreign attempts to undermine the nation’s ‘good morals.’” (Michel Cole)

But their stance resembles current, especially, US conservative, evangelical values, only later some Taiwanese religious groups supported the Alliance and brought up “Chinese family values”

Chinese Lala Alliance (CLA)

- Chinese Lala Alliance (CLA) - aim is sharing experiences with veteran Chinese lesbian activists from Hong Kong, Taiwan and North America.
- Established in 2007 by Chinese lesbian, bisexual and transgendered activists from mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and North America.
- Transnational organization
- Activities mostly from New Picture 2007 to 2017



正文

华人拉拉联盟 招募运营主管

华人拉拉联盟是一个非政府非营利的组织（**CLA**），旨在为华人女同性恋者、相互支持、共享经验和信息的服务，并

Cross-Strait Activism: Taiwanese activists now living in mainland China: Lai Jeng-er

- Owner of the first “Chinese language” book store in Taipei Gin Gin
- Later opened a coffeeshop in Beijing
- Now back to Taiwan
- “A movement” is impossible in China, but various activities are
- As soon as an activity is getting reported in the Western press, difficulties arise



Picture: New York Times

Chinese Media Reports on LGTQ Issues in Taiwan

- Cautious support
- Balanced reporting (both in issues in Taiwan and in China)
 - Support of activists
 - Criticism especially by the elder generation
 - Not mentioning of Christian and religious issues
 - Taiwan is described both as “one country” and as “different in public views on social issues” (Global Times 2017)
 - Positive report on developments in other Asian states such as Thailand (Chinese netizens show support for Thailand’s move toward legalization of same-sex unions)
- Chinese language media does not cover the topic
- But social media are not censored

People's Daily, China
@PDChina

Local lawmakers in #Taiwan, China, have legalized same-sex marriage in a first for Asia, according to local media reports.



People's Daily, China
@PDChina

#LGBTQ quietly gains acceptance in China's big cities as rainbow flags are out on display outside in central Beijing and other cities in recent weeks, marking the International Day Against Homophobia.
#PrideMonth2020



4:00 PM · Jun 7, 2020 · TweetDeck

Conclusion I

The development of Taiwanese society towards the acceptance of human rights as global values, multiculturalism, the rights of individuals etc. is intrinsically linked to the development of a Taiwanese identity is used to assert Taiwan's international status

LGBTQ rights (as well as opposition towards these rights) has both local and global components and fit in the current discourse on gender equity in Taiwan

Conclusion II

Taiwanese LGBTQ rights act as a signifier of Taiwan's democratization with the aim of achieving soft power (also in opposition to any "one China policy" [including "one China, two systems"])

However, there exists strong opposition by Christian groups and a larger part of Taiwanese society (especially in the South, stronghold of DPP voters) (ethno-nationalism, fewer links to global developments)

Conclusion III

Chinese LGBTQ activists are emphasizing the cultural “same-ness” of Taiwan and China, while China’s official media are shunning the topic. The religious aspect of Taiwan’s opposition to LGBTQ issues is not mentioned.

There is a large gap between the Chinese international (English) media and the domestic Chinese media, but Chinese social media are largely free to discuss this issue



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