Does Taiwan Matter to the United States? Policy Debates on Taiwan Abandonment and Beyond

Gang Lin, Wenxing Zhou

China Review, Volume 18, Number 3, August 2018, pp. 177-206 (Article)

Published by Chinese University Press

The China Review, Vol. 18, No. 3 (August 2018), 177–206

*Does Taiwan Matter to the United States? Policy Debates on Taiwan Abandonment and Beyond**

Gang Lin and Wenxing Zhou

Abstract

This article approaches the puzzle of whether and to what degree Taiwan matters to the United States. The deteriorating of cross-Strait relations since 2016 has made people more concerned about the sustainability of the status quo. For the Chinese mainland, the danger is the possible collapse of U.S. one-China policy—a key pillar of the U.S.-China diplomatic architecture; for Taiwan, the nightmare is that the businessman-turned-president might sell out the island for economic gains from the mainland. Trump's aversion toward liberal institutionalism and his advocacy of economic nationalism have revived the specter of Taiwan abandonment, which have occurred occasionally in U.S. foreign policy thinking since the late 1940s. To be sure, "abandoning Taiwan" as well as the Cold War mind-set of playing wildly the "Taiwan

Gang Lin is Distinguished Professor of Political Science at the School of International and Public Affairs and Director of Center for Taiwan Studies, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China, and Senior Fellow of the Collaborative Innovation Center for Peaceful Development of Across-Strait Relations.

Wenxing Zhou is a PhD candidate at the School of International and Public Affairs, Shanghai Jiao Tong University and Visiting Fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Correspondence should be sent to zhouwenxing@sjtu.edu.cn.

*This article has been sponsored by the China Scholarship Council.

> card" are far from the mainstream view in U.S. policy circles today, which favors maintaining the status quo. Still, such heterodox arguments have made salient the fundamental issue of whether Taiwan is a strategic liability or a strategic asset for the United States. Which view prevails matters a great deal for the state of U.S.-China relations and whether that relationship will be more cooperative or confrontational in the years to come.

The deteriorating cross-Strait relations after a power turnover in Taiwan from the Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, KMT) to the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in May 2016 have reactivated Washington's interest in maintaining the volatile status quo. In the wake of the 1995–1996 Taiwan Strait crisis, the United States began to encourage political dialogue between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait so as to prevent a possible military confrontation around the island, which would force Washington to face a dilemma of either being involved in a war with a rising power or standing by and losing its security credibility in Asia-Pacific. As the two sides moved into the period of peaceful development of cross-Strait relations between 2008 and 2016 thanks to Taipei's acceptance of the one-China framework, Washington was less concerned over the issue of Taiwan, which was marginalized in U.S. policy agenda. The outcomes of the 2016 elections in Taiwan and the United States respectively have resurfaced the Taiwan issue, however. While the Chinese mainland is concerned that the unpredictable U.S. President Donald Trump might play the Taiwan card wildly in dealing with a rising China, Taiwan is more concerned that the businessman-turned-politician will sell it to Beijing whenever he feels lucrative. Trump's surprising phone conversation with Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) and his linking of U.S. one-China policy to its bilateral trade relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC) during the interval from his election to inauguration have not only sent a mixed message to both sides of the Taiwan Strait but also incurred an open letter to President Trump from former chairman of American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) Richard Bush, providing Trump with "some basics" of American one-China policy while reminding him that "Taiwan is not a 'tradeable good.'"[1] Although Taiwan abandonment is a far cry, together with the outmoded Cold War mind-set of Taiwan card manipulation, the tendency toward antiglobalism and economic nationalism of President Donald

Trump has provided a clue for further reflection of the issue: Does Taiwan really matter to the United States, and if so, to what degree?

1. The Origin of Taiwan Abandonment

Historically, whether Taiwan is important to the United States depends on different international situations in general and U.S.-China relations in particular. Toward the end of the Chinese Civil War, the Harry Truman administration displayed its contempt for the irredeemable government of Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石) and "seriously considered abandoning the Kuomintang" by the end of 1949. It "ruled out a military defense of Taiwan just weeks after Beijing had begun to plan for a cross-Strait war in 1950–51," openly announcing that the United States would "not again intervene in the Chinese Civil War, signaling that they saw Taiwan as expendable."[2] On 5 January 1950, U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson told American lawmakers that Taiwan was "essentially a Chinese territory" and that its fate had been "morally sealed by some form of prior agreement."[3] It was only because of the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 that the United States reassessed its strategy and changed its decision, considering Taiwan as an "unsinkable aircraft carrier" to confront the Soviet Union and China—regardless of Truman's discord with Chiang and the fact that Taiwan remained authoritarian—and intervening in China's domestic conflicts again.

Washington's military interference in the Taiwan Strait marked the very beginning of U.S. strategic manipulation of the Taiwan card. Truman first declared "the undetermined status of Taiwan" on 27 June 1950, two days after the Korean War broke out. To better incorporate Taiwan into the capitalist camp vis-à-vis the socialist camp led by the Soviet Union and prevent the mainland from "liberating" the island, Washington signed the Mutual Defense Treaty with Taiwan in 1954 and the U.S. Congress passed the Formosa Resolution of 1955, providing a legal basis for U.S. military presence on the island and paving the way for its direct involvement in the Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1958. The U.S. government had since then strongly supported Taiwan and successfully rejected the mainland's claim over the island.[4] This is evidenced by the vast amount of U.S. economic assistance and military support through the 1950s to the 1970s. During the Marshall Plan period (1949–1952), for example, Taiwan received $275 million in terms of military assistance, accounting for around 35 percent of the total military loans and grants that more than

26 countries in Asia shared. During the eight years of the Mutual Security Act period (1953–1961), Taiwan received an unexpectedly huge sum of $2,060 million from the United States, which is more than seven times the amount of that it received in the earlier period.[5] Under the guise of protection of the island against attacks by the mainland, Washington played the Taiwan card hard by reengineering the island in terms of military, economy, politics, culture, society, as well as external relations.

However, in the beginning of the normalization of Sino-U.S. relations, especially from 1971 to 1982, Taiwan became less important to the United States because of its strategic need of "allying China to counterbalance the Soviet Union." By tacitly accepting the prospects of peaceful unification of China, Washington was ready to abandon Taiwan, but more gracefully this time as the use of military means by the mainland was not allowed by the United States. On 9 July 1971, U.S. National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger told Chinese premier Zhou Enlai (周恩來): "As for the political future of Taiwan, we are not advocating a 'two Chinas' solution or a 'one China, one Taiwan' solution. As a student of history, one's prediction would have to be that the political evolution is likely to be in the direction [meaning Taiwan restoration to the motherland] which Prime Minister Chou En-Lai indicated to me."[6] When talking about common interests of the two countries, Kissinger argued that the Taiwan issue could be accomplished "within the near future," and that Taiwan would face little choice other than accepting some form of unification once the United States began to withdraw its military and political support.[7] In October 1971, while being asked of the U.S. position on the status of Taiwan by Premier Zhou Enlai, Kissinger made it clear that the U.S. policy was to "encourage" a peaceful solution *within the framework of one China*.[8] As Dennis Hickey observed, recently declassified documents reveal that President Richard M. Nixon stated plainly that Taiwan is a part of China during his 1972 visit to China. In top-secret discussions with Premier Zhou Enlai, Nixon declared that "there is one China, and Taiwan is a part of China. There will be no more statements made—if I can control our bureaucracy—to the effect that the status of Taiwan is undetermined." Like Nixon, Henry Kissinger, then U.S. national security adviser, pledged that Washington would never again refer to Taiwan's status as "undetermined."[9]

After the PRC and the United States signed the 1972 Shanghai Communiqué, Washington continued to accept in speech China's peaceful unification. President Nixon told the then ROC ambassador

James Shen that the U.S. expected the Taiwan question be settled peacefully and that the United States had no intention of interfering nor would it urge either side to negotiate or offer any suggestion and formula. When being asked what sort of timeframe he had in mind for a peaceful settlement, Nixon responded "maybe two years, three years or five years."[10] Although the United States opposed Beijing's usage of force to take Taiwan back and did not compel Taipei to have peace talk with Beijing, it was expecting a peaceful solution of the Taiwan issue within three to five years. It is worthy to repeat that under the linguistic context of one China framework, both peace talks and peaceful solution then contained the idea of "unification." In addition, accompanied with the normalization of Sino-U.S. relations, the United States withdrew from its earlier position that "Taiwan's status is undetermined" and excluded the options of "two Chinas" and "one China, one Taiwan" for Taiwan's future. In his talks with Chinese officials in the early 1970s, Kissinger also used the concept of "peaceful integration" repeatedly to refer to the arrangement of the Taiwan's status in the future.[11]

The U.S. acceptance of China's peaceful unification, at least in the minds of some high-ranking American officials, was further demonstrated under the Carter administration. U.S. National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski told Deng Xiaoping (鄧小平) during his Beijing trip in May 1978 that Washington hoped the Taiwan question would be solved peacefully and that eventually, one China would become a reality.[12] In December 1978, Deng Xiaoping made a proposal to Leonard Woodcock, director of the U.S. Liaison Office in the PRC, that the United States should play a positive role in China's peaceful unification or at least not obstruct that process. Woodcock answered that arms sales would not obstruct the process but rather lead to a change in American attitudes that would rebound to the benefit of eventual unification.[13] Regardless of the logic in Woodcock's defense of U.S. arms sales to Taiwan as favorable to China's unification, it was no doubt that he had at least paid lip service to the final goal (unification) when making the argument. In other words, the United States attempted to make a deal based on U.S. oral acceptance of China's unification and Beijing's concession on the issue of arms sales. Consequently, the United States and the PRC established formal diplomatic relations. Washington cut off its formal relations with Taipei, terminated the U.S.-Taiwan Mutual Defense Treaty, and withdrew military troops from the island, but with continuing arms sales to Taiwan. To counteract the Carter administration's official

abandonment of Taiwan, the U.S. Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) to regulate semiofficial ties between Washington and Taipei, while maintaining U.S. commitment to Taiwan's security in an ambiguous way, including arms sales.

In preparing the establishment of Sino-U.S. diplomatic relations, the two countries made their statements respectively. The U.S. side reiterated that peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue by Chinese themselves conformed to American interests, while the Chinese side pointed out that "the way of Taiwan's return to the motherland and accomplishment of national unification is entirely an internal affair of China."[14] After PRC National People's Congress Standing Committee Chairman Ye Jianying (葉劍英) made his "Nine-Point Proposal" to Taipei on China's peaceful unification on 30 September 1981, U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig openly appreciated the proposal and even suggested Taipei respond to it positively. Later, the retiring Haig suggested President Reagan reach an agreement with Beijing that would allow continued U.S. arms sales to Taiwan but subject it in the future to the progress on China's peaceful course of unification.[15] Echoing Haig's proposal, the 1982 Sino-U.S. communiqué (the August 17 communiqué) reiterated that the United States "has no intention of infringing on Chinese sovereignty and territorial integrity, or interfering in China's internal affairs, or pursuing a policy of 'two Chinas' or 'one China, one Taiwan.' The United States Government understands and appreciates the Chinese policy of striving for a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan question as indicated in China's Message to Compatriots in Taiwan issued on 1 January 1979 and the Nine-Point Proposal put forward by China on 30 September 1981."[16]

Washington's acceptance of peaceful unification and "a high degree of autonomy" for Taiwan offered in Beijing's Nine-Point Proposal, along with the U.S.-PRC August 17 communiqué, had aroused a great concern on the island as well as in the United States, as indicated by Washington's earlier "Six Assurances" to Taipei, including not exerting pressure on Taiwan to enter into negotiations with the PRC. The orally delivered Six Assurances, along with three "non-papers" in President Reagan's name by James Lilley, then the head of the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), underlined the United States' "only interest in this matter," that being, "any resolution of these issues be accomplished peacefully."[17] Having no dissent on peaceful unification per se and not considering peaceful separation as another option for peaceful solution, Washington then worried

that Taiwan would be forced to hold peace talks on unification with the mainland and that the PRC government might pursue unification by force. Therefore, when Beijing requested that Washington force Taipei to negotiate with the mainland to resolve the Taiwan issue peacefully, President Reagan declined it during his visit to China in April 1984. Since Taiwan was unwilling to accept unification with the mainland, the peaceful settlement that the U.S. Taiwan policy then emphasized actually meant no supporting unification, suggesting that Taiwan abandonment was not on the policy agenda.

In the late 1980s, Sino-U.S. cooperation in dealing with the Soviet Union was gradually loosening its strategic foundation due to the détente of U.S.-Soviet relations and the normalization of Sino-Soviet ties. With dramatic changes within former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries in the early 1990s, the world entered into a post–Cold War era. Consequently, there was a lack of a solid foundation of Sino-U.S. strategic cooperation and a new one was yet to be discovered. In this transitional period, the United States no longer took China's core interests, including national unification, as seriously as in the past. U.S. officials avoided talking about peaceful unification, deliberately interpreted peaceful settlement as an ambiguous concept referring to either peaceful unification or peaceful separation, and replaced the term one-China principle frequently used in the past with the one-China policy, which was subject to the "peaceful solution" principle. At the same time, Washington responded to the 1993 "Wang-Koo talks" (汪辜會談) unenthusiastically while upgrading U.S.-Taiwan relations constantly and earnestly. For instance, both the quality and quantity of U.S. arms sales to Taiwan were increasing, making Taiwan the second largest weaponry market for the United States between 1990 and 1995. Another case worth mentioning was that the U.S. State Department allowed Lee Teng-hui (李登輝) to visit the United States in 1995 in a private capacity. This new trajectory of Taiwan-U.S. relations along with its impact on the island, intentionally or unintentionally, contributed to Taipei's policy agenda of "resisting unification and seeking independence" and in turn led to the Taiwan Strait crisis in 1996. These events can serve as an evidence to verify a positive correlation between the degree of U.S. acceptance of China's unification and Sino-U.S. strategic cooperation. That is, the more strategic cooperation is needed between the United States and China in globe affairs, the more likely that Washington may accept China's peaceful unification.[18]

2. Taiwan Abandonment in a New Context

In the wake of the 1995–1996 Strait crisis, three views appeared in the United States. The first view argues that the U.S. military should intervene into military conflicts under any circumstances. This view carries a Cold War mind-set, being addicted to the Taiwan card, however "wild" it is. The second view argues that Washington should make a *conditional* commitment to Taiwan's security, never fighting with the mainland for the sake of Taiwanese independence. The third view argues that the United States should clearly stay outside of the mainland-Taiwan conflict, as advocated by Cato Institute Vice Director Ted Galen Carpenter in 2006.[19] As Cato embraces libertarianism and advocates noninterventionism in foreign policy, Carpenter's argument was quite unique in Washington, DC. It has, however, prepared a basic tune for the voice of "Taiwan abandonment" uttered between 2009 and 2014. Former Vice Chairman of U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Bill Owens wrote an article in *Financial Times* in November 2009, arguing that China would become a great power equal to the United States within 30 years. "The solution is to approach the US/China relationship not with hedging, competition or watchfulness, but with co-operation, openness and trust." For him, Washington should have a thoughtful review of the implementation of the TRA and other outdated legislation.[20] Meanwhile, Peterson Institute of International Economics Director Fred Bergsten used G-2 to describe the leadership of the two countries in overcoming the world economic crisis.[21] While both Taiwan abandonment and G-2 are beyond the mainstream in American academic circles, these arguments have illustrated an internal tension between U.S.-China strategic cooperation in the world and Americans' commitment to Taiwan's security. Consequently, an increasing number of American scholars and policy advisors have begun to accept the argument of "Taiwan abandonment" or considered readjusting U.S. Taiwan policy, as a result of the reducing gap in national strength between China and the United States as well as the growing prospects of their cooperation, peaceful development of cross-Strait relations, and the declining capacities of Taiwan.[22]

In regard to Taiwan abandonment, there are two groups of people. The first group argues that the United States should get out of Taiwan affairs. For people in favor of this perspective, because of the narrowing gap between the United States and China economically and militarily and the expanding gap between the Chinese mainland and Taiwan in both

spheres, Taiwan should not remain as an unstable root of tensions between Washington and Beijing. If the United States continues to support Taiwan in the last stage of the Chinese civil war, it will face a series of negative implications. As David Shambaugh has argued, the game between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait is over. Since Taiwan cannot escape from the mainland's control, Washington should abandon Taiwan as early as possible.[23] Chas Freeman argues that the long friendship and cooperation between the United States and the Chinese mainland are far more important than Americans' special sentiments to Taiwan; the best policy therefore is to accept China's reunification.[24] Former U.S. ambassador to China Joseph Prueher argues that even if America continues to provide arms sales to Taiwan, the island cannot defend itself. Charles Glaser considers Taiwan as a strategic liability of the United States. Because Taiwan's leader may bring America into a war with China, which has developed its regular and strategic nuclear forces quickly, Washington should gradually free itself from Taiwan affairs to avoid falling into a longtime hostility with a rising China.[25] Like Owens, both Prueher and Glaser agree that the United States should review the TRA and the arms sales issues.[26] According to Bruce Gilley, if Taiwan can maintain autonomy and democracy, getting rid of its role as a strategic partner of the United States through Finlandization, it will be good news for the American government who is increasingly seeking China's cooperation; Washington does not need to include Taiwan into its strategic orbit.[27] More bluntly, Paul Kane even suggests the Obama administration negotiate with the Chinese government behind doors to cancel American debt of $1.14 trillion to China by ending arms sales and military assistance to Taiwan.[28] From a realist perspective, John Mearsheimer argues that if China continues to grow dramatically, Taiwan seems doomed to become part of China, and the United States has to say goodbye to Taiwan. For Mearsheimer, "at some point in the next decade or so, it will become impossible for the United States to help Taiwan defend itself against a Chinese attack." The price of close relations between the United States and Taiwan will overtake the interest America can gain. It is doubtful how long Washington will consider Taiwan as a strategic asset.[29] For him, Taiwan abandonment is undesirable, but it may eventually become a reality that the United States has to accept. As Michael Swaine argues, as the United States cannot maintain dominance in East Asia and commitment to Taiwan's security in the long run, it should soon begin to consider negotiation with the Chinese mainland, reducing both parties'

military projection in the Taiwan Strait and revising the Six Assurances so that the two sides of the strait can eventually move to political dialogue.[30]

Another group of people tend to give a free hand to China's peaceful unification as U.S. officials did during the most part of the 1970s and the early 1980s mentioned above. With the peaceful development of cross-Strait relations and strengthening of China-U.S. strategic cooperation over the past years, a growing number of American experts have begun to explore the possibility of China's peaceful unification as well as the specific formulas for it. According to former U.S. National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, because of the decline of American national capacity and the growing need for U.S.-China strategic cooperation, arms sales to Taiwan can only increase unnecessary hostility from the Chinese mainland. According to him, Taiwan should accept a more flexible unification model like "one country, multiple systems" rather than "one country, two systems" and thus reduce its reliance on the United States.[31] Interestingly, his argument in 2012 was quite consistent with what he made in an official capacity three decades earlier. Similarly, U.S. military expert Michael McDevitt pointed out that if China was reunified, it would be the "best outcome for better Sino-U.S. relations" because it could "bring closure to U.S. involvement in the Chinese civil war."[32] Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Christensen's earlier argument—before he joined the government—is even stronger. For him, peaceful unification is in the U.S. interest, because "the United States has long-term security and moral interests in the political liberalization of the mainland." However, "Taiwan's status as a Chinese democracy—holding out the prospect of unification with the mainland under the right set of conditions—can be a powerful force for liberalization on the mainland."[33] These arguments explore the desirability of peaceful unification of the two sides from different perspectives. Brzezinski and McDevitt approach the issue more from a realist perspective, that is, to gracefully resolve the structural problem in China-U.S. relations and free Washington from the historical knot on the issue of Taiwan without sacrificing the latter's interest. By contrast, Christensen makes his case more from a liberalist perspective, with a strong ideological flavor, considering Taiwan as a medium promoting the mainland's political liberalization. It is interesting to observe that regardless of whether Taiwan is a historical burden or potential asset for the United States, the major concern of Washington is ironically the mainland rather than Taiwan. In other words, Taiwan is less important than the mainland in U.S. policy reckoning. This group of

scholars and experts would not consider themselves as supporters of Taiwan abandonment. After all, peaceful unification is inherent within the U.S. policy guideline of peaceful resolution. However, they consider Taiwan more as a strategic liability than an asset of the United States and disregard peaceful separation as a feasible option. They hope China's unification can occur with Taiwanese agreement so that the United States can gracefully disentangle itself from the historical knot and resolve the structural problem between Washington and Beijing. For them, the political dispute across the Taiwan Strait is the outcome of the Cold War, and the Taiwan issue can be resolved by itself as the two sides move toward political integration through economic integration.

3. Reactions Against Taiwan Abandonment

Taiwan card players with the Cold War mind-set oppose the idea of Taiwan abandonment sharply. This group considers Taiwan a quasi-ally of the United States. If Taiwan is incorporated into the mainland, it will undoubtedly become a militarized island as China's navy base. This unsinkable aircraft carrier will provide strategic length for the mainland when military conflict occur in East Asia. The Chinese mainland then can easily control foreign ships navigating through the Taiwan Strait and militarily threaten the south wing of Japan, making matters more difficult for Japan and its ally, the United States. By controlling the Taiwan Strait, China can better extend its sovereign claim over the South China Sea, exclude other foreign military forces from this area, and further threaten American military bases in the Philippines, Guam, and even Hawaii. For people with the Cold War mind-set, the rise of China has increased pressure on its neighboring countries, including many of American allies. The United States should serve as their reliable security partner. Otherwise, Asia-Pacific will fall into an arms race. They criticize the Bush and Obama administrations for not selling to Taiwan sufficient weapons much needed by the island. For them, Washington should provide more active support for Taiwan, a longtime democratic partner of the United States. Only if Washington continues to cultivate its ties with Taiwan—a frontier in U.S.-China strategic competition—and provide arms to the island in defense against the mainland threat can the United States hopefully maintain peace in Asia.[34] They suggest the United States send aircraft carriers to the Taiwan Strait and help Taiwan defend itself against possible military attacks from the mainland.[35]

The views of Taiwan abandonment and Taiwan card manipulation reflect different evaluations of the Taiwan Strait situation and U.S.-China relations by fundamentally different groups of people. Taiwan abandoners in general regard Taiwan as a liability of the United States, considering U.S.-China common interest and mutual cooperation more important than American interest in Taiwan. They do not support fighting with the Chinese mainland for the sake of Taiwan. Taiwan card players always consider Taiwan as a U.S. strategic asset, highlighting the fundamental conflict of strategic interests of the United States and China and thus challenging Washington's long-held one-China policy. Sitting between the two views are mainstream scholars who regard U.S.-China as neither enemies nor friends. They advocate maintaining the status quo and advancing U.S. ties with Taiwan without damaging U.S.-China relations in order to prevent Taiwan from being forced to accept the mainland's unification formula and prevent Beijing from changing the nature of Taiwan's democratic regime or use Taiwan as strategic base to project military power.[36]

Unlike the group of people who tend to give a free hand to China's peaceful unification, status quo maintainers do not exclude the option of Taiwan's peaceful separation from the mainland. Meanwhile, unlike Taiwan card players, status quo maintainers disregard or downplay Taiwan's strategic and military value to the United States. Their concern is Taiwan might become an unsinkable aircraft carrier of the mainland. According to Stimson Center Senior Fellow Alan Romberg, if the mainland takes Taiwan after unification as a military base, it would really cross the bottom line of American policy.[37] For Kenneth Lieberthal, the United States no longer needs Taiwan as an unsinkable aircraft carrier from a pure military sense in the era of high-tech war. What concerns Washington is whether Beijing needs such an aircraft carrier.[38] According to Alan Wachman, the unique significance of Taiwan to the mainland is its important geopolitical status.[39] Whether Taiwan has already reduced its strategic value to the United States is a debatable issue, but the argument above simply highlights the important strategic value of Taiwan to the mainland. In fact, as John Mearsheimer recognizes, Taiwan is a giant aircraft carrier in the East China Sea, strategically important to *both* the Chinese mainland and the United States. It is only because Taiwan is too close to the mainland and too far away from America, which will in several years lose its capability to help Taiwan defend itself, that he predicts the United States eventually has to give up Taiwan.[40]

Among "maintainers of the status quo," Nancy Tucker argues that the United States should continue to maintain strategic ambiguity in what conditions it would be involved in military conflict across the Taiwan Strait. The Chinese mainland should not underestimate the possibility of U.S. involvement. As it had in the 1950s, "the US delighted Taipei and shocked Beijing in its willingness to deploy substantial military capabilities despite strains in US-Taiwan relations: in the 1950s over garrisoning of, and guarantees to, several offshore islands; in the 1990s over Lee Teng-hui's manipulations of the US political system." For Tucker, despite disputes and distrust between Washington and Taipei, the two parties can resolve their problems through dialogue. The importance of U.S.-Taiwan ties has not declined because of the improvement of cross-Strait relations. "American national interests, defined as much by values as by security or strategic goals, render sacrifice of Taiwan unacceptable."[41] Former AIT Board Chairman Richard Bush emphasizes that Taiwan abandonment does not meet U.S. interests in his book *Uncharted Strait*. According to him, the United States is unlikely to give up Taiwan for the sake of America's own interests and interests of its allies in Asia-Pacific as well as two sides of the Taiwan Strait.[42] When the United States warns Beijing about using force against Taiwan, the unstated implication is that Washington would come to Taiwan's defense. The United States has established diplomatic relations with the PRC in return for Beijing's "fundamental policy" of pursuing reunification by peaceful means.[43] In the words of Steven Goldstein, normalization with China was based on the "expectation" of peaceful resolution of cross-Strait differences. For the United States, "leaving the island's status undetermined was a solution to the most difficult problem preventing Sino-U.S. normalization and was intended to satisfy the PRC while minimizing the domestic and international impact of the desertion of a long-time ally." That is, Washington should carefully navigate "a course between the Scylla of damaging relations, or even becoming entrapped in a conflict with China, and the Charybdis of the domestic and international political damage that might result from the apparent abandonment of an Asian democracy."[44] The irony, for Richard Bush, is that Washington has defense cooperation with a government that it does not recognize to help that government ensure its security vis-à-vis a government that the United States does recognize.[45] As Bush argues, the development of cross-Strait relations will lead to two scenarios. One is the continued creation and consolidation of a stabilized order, and another is a movement toward the resolution of the fundamental dispute between the two sides and realization of political integration.[46]

Other status quo maintainers criticize Taiwan abandonment from the perspective of ideology and American value. Davidson College professor Shelley Rigger points out in her book *Why Taiwan Matters* that the United States should keep a balance between maintaining its friendship with the Chinese mainland and supporting a democratic Taiwan. To encourage free market and democracy meets American national interest and national value. Taiwan's success in this regard testifies to its significance to the United States. Taiwan is more than just a "problem." For Rigger, Americans have a tendency in their behavior to support underdogs, considering it necessary to protect democracies in the world. Many Congressmen take this position. Among Americans, the percentage of people in favor of Taiwan is much higher than that in favor of the Chinese mainland with a ratio of 46 percent versus 11 percent. This suggests why Washington is unwilling to see Taiwan being forced to accept unification with the mainland. However, Americans are even more unwilling to fight with China, particularly for the sake of Taiwanese independence. Having said that, Rigger points out if the war is not provoked by Taiwanese independence, Taiwan has done its best to protect itself and the United States can win the war without serious casualties, the likelihood of U.S. involvement in the strait war will increase accordingly.[47]

Theoretically, a better understanding of the three views on U.S. Taiwan policy mentioned above could be approached through the lens of value versus interest, or moral commitment versus strategic calculation. Taiwan abandonment is based on an optimistic judgment of both China's peaceful rise and U.S.-China cooperation. From this strategic calculation, it is undesirable and impossible to play the Taiwan card against the Chinese mainland, and the status quo across the Taiwan Strait is unmaintainable due to the growing gap between Taiwan and the mainland and the reducing gap between the United States and the PRC. This view is optimistic on the likelihood that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait can resolve their problems peacefully but pessimistic that the United States has a strong will and capabilities to intervene in a military conflict across the Taiwan Strait. In contrast, Taiwan card manipulation is derived from a pessimistic view that the PRC and the United States will become enemies and fight with each other eventually. It is optimistic that Washington can counterbalance against an assertive China by playing the Taiwan card. The status quo maintainers, however, are neither optimistic nor pessimistic about U.S.-China strategic cooperation. For them, it is necessary and feasible to maintain the status quo under Washington's

one-China policy. While Taiwan card players and status quo maintainers share a moral commitment to Taiwanese democracy and security, they differ on Taiwan's comparative value vis-à-vis the mainland to the United States. That is, should Washington upgrade its relations with Taiwan at the unbearable cost? Is Taiwan more important to the United States than the mainland? For Taiwan card players, the answers are clearly "yes." However, for status quo maintainers, the answers are "no."

4. Main Factors Shaping U.S.-Taiwan Relations

The ups and downs in U.S.-China relations as well as cross-Strait relations have both shaped and reshaped American policy orientation on the Taiwan issue. During the disturbing periods prior to 2008, U.S. policy focused on avoiding military conflict between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. Correspondingly, Washington adopted a policy featured by strategic ambiguity, dual deterrence, not supporting Taiwanese independence, opposing unilateral change of the status quo, and encouraging cross-Strait dialogue, in order to maintain a cold peace of no unification and no independence. In the period of peaceful development of cross-Strait relations between 2008 and 2016, U.S. policy focus was to strengthen Washington-Taipei military relations, support Taiwan's participation in the international community, counterbalance the impact of swift cross-Strait economic and cultural exchanges on U.S.-Taiwan relations, and increase Taiwan's bargaining chips in dealing with the mainland politically. At the same time, the United States kept a close watch on the possible outcomes of peaceful development of cross-Strait relations. The goal of U.S. encouragement of cross-Strait political dialogue was to avoid the reversion of cross-Strait relations to the previous periods of crisis and to prevent Taiwan from being forced to accept Beijing's unification request, thus impacting American strategic interest in the region. Whereas Washington's nonsupport of Taiwanese independence had played a positive role in preventing Taiwan from moving to independence during the disturbing periods of cross-Strait relations prior to 2008, Washington's ambiguous policy position on the desirability and feasibility of China's reunification thereafter is not helpful to the cause.

Observing the trend of peaceful development of cross-Strait relations between 2008 and 2016, the policy circle in the United States began to think about the scenario of cross-Strait political dialogue and its

possible outcome. In regard to the final solution of the Taiwan issue, the U.S. position is featured by the principle of peaceful resolution, taking an open position on the option of either unification or independence. The rationale behind U.S. position of neither support of nor opposition against either option regarding Taiwan's future is Washington's inability to make a choice for the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, believing any solution should be based on people's agreement and peaceful means. This position reveals a liberal flavor on the surface but has its realist roots. Underneath the U.S. position of nonsupport of either solution is Washington's reluctance to hurt its image as a reliable friend of Taiwan and as a dominant power in the Asia-Pacific region on the one hand and to fight with the Chinese mainland for the sake of Taiwanese independence on the other hand. Because of these two strategic goals, maintaining the status quo has long been the best choice for the U.S. government. The main concern of the United States is whether Taiwan would be forced to accept Beijing's demand for unification once the two sides begin political dialogue, given Taiwan's weak position as opposed to the mainland in terms of economic and military capacities. Military men in the United States estimate that while Beijing's increasing military capability can deter Taiwan from moving toward independence, it cannot obtain compelling success in forcing Taiwan to accept unification without the ability to conduct a viable amphibious offence prior to 2020.[48] In other words, in terms of military capabilities, Taiwan is able to maintain the status quo of no unification and no independence within a few years. However, from a nonmilitary perspective, the United States is divided on the possibility of Taiwan's acceptance of unification under certain pressures.

Whether or not Taiwan will move toward unification is subject greatly to the dynamics in the Taiwan Strait. Robert Sutter, with his past longtime experience in Congressional Research Service and National Intelligence Council, expresses his concern that the "longstanding notion of U.S.-supported balance in the Taiwan Strait" has been shaken by ever-increasing mainland influence over the island, a product of institutionalization and stabilization of cross-Strait relations, and "overshadowed by more pragmatic and immediate concerns in Washington and Taiwan regarding fostering positive relations with China."[49] According to him, the mainland's "economic, military, and diplomatic leverage over Taiwan," the "eroded U.S. support" of Taiwanese security, and Taiwan's weak self-strengthening will give Taiwan little choice other than following

"a path leading to accommodation of and eventual reunification with China." Sutter suspects that political elites in Taiwan and the United States "privately may be aware of the implications of Chinese leverage in determining Taiwan's future and perhaps may favor Taiwan's eventual reunification with China," even though other stakeholders among politicians, the administrations, interest groups, the media, and the general public may still "cling to unrealistic expectations that Taiwan can preserve freedom of action amid the increasingly constraining circumstance." Therefore, "U.S. allies and friends in Asia, notably Japan, will require extraordinary reassurance that U.S. government encouragement of conditions leading to the resolution of Taiwan's future and reunification with China does not forecast a power-shift in the region."[50] One can tell a similarity between Sutter's argument, Bruce Gilley's anticipation of "Finlandization of Taiwan" and Charles Glaser's suggestion of sacrificing Taiwan for the sake of the mainland.[51] The common assumption of them is that the status quo cannot be maintained. However, most policy experts in the United States believe that the status quo is unlikely to change in a short term, and the two sides cannot settle their dispute within one or two decades.[52] Political dialogue is an indispensable means to maintain the status quo, though.

The outbreak of Sunflower movement in 2014 and following landslide victories of the pro-independence DPP in two important elections have greatly relieved some Americans' concern that the Ma administration might give in under the pressure of the mainland's "peaceful offensive." The trade-off, however, is the possible change of the status quo toward the opposite direction: Taiwan's move toward independence and the resultant military confrontation across the strait. Hence, after Tsai was elected as chief executive of the Taiwan area, Washington continues to encourage the incoming DPP administration to reach a compromise with the mainland while urging Beijing to meet Tsai at the middle point rather than demanding from her a clear commitment to the one-China principle or the "92 consensus," putting more pressure on Beijing than Taipei. From the perspective of some Americans, Tsai has shown her goodwill to handle cross-Strait relations within the de facto one-China framework.[53] Tsai's mentioning of the Taiwan Area and Mainland Area was well taken by an influential American expert during a conference on the Taiwan Factor in China-U.S. Relations in New York in June 2016. Many American experts consider the 92 consensus as a myth created by the KMT, and argue that the mainland should not demand the DPP to

follow suit.[54] This position is different from that prior to 2012 elections in Taiwan, when many in the United States endorsed the 92 consensus as a base for normal cross-Strait relations. Several factors may have contributed to the change, including pragmatism, compromise, risk aversion, and tune setting. First, Americans are pragmatic to the reality of party politics in Taiwan. The DPP's landslide victory in the 2016 elections has tempted some Americans' speculation on the likelihood of party realignment through the so-called critical elections. If the KMT has no hope to come back, the DPP would become the only dealer for Washington at present as well as in the foreseeable future. Second, Americans are used to making political compromise. From that aspect, the Tsai administration may not meet Beijing's requirement, but Beijing should give her an encouraging signal so that she can move forward continuously. Third, dialogue is the only way to prevent risks and build trust. Otherwise, the situation across the Taiwan Strait may be out of control, threatening U.S. interest in Asia-Pacific. Fourth, the Tsai administration's ambiguity on the one China framework can ensure the cross-Strait dialogue not involve the issue of unification.

While the United States hopes to maintain a parallel relationship with both sides of the Taiwan Strait, its ties with Taiwan are inevitably subject to the greater framework of China-U.S. relations. The internal tension between the two sets of relationships is revealed in the views of Bruce Gilley and Charles Glaser, even though their arguments are not the mainstream perspectives. As a matter of fact, U.S. interest in the Taiwan Strait is subject to its greater interests in Asia-Pacific, which includes China's continued participation in the international economic system and its full acceptance of the Western-made "liberal international order."[55] The key in the Obama administration's China policy is a combination of engagement and hedging, which is not substantially different from previous policy.[56] The difference is the direction of policy adjustment. During the early period of the Bush administration, it regarded China as a strategic competitor and announced openly that Washington would do whatever to help Taiwan defend itself. It was because of the needs of international antiterrorism and counterproliferation of nuclear weapons on the part of the United States that the Bush administration soon strengthened its strategic cooperation with China. On the other hand, the Obama administration highlighted the importance of cooperation and engagement with China in its early days, but shifted to strategic rebalancing in the wake of sinking of a South

Korean warship (Cheonan) and territorial disputes in the South China Sea. However, the absence of the role of Taiwan in U.S. strategic restructure in Asia-Pacific has indicated that U.S. ties with Taiwan are subject to its global strategies. As Richard Bush frankly states, if Beijing's policies were more in line with U.S. interests on the issues of Iran and North Korea, "Washington might take Chinese sensitivities regarding Taiwan into consideration, at least in calibrating the timing of its arms sales decision."[57]

5. U.S. Taiwan Policy under President Donald Trump

Like most of his predecessors, Donald Trump demonstrated his pro-Taiwan position at the very beginning. During his presidential campaign, Peter Navarro, a close policy advisor of Donald Trump, harshly criticized U.S. presidents including Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama for their missteps of sacrificing Taiwan to woo the mainland, arguing that "it's time for America to fully and firmly recommit to an island that is indeed both a beacon of democracy and critical to the U.S. defense strategy in Asia."[58] A more explicit illustration of those policy experts' favoring of the Taiwan card is the GOP's 2016 platform lauding Taiwan's political and economic values, calling for its full participation in international organizations, advocating enhanced arms sales to the island, and support for defending Taiwan should military confrontations occur.[59] This reflects the idea of Taiwan card manipulation in President-Elect Trump's earlier challenge of the one-China policy.

To understand the Trump administration's Taiwan policy, one needs to pay more attention to the China-U.S. interactions in the triangular structure. Despite the "great chemistry" between Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping during the April 2017 summit that marked the improvement of the bilateral relations, no one can exclude the likelihood of another downturn in the years to come. Relying less on multilateral architecture and international regime and more on bilateral dealings and unilateral decisions, Trump's foreign policy is more domestic-oriented, with a strong flavor of America first. Trump's embrace of populism and unilateralism has made scholars and policy practitioners to think of him as his predecessor back to the early 19th century, Andrew Jackson, the first populist president in American history.[60] As a

Jacksonian president, Trump's priority is to shore up U.S. domestic economy instead of paying asymmetrically for American global leadership. His intention to break with traditional diplomatic norms also inevitably altered Asian people's perception of the credibility of the United States' threat of force. According to a Gallup World Poll survey conducted in December 2016, while 44 percent of Taiwanese believe that the United States would provide military assistance if needed, 35 percent of respondents hold the opposite belief, with the rest having different perceptions on the issue, in which 6 percent say "depends" and 15 percent "don't know".[61] The unpredictable Trump administration has also brought implications for Taipei-Washington relations. Since Washington has withdrawn from the regional economic architecture of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and shown less concern about the human rights issue, the Tsai administration's three-prong strategy of allying with the United States in terms of economy, value, and security has lost two legs, highlighting the issue of sustainability of status quo across the Taiwan Strait.

Looking into the near future of the U.S.-China relations, one needs to keep in mind that President Trump's priorities are the trade and North Korea issues. Trump's blaming of China as an "economic enemy" and his decision to impose tariffs on $34 billion worth of Chinese products as the first step in the trade conflict with Beijing, followed by the unusual passage of U.S. warships through the Taiwan Strait amid the heightened tensions, convey a clear message.[62] It is natural that Trump appointed some hardliners as his high-ranking trade officials, including the U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross, the U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, and the Director of the White House National Trade Council Peter Navarro, all advocates for tougher stances toward China on the trade issue. The Korean Peninsula nuclear issue is another critical one that the two powers find their interests not all convergent. The Trump administration's resoluteness to push China on these two critical issues is reflected in U.S. National Security Strategy released at the end of 2017 and the 2018 National Defense Strategy, in which China is labeled as one of America's major "strategic competitors," along with Russia, on both economic and military fronts.[63] For the first time since World War II the United States claims that "we are emerging from a period of strategic atrophy" and "that our competitive military advantage has been eroding," rendering Washington-Beijing ties preoccupied with more fierce competition vis-à-vis strategic cooperation in the years down the road.[64] This does not suggest that China-U.S. relations are doomed to be pessimistic

as the two powers are comprehensively interdependent and without China's cooperation America can achieve limited outcomes in global affairs. What it means is that more efforts and dialogues are indispensable for making a working relationship between the two countries.

Trump's earlier challenge to and later acceptance of the one-China policy have demonstrated that the president's ignorance of foreign affairs can be improved only through a belated learning process depending on individual channels rather than institutional decision-making processes. When considering all decisions by the U.S. government and Congress concerning Taiwan after Trump's inauguration, one can feel that the strategic importance of Taiwan is reemphasized. Since the beginning of 2017, for instance, Washington has increased its security cooperation with the island, particularly in a nontraditional sphere like antiterrorism. Besides, the arms sale of a $1.42 billion arms package—including seven proposed defense sales—to Taiwan on 29 June 2017 is the first such sale under the Trump administration. This package includes advanced missiles and torpedoes as well as technical support for an early warning radar system, which has surely overshadowed the Xi-Trump summit in April of that year and threatened to undermine PRC-U.S. relations. In addition, the U.S. Congress has pushed for new resolutions to upgrade Washington-Taipei relations, enhance the security of Taiwan, and bolster Taiwan's participation in international organizations such as the WHA, Interpol, and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Some proposals may lead to a port call of the U.S. Navy to Taiwan and sending uniformed marines to the AIT in Taiwan. Another decision that would exert an extremely serious impact on the cornerstone of U.S.-China relations is the passage of the Taiwan Travel Act (TTA), which was passed without amendment by unanimous consent in the U.S. Senate on 28 February 2018, expressing "the sense of Congress that the U.S. government should encourage visits between U.S. and Taiwanese officials at all levels."[65] President Trump's signature of the TTA indicates a breakthrough in Washington's and Taipei's unofficial relationship at the price of U.S.-China ties. This is followed by Washington's reluctance to allow American airlines to redefine Taiwan as a non-state—under Beijing's pressure—on their websites.[66]

Indeed, U.S. policy to Taiwan has become less predictable since President Trump came to office. Many uncertainties, such as the power struggle inside Trump's policy-making circle between the nationalists and internationalists and the policy debates between the hardline and moderate

Republicans, have resulted in the unpredictability of Trump's policy to Beijing as well as Taipei. However, against the backdrop of the ongoing wide-range U.S. debates over Washington's China policy in academic and policy circles over the policy of engagement and hedging, one cannot help but link the decisions on Taiwan with U.S. intentions to balance against a rising China. In other words, the Taiwan card will continue to be played by the Trump administration. Meanwhile, it is not unlikely that President Trump may want to "make a deal" with Beijing over Taiwan in exchange of economic gains as well as the Korean Peninsula issue about which he is more concerned. As Raymond Burghardt indicated, the U.S. Taiwan policy might be negotiable with Beijing and used as strategic leverage for economic interests.[67] This worrisome speculation has increased Taiwanese concern of being abandoned by Americans.

6. Conclusion

It should be noted that the U.S. policy toward the Taiwan Strait over the past decades is never an either/or dichotomy in terms of Taiwan abandonment or absolute moral and security commitment to the island. In the United States, as illustrated, scholars and the media that have been more actively involved in debates over Taiwan policy roughly fall into three groups. Lying in the middle are those who regard U.S.-China relations as neither that of friends nor enemies. They are mainly mainstream scholars in favor of maintaining the status quo across the Taiwan Strait. Situated on the two sides are those in favor of change of the status quo. As non-mainstreamers, they see Taiwan either as a strategic liability or as a strategic asset, advocating simply abandoning Taiwan or wildly playing the Taiwan card. Resonating with the three contending voices, Washington has been carrying out its Taiwan policy with the mainstream opinion of maintaining the dynamic status quo at the core, supplemented by ideas of Taiwan abandonment and Taiwan card manipulation in varying degrees depending on different situations. Since the mentalities of Taiwan abandonment and Taiwan manipulation have played their partial roles in U.S. Taiwan policymaking historically, it is inappropriate to classify and predict U.S. Taiwan policy as simply abandonment or card playing. Instead it is more a mixed policy of the three elements, with the idea of maintaining the status quo enjoying a commanding height. Indeed, the opinion of Taiwan abandonment is still an unofficial argument advocated by some people in the United States, and its

publicity in the academic circle and the media has stimulated strong criticisms and reactions from those who want to maintain the status quo or embrace the mentality of the Cold War. With the growing interest by more people involving in the debates, this article suspects that the outcome of the ongoing debates might inevitably impact the future development of U.S.-Taipei ties.

When addressing Taiwan abandonment as a general concept and policy option, people should understand it in a more specific manner from various dimensions. They can be, as one may find in the historical interactions among Beijing, Washington, and Taipei, for example, reductions and postponement of arms sales to Taiwan, policy discussions of abolishing the TRA and the Six Assurances, encouragement of peace talks on China's reunification, and pressure on Taipei to meet with Beijing's requirement. More importantly, it should be noted that a true abandonment of Taiwan could hardly be determined unless a military confrontation breaks out across the Strait or peaceful unification is under serious discussions. Historically, the Truman administration decided to dump Taiwan in the early 1950 when the PLA programmed to liberate the island. The Nixon administration again reconsidered abandoning Taiwan in the early 1970s when Washington sought imperative cooperation with the PRC to counterbalance the assertive Soviet Union. Additionally, academic and policy circles should be more aware of two dimensions underneath the argumentation of Taiwan abandonment. The first one is a normative perspective, arguing that the United States *should* forsake Taiwan, seemingly conveying a message that it is consistent with U.S. *value* to do so. Another one is based on empirical cognition of changing *interest*, believing that Washington *has to* ditch Taiwan.

Although the status quo maintainers still belong to the mainstream in the United States, many Americans have begun to rethink the Taiwan issue in U.S.-China relations. Among them some experts argue for the policy of Taiwan abandonment with various degrees, either for the sake of U.S.-China cooperation (e.g., Owens, Gilley, Kent, Freeman), avoiding military conflict with China (Carpenter and Glaser), or acknowledgments of the greater trend of China's eventual reunification (e.g., Shambaugh, Prueher, Swaine, Sutter, McDevitt, Brzezinski or Mearsheimer). Unlike Washington's tacit acceptance of Taiwan's unification with the mainland for working with the PRC to counterbalance against the Soviet Union in the 1970s and early 1980s, the argument that Taiwan *has to* or *should* be abandoned advocated openly in unofficial views in recent years have

aroused more public attention and therefore more criticisms and reactions from status quo maintainers and the "Cold War minders." It remains empirically underexplored to what extent these debates over Taiwan abandonment will shape U.S. policy toward the Taiwan Strait. Drawing on interactions among Beijing, Washington and Taipei over the past decades, the answer to the question is often a big *yes*, evidenced by policy adjustments following policy debates and their impact on the future trend of U.S.-Taiwan relations. It is clear that arguments of Taiwan abandonment between 2009 and 2014 are coincided with increasing U.S.-China cooperation and smoothly peaceful development of cross-Strait relations. The growing but *limited* tensions in both U.S.-China relations and domestic politics of Taiwan in the late years of the Obama administration may have increased the incentive and faith for Taiwan watchers in the United States who want to maintain the status quo and even play the Taiwan card. This may explain the decreasing voice of Taiwan abandonment in the last couple of years of the Obama administration.

However, *if* cross-Strait relations continue deteriorating and kindle a new crisis in the near future or the mainland loses patience in using peaceful means to resolve the Taiwan issue, it is safe to expect that voices of abandoning Taiwan and avoiding war will rise. Meanwhile, it is also worthy to observe whether the "Cold War minders" would take the opportunity to squeeze the space left over for strategic ambiguity, thus disturbing the current status quo. On the other hand, *if*—an even bigger if under the DPP administration—the two sides of the Taiwan Strait move to negotiation on political integration based on growing economic and social integrations in the future, both Taiwan abandoners and Taiwan card players are expected to make bigger voices, as the status quo then will become less maintainable.

Absent of these two scenarios, experts in the United States will still remain divided with different degrees on the significance of Taiwan in the American global strategic chessboard, with views driven mainly by national interest or moral value, or a combination of different dimensions of them. Taiwan abandonment and Taiwan card manipulation as policy options or public debate issues will never vanish in American politics in the foreseeable future. While the status quo maintainers still command the central position in the academic and policy circles, Taiwan abandoners and card players will squeeze into the mainstream and exert their respective influences in different periods of time. Under the unpredictable Trump administration, one should never rule out the possibility of U.S.

Taiwan policy shifts from one view toward the other. Given the relative decline of U.S. supremacy in Asia-Pacific, "it would be unsurprising if Americans were to turn to a more non-interventionist foreign policy."[68] According to Frank Klingberg, U.S. foreign policy has oscillated between isolationism (introvert phase) and internationalism (extrovert phase), with 25 years as a circle. He predicted in 1990 that the next introvert phase should begin to set in around 2014.[69] It is too early to judge whether the antiglobalization atmosphere in the United States and the election of Donald Trump as U.S. president would affirm this interesting forecast. It may be safer to say, however, the significance of Taiwan for U.S. policy makers will continue to decrease if the PRC and the United States increase their strategic cooperation in the future. Only under this circumstance can the final resolution of the Taiwan issue free itself from external interference and influence.

Notes

1 Richard Bush, "An Open Letter to Donald Trump on the One-China Policy," 13 December 2016, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2016/12/13/an-open-letter-to-donald-trump-on-the-one-china-policy/, accessed 26 February 2018.

2 Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Strait Talk: United States-Taiwan Relations and the Crisis with China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 3, p. 13.

3 See "Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, January 5, 1950," in U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950*, Vol. 6 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 259.

4 M. Taylor Fravel, Strong Borders, *Secure Nation: Cooperation and Conflict in China's Territorial Disputes* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), pp. 227–252.

5 U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations* (1 July 1945–30 September 2013), https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/USOverseasLoansGrantstheGreenBook2013.pdf, accessed 26 February 2018. As for loans and grants that countries received in single years, see https://explorer.usaid.gov/reports.html, accessed 26 February 2018.

6 Memorandum of Conversation, 9 July 1971 (4:35 pm–11:20 pm), in William Burr, ed., *The Beijing-Washington Back-Channel and Henry Kissinger's Secret Trip to China: September 1970–July 1971* (National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book, No. 66), p. 5, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB66, accessed 26 February 2018.

7 Memorandum of Conversation, 10 July 1971 (12:10 pm–6:00 pm), in ibid, p. 28; also see Alan D. Romberg, *Rein In at the Brink of the Precipice: American Policy toward Taiwan and U.S.-PRC Relations* (Washington, D.C.: Henry L. Stimson Center, 2003), p. 33.

8 Memorandum of Conversation, 21 October 1971 (10:30 am–1:45 pm), in *Negotiating U.S.-Chinese Rapprochement: New American and Chinese Documentation Leading Up to Nixon's 1972 Trip*, edited by William Burr (National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book, No. 70), p. 261, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NASEBB70, accessed 26 February 2018.

9 Dennis V. Hickey, "U.S. Policy Toward Taiwan: Time For Change?," *Asian Affairs*, No. 40 (2013), p. 177; Ching Cheong, "US Taiwan Policy Set 31 Years Ago," *Straits Times*, 20 December 2003; Shirley Kan, *China/Taiwan: Evolution of the "One China" Policy—Key Statements from Washington, Beijing and Taipei* (CRS Report for Congress) (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 13 December 2007), CRS-33; Elaine Sciolino, "Records Dispute Kissinger on His '71 Visit to China," *New York Times*, 29 February 2002, 11.

10 *The U.S. & Free China*, p. 109, quoted from Romberg, *Rein In at the Brink of the Precipice*, p. 37, n. 41.

11 Memorandum of Conversation, 26 November 1974 (3:45 pm–5:00 pm), pp. 3–6, NSA 00322, quoted from Romberg, *Rein In at the Brink of the Precipice*, p. 65.

12 *Memorandum of Conversation*, 4:05 pm–6:30 pm (Atlanta: Carter Library, 21 May 1978), p. 9.

13 Tao Wenzhao, *Zhongmei guanxi shi* (A History of Sino-U.S. Relations), Vol. 3 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 2004), p. 58; Peking 237, "Full Transcript of December 15 Meeting with Teng," paragraph 32 (Atlanta: Carter Library, 15 December 1978).

14 *People's Daily*, 7 December 1978.

15 Alexander M. Haig, *Caveat: Realism, Reagan and Foreign Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1984), pp. 213–215.

16 Joint Communiqué Issued by the Governments of the United States and the People's Republic of China, 17 August 1982.

17 Harvey Feldman, "President Reagan's Six Assurances to Taiwan and Their Meaning Today," *WebMemo* (Washington, D.C.: Heritage Foundation, 2 October 2007).

18 Lin Gang, "Meiguo dui jiejue Taiwan wenti de zhengce quxiang" (The Policy Orientation of American Approach towards the Taiwan Issue), *Meiguo yanjiu* (American Studies Quarterly), No. 3 (2008), p. 66.

19 Ted Galen Carpenter, *America's Coming War with China: A Collision Course over Taiwan* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

20 Bill Owens, "America Must Start Treating China as a Friend," *Financial Times*, 17 November 2009.

21 C. Fred Bergsten, "Pacific Asia and the Asia Pacific: Choice of APEC," Policy Brief No. PB09-16 (Washington, D.C.: Peterson Institute of International Economics, July 2009), p. 3.
22 Tao Wenzhao, "Jinnian lai meiguo zhiku guanyu mei duitai zhengce de zhenglun" (Debates among U.S. Think Tanks over American Taiwan Policy in Recent Years), *Xiandai guoji guanxi* (Contemporary International Relations), Vol. 2 (2012), p. 1.
23 David Shambaugh, "A New China Requires a New Strategy," *Current History*, Vol. 109, No. 728 (2010), pp. 219–226.
24 Chas Freeman, Jr., "Beijing, Washington, and the Shifting Balance of Prestige," Remarks to the China Maritime Studies Institute, Newport, R.I., 10 May 2011, www.mepc.org/articles-commentary/speeches/beijing-washington-and-shifting-balance-prestige, accessed 27 February 2018.
25 Charles Glaser, "Will China's Rise Lead to War? Why Realism Does Not Mean Pessimism," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 90, No. 2 (March–April 2011), pp. 80–91.
26 Joseph Prueher, "Remarks at the Meeting on 'The Way Ahead with China'" (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies and Miller Center of Public Affairs at University of Virginia, 29 March 2011), http://eventful.com/washington/events/way-ahead-china-/E0-001-037859132-5, accessed 31 March 2011; Glaser, "Will China's Rise Lead to War?"
27 Bruce Gilley, "Not So Dire Straits: How the Finlandization of Taiwan Benefits U.S. Security," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 89, No. 1 (January/February 2010), pp. 44–60.
28 Paul Kane, "To Save Our Economy, Ditch Taiwan," *New York Times*, 10 November 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/11/opinion/to-save-our-economy-ditch-taiwan.html?r=1&sq=paul%20V.%20Kane&st=cse, accessed 12 November 2011.
29 John J. Mearsheimer, "Say Goodbye to Taiwan," *National Interest*, 25 February 2014, http://nationalinterest.org/article/say-goodbye-taiwan-9931, accessed 15 October 2017.
30 Michael Swaine, "Remarks at the Conference on the Future of U.S. Posture towards Cross-Strait Relations" (Washington, D.C.: Atlantic Council, 28 September 2011), http://www.acus.org/event/future-us-posture-towards-cross-strait-relations, accessed 1 October 2011.
31 Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Balancing the East, Upgrading the West," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 91, No.1 (2012), pp. 97–104.
32 Michael McDevitt, "Alternative Futures: Long-Term Challenges for the United States," in *New Opportunities and Challenges for Taiwan's Security*, edited by Roger Cliff, Phillip Saunders, and Scott Harold (Washington, D.C.: RAND, 2011), pp. 103–104.
33 Thomas Christensen, "The Contemporary Security Dilemma: Deterring a Taiwan Conflict," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (2002), pp. 16, 19–20.

34 Michael Mazza, "Why Taiwan Matters," American Enterprise Institute, 8 March 2011, http://www.aei.org/article/foreign-and-defense-policy/regional/asia/why-taiwan-matters, accessed 10 July 2013.
35 Dan Blumenthal et al., *Asian Alliances in the 21st Century*, Project 2049 Institute, 30 August 2011, https://project2049.net/documents/Asian_Alliances_21st_Century.pdf, accessed 12 November 2011.
36 Alan Romberg, "2010: The Winter of PRC Discontent," *Chinese Leadership Monitor*, No. 31 (2010).
37 Ibid.
38 Author's meeting notes, 17 August 2007, Washington, D.C.
39 Alan Wachman, *Why Taiwan? Geostrategic Rationales for China's Territorial Integrity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), p. 161.
40 Mearsheimer, "Say Goodbye to Taiwan."
41 Tucker, *Strait Talk*, pp. 3, 280.
42 Richard Bush, *Uncharted Strait: The Future of China-Taiwan Relations* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2013), pp. 231–233.
43 Bush, "Open Letter to Donald Trump."
44 Steven M. Goldstein, "Taiwan: Asia's Orphan?" *Special Report*, No. 62 (Washington, D.C.: National Bureau of Asian Research, December 2016), p. 11.
45 Bush, "Open Letter to Donald Trump."
46 Richard Bush, "China-Taiwan: Recent Economic, Political, and Military Developments Across the Strait, and Implications for the United States," 18 March 2010, https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/china-taiwan-recent-economic-political-and-military-developments-across-the-strait-and-implications-for-the-united-states/, accessed 27 February 2018.
47 Shelley Rigger, *Why Taiwan Matters: Small Island, Global Powerhouse* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011), pp. viii, 189–191; Author's meeting notes, 17 July 2013, Shanghai.
48 Christopher Twomey, "Limits of Coercion: Compellence, Deterrence, and Cross-Strait Political-Military Affairs," in *New Opportunities and Challenges for Taiwan's Security*, edited by Cliff, Saunders, and Harold, pp. 47–49, p. 61.
49 Robert Sutter, "Cross-Strait Moderation and the United States—Policy Adjustment Needed," *PacNet*, No. 17 (Honolulu, HI: Pacific Forum CSIS, 5 March 2009).
50 Robert Sutter, "Taiwan's Future: Narrowing Straits," *NBR Analysis* (Seattle, WA: National Bureau of Asian Research, May 2011), p. 4.
51 Glaser, "Will China's Rise Lead to War?"
52 Richard Bush, "The Social Foundation of Taiwan's Future: Guns, Wheelchairs and Shark's Fin Soup," speech delivered at Columbia University Symposium on Taiwan in the 21st Century, 13 June 2010, https://www.brookings.edu/on-the-record/the-social-foundation-of-taiwans-future-guns-wheelchairs-and-sharks-fin-soup/, accessed 27 February 2018.

53 Bonnie Glaser, *Managing Cross-Strait Ties in 2017* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Relations, January 2017), p. 2.
54 Rorry Daniels, *A Conference with Taiwan Affairs Office of the PRC State Council* (New York: National Committee on American Foreign Policy, June 2016).
55 Blumenthal, "The United States and Cross-Strait Relations," paper delivered at a conference "Cross-Strait Relations in a New Era of Negotiation," hosted by Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 7 July 2010, Washington, DC.
56 David Shambaugh, "Dealing with China: Tough Engagement and Managed Competition," *Asia Policy*, No. 23 (January 2017), p. 6.
57 Richard Bush, "Taiwan Comes Between the U.S. and China Again," 11 February 2010, https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/taiwan-comes-between-the-u-s-and-china-again/, accessed 27 February 2018.
58 Peter Navarro, "America Can't Dump Taiwan," *National Interest*, 19 July 2016, http://nationalinterest.org/feature/america-cant-dump-taiwan-17040, accessed 27 February 2018.
59 Shelley Rigger, "Donald Trump Is No Friend of Taiwan," *E-Notes*, 16 March 2017, https://www.fpri.org/article/2017/03/donald-trump-is-no-friend-of-taiwan/, accessed 27 February 2018.
60 Walter Russell Mead, "The Jacksonian Revolt: American Populism and the Liberal Order," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 96, No. 2 (2017), pp. 2–7; Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World* (New York: Knopf, 2001); Susan B. Glasser, "The Man Who Put Andrew Jackson in Trump's Oval Office," *Politico Magazine*, 22 January 2018, https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/01/22/andrew-jackson-donald-trump-216493, accessed 28 February 2018.
61 Michael Smith and Stafford Nichols, "Mixed Reactions in Asia on Whether US Would Defend Them," *Gallup News*, 19 December 2016, http://news.gallup.com/poll/200012/mixed-reaction-asia-whether-defend.aspx?g_source=ASIA_PACIFIC&g_medium=topic&g_campaign=tiles, accessed 18 October 2017.
62 Ana Swanson, "Trump's Trade War With China Is Officially Underway," New York Times, July 5, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/05/business/china-us-trade-war-trump-tariffs.html, accessed July 8, 2018; Phil Stewart, Idrees Ali, and Jess Macy Yu, "U.S. warships pass through Taiwan Strait amid heightened tensions with Beijing," *Reuters*, July 7, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-taiwan-usa-defence/us-warships-pass-through-taiwan-strait-amid-heightened-tensions-with-beijing-idUSKBN-1JX0QY, accessed July 8, 2018.
63 White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, D.C., December 2017); Department of Defense, *Summary of*

the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America: Sharpening the American Military's Competitive Edge (Washington, D.C., January 2018).

64 Department of Defense, *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy*, p. 1

65 H.R.535-Taiwan Travel Act, 115th Congress (2017–2018), https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/535, accessed 1 March 2018.

66 Daniel Shane, "White House calls China's warning to airlines 'Orwellian nonsense', *@CNNMoney*, 6 May 2018: 11:22 AM ET, https://money.cnn.com/2018/05/05/news/companies/white-house-response-china-warning-taiwan/index.html, accessed 30 July 2018.

67 Raymond Burghardt, *Cross-Strait Trilateral Meeting Report* (New York: National Committee on American Foreign Policy, 7 April 2016), p. 5.

68 Douglas Paal, "The Rise of China and Alliance in East Asia: Implications for Diplomatic Truce," keynote remarks at the 39th Taiwan-American Conference on Contemporary China, Taipei, 9 December 2010, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/2010/12/09/rise-of-china-and-alliance-in-east-asia-implications-for-diplomatic-truce/s6#, accessed 27 February 2018.

69 Frank Klingberg, "Cyclical Trends in Foreign Policy Revisited in 1990," *International Studies Notes*, Vol. 15 (1990), pp. 54–58, cited from Glenn Hastedt, *American Foreign Policy: Past, Present, Future* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1997), p. 27.