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## Understanding Taiwan Presidential Election: A Review Paper

Shida Zhong  
*Utah State University*

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UNDERSTANDING TAIWAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

A REVIEW PAPER

by

Shida Zhong

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirement for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Political Science

Approved:

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Yesola Kweon, Ph.D.  
Major Professor

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Laura Gamboa-Guiterrez, Ph.D.  
Committee Member

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Jasmine Yu-Hsing Chen, Ph.D.  
Committee Member

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, Utah

2019

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## ABSTRACT

Understanding Taiwan Presidential Election: A Review Paper

by

Shida Zhong, Master of Science

Utah State University, 2019

Major Professor: Dr. Yesola Kweon  
Department: Political Science

This paper seeks to find a systematic understanding of the presidential election in Taiwan. Based on the Taiwanese national identity issue as the main social cleavage, I try to review the literature about Taiwan's presidential election and find the factors that influence the result of presidential election. I try to sort the factors into three dimensions: issue voting, valence voting and social context. Meanwhile, this paper also contains a brief introduction of democratization in Taiwan as a history background and a short review on the past Taiwan presidential election. The purpose of paper is to shine a light on the future research about Taiwan politics. In future research about Taiwan presidential election, the joint impact of several factors such as gender, civic society and social network should be paid attention to. Several factors such as the attitude towards independence/unification and policy towards Cross-Strait relations of both China and Taiwan should be traced with time to see whether their effect changes. Besides, due to the uniqueness of Taiwan, the impact of relation with not only China but also the US on domestic politics should be taken into consideration.

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Shida Zhong

(73 pages)

## CONTENT

	Page
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
I. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 As a result of the unique process of democratization	2
1.2 As a factor influencing the prospect of international relations	3
1.3 As a platform of public political participation	5
II. BACKGROUND: DEMOCRATIZATION IN TAIWAN	7
2.1 Preconditions	8
2.1.1. The characteristics of the KMT regime in Taiwan	8
2.1.2 Economic Growth, Social Change, and the Political Sociology of the Opposition	9
2.2 Process: Strategic Interaction between Regime and Opposition	10
III. SHORT INTRODUCTION TO TAIWAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION	14
IV. WHAT INFLUENCE TAIWAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION	22
4.1 Issue Voting.	22
4.1.1 Theories	22
4.1.2 Issue voting in Taiwan	25
4.2 Valence Voting	32
4.2.1 Theories	32
4.2.2 Valence voting in Taiwan	35
4.3. Social cleavage: national identity	37
4.3.1 National identity: Theory	37
4.3.2 National identity in Taiwan	42
4.3.3 National identity and Politics	51
4.3.4 National identity and Taiwan voters	53
V. FURTHER RESEARCH	57
VI. CONCLUSION	58
REFERENCE	60

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figures	Page
1. Taiwanese / Chinese Identity (1992/06~2018/12).....	38
2. Taiwan Independence vs. Unification with the Mainland (1992/06~2018/12)...	42

## I. INTRODUCTION

As the result of the Chinese Civil War in 1949, the Kuomintang (KMT) retreated to Taiwan and lost the control of the mainland to CPC (Communist Party of China). Since then, both sides of the Taiwan straits step on different development path not only in politics but also in economy under two political entities: the People's Republic of China (PRC) led-by the CPC in the mainland and the Republic of China (ROC) in Taiwan. Since 1980s, Taiwan has started democratization. The year 1986 witnessed the end of the Martial Law period as well as the establishment of the Democratic Progressive Party (DDP) as the main opposition party to the ruling party KMT in Taiwan, which is a benchmark to a substantial progress in Taiwan's democratization. Moreover, in 1996, Taiwan had the first popular presidential election. Each president has a four year term. Candidates from both KMT and DPP have the chance to become the presidents, which is regarded as a typical symbol of democratic consolidation. It takes only 20 years around for Taiwan to accomplish the transition from an authoritarian one-party regime to a democratic regime.

This thesis is organized by five parts. The first part is the historical background. It aims to offer more details of the democratization in Taiwan based on preconditions and process as two dimensions. Next part is short review about Taiwan's presidential election since 1996 to 2016 including major candidates and their campaign strategy, along with vital events during the elections. The third part is the theoretical explanation on what influence the Taiwan's presidential election. After these theories is the further research direction. In the last is the conclusion section.



The theoretical explanation on what influence Taiwan's presidential election contains three major theories: Issue voting, valence voting and social cleavage. In issue voting, the impact of four major issues on voters along with how Taiwan's political parties manipulate to accomplish their goals is included. In valence voting, both prospective and retrospective voting are evident in voters' voting choice. In social cleavage, national identity as the sole social cleavage dominates Taiwan politics. In the rest of this introduction section, the significance of studying and understanding Taiwan's presidential election is contained.

### 1.1 As a result of the unique process of democratization

Young but mature, democracy in Taiwan has become a unique case to study. Huntington suggests three models to explain the transition from authoritarian regime to democracy: *Transformation, Replacement and Transplacement*.<sup>1</sup> However, though his theory has influences over several democratization cases in other area, None of these models is suitable to explain the democratization in Taiwan. Nevertheless, deeply influenced by the traditional Confucianism, Taiwan never has any democracy experience. Even worse, if we scrutiny the Confucianism, we may argue that the view about political power, government and even human right in Confucianism is totally different to that in democracy. For example, Confucianism argues the human-centeredness. It advocates the loyalty to the emperor without any guarantee of human rights, In ancient China, the concept of human-centeredness was to demonstrate the respect of humanity through the affirmation of human nature. However, the concept of democracy derives the equality of

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<sup>1</sup> Huntington, Samuel P. The third wave: Democratization in the late twentieth century. Vol. 4. University of Oklahoma press, 1993.

personality through the affirmation of human rights. What's more, the democratization in Taiwan is not accompanied with bloody rebellion or military coup. The more detail process of Taiwan democratization will be contained in the next section.

Thus the democratization is unique due to the existing cultural value conflict and peaceful but rapid pace. As a result of this unique process, the presidential election is an essential institution functioning as the maintenance and consolidation of democracy. The result of presidential election is also related to the evolving party system in Taiwan. Political parties hold vital position in democracy. It is the political party that constructs the intermediary mechanism between citizens and government. Also their interaction guarantees the function of democracy.

Meanwhile, the dominant party in the authoritarian regime is easy to lose its position after the transition. However, as the dominant party since 1949, KMT didn't lose the first popular election in 1996 after the transition from authoritarian regime to democracy but was beat by the DPP in the 2000 election. The candidate from DPP coming into power in 2000 also remarks the change in the citizens' partisanship along with the partisan realignment. The pan-Green camp led by DPP and the pan -Blue camp led by KMT forms the basic framework of the party system. In these two camps, other than the two leading parties, there are also several less influential parties which constitute the party system. The competition between these two camps accelerates the consolidation of Taiwan democracy.

## 1.2 As a factor influencing the prospect of international relations

Taiwan matters a lot to the world. The relation between the PRC, the ROC and the US has impact on the stability of the East Asia. During the Cold War, this island was part

of the frontier of the socialism camp and the western camp. As Rigger argues, Taiwan is a small island but global powerhouse. As Shelley writes, “One final sense in which Taiwan matters to the world is that it stands as a perpetual reminder of what is possible in international relations—both for better or for worse. Taiwan offers proof that development—both political and economic—is possible, but its experience shows how fragile states’ independence really is.”<sup>2</sup> Besides, the success of the Taiwan democratization has underscored the advantage of the democracy institution, which can be regarded as an indispensable case supporting the US-led global order. But on the other side, what is more salient is the prospect of the Cross-Strait relation, which means the relation between the two political entities: the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in mainland while the Republic of China (ROC) in Taiwan. Since the PRC never gives up the military operation as one of the solutions to the Cross-Strait relation, the military threat has long been a “sword of Damocles” to Taiwan. Reunification has always been the PRC’s advocates regarding to the relation with Taiwan since the One-China policy is the basic principle and guideline in PRC’s diplomacy<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless, in the discourse of CPC’s propaganda, reunification with Taiwan is the historic task for this party to lead the nation achieving the great rejuvenation in the new era.<sup>4</sup> The great rejuvenation has long been the goal of the CPC since it was come up in 1997. It contains several major goals including developing the socialism with Chinese characteristics, accelerating the “new industrialization” by advanced technology and cultivating the spirit of Chinese nation. As

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<sup>2</sup> Rigger, Shelley. Why Taiwan matters: Small island, global powerhouse. Rowman & Littlefield, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Statement from Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People’s Republic of China: Taiwan problem and the China’s unification (台湾问题与中国的统一) :  
[https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/ziliao\\_674904/zl\\_674979/ywzt\\_675099/wzzt\\_675579/2296\\_675789/t10531.shtml](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/ziliao_674904/zl_674979/ywzt_675099/wzzt_675579/2296_675789/t10531.shtml)

<sup>4</sup> Highlights of Xi’s speech at Taiwan message anniversary event:  
<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201901/02/WS5c2c1ad2a310d91214052069.html>

one of the most important part of the great rejuvenation, reunification with Taiwan is essential to the spirit of Chinese nation according to CPC. On the other side, the result of presidential election is out of the competition between the two camps. However, the two camps have different view towards certain issues vital to the Cross-Strait relation. Whether reunification, becoming independent or maintaining status quo is the major attitude towards the relation with mainland. The presidential candidates are usually recommended by the parties, which ensures their attitudes towards the Cross-Strait Relations same with the parties. Besides, with the mainland's characteristic policy "Reform and Open-up" along with the Taiwan export-oriented economy, the economic interdependence and cooperation is more and more frequent between the two sides. As a result, the economic integration between two sides becomes an inevitable issue during the presidential election campaign.

### 1.3 As a platform of public political participation

Moreover, the presidential election offers a vital platform of the public to participate in the politics. The result of the presidential election is determined by the public's choice. Thus, the president is responsible for the public opinion. Focusing on the choice of the Taiwan voters, we can find the public opinion as well as its changes. One of the most salient parts of the public opinion is the national identity. As the key social cleavage, national identity influences citizens' opinion towards the prospect of Taiwan. The attitudes towards relations with mainland China, whether unification, independence or maintaining the status quo is the dominant issue. The cultural and historical acceptance of China and the political acceptance of Taiwan constitute the inner conflict in Taiwan citizens. With time going by, a generational effect is appearing. (Chen and Wang, 2019;

Li and Zhang, 2017) Instead of national identity inherited from mainland China and prompted by the Chiang Kai-Shek regime, the national identity with more local Taiwan historical cultural experience along with the democratization became the dominant. The Taiwanese citizens' national identity is closely attached to their partisanship, which may turn out as one of the decisive factors in presidential election.

There is no doubt that Taiwan matters a lot not only in the democratization theoretical perspective but also in the realistic international relation perspective. As the institution generating the leader of Taiwan who may have influence on its development in the next several years, the presidential election in Taiwan deserves more attention. But before stepping further into the presidential election in Taiwan, a short review over the process of the democratization as background is needed.

## II. BACKGROUND: DEMOCRATIZATION IN TAIWAN

The democratization in Taiwan faced several challenges. After retreating to Taiwan, the KMT had experienced vast administrative and coercive power which ensured its ability to quench any attempt to form opposition. The conflict between the new coming Mainlanders and the local Taiwanese was evident due to the huge gap between life style and thoughts. What's more, as Wong argues, the ultra-nationalists force from Beijing twisted the statehood and nationhood questions in Taiwan.<sup>5</sup> Though facing these challenges, the Taiwan democratization is rapid but peaceful. The transition from an authoritarian regime to democracy is achieved without coup or massive rebellion. Before stepping into Taiwan as a typical case, I will revisit the general theory about democratization. Generally, the precondition school and the strategic choice theorists hold the two extremes of the theoretical spectrum<sup>6</sup>. The precondition school argues that democratization is a step of the sequential process of modernization. While the strategic choice is a process of strategic political decision making wherein democratic institutions are the products of negotiation, bargaining and ultimately collectively interested compromise. However, the two schools are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they are the two sides of one coin. In the process of democratization in Taiwan, we can find several vital preconditions as well as the interaction between the ruling party KMT and the opposition party. Though democratization in Taiwan is regarded as a rapid process, it's a gradual change with no valid and explicit departure point.

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<sup>5</sup> Wong, Joseph. "Dynamic democratization in Taiwan." *Journal of Contemporary China* 10.27 (2001): 339-362.

<sup>6</sup>Karl, Terry Lynn. "Dilemmas of democratization in Latin America." *Comparative politics* 23, no. 1 (1990): 1-21.

## 2.1 Preconditions

### 2.1.1. The characteristics of the KMT regime in Taiwan

The KMT regime in Taiwan was different from other authoritarian regime in several aspects. After retreated to Taiwan, the KMT launched several policies and movement to maintain its authority and legitimacy. These policies and movement set several pre-conditions for democratization. In politics, the defeat of KMT regime on the mainland motivated a thorough political reform in 1950—1951 through which the party increased its organizational capacity and developed a semi corporatists structure.<sup>7</sup> The KMT's political autonomy from society and its ability to penetrate social organizations and create its own had several consequences for the subsequent political development. In economy, the far-reaching land reform launched by the KMT from 1949 to 1953 changed the ownership of lands. As a result, the land reform has changed the preference of investment. It was no longer for landlords and urban capitalists to invest on land. Instead, financing various small business and light industry become the new investment choice. Meanwhile, the focus of these landlords and capitalists transited from the rural village to the urban area. Before the land reform, landlords took the responsibility as the recognized local leader in the village managing the local affairs. In the organization of the KMT, Chiang Ching-kuo, the successor of Chiang Kai-shek as the leader of Taiwan, established a commissar system within the military, which avoided the emergency of military coup during the democratization.

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<sup>7</sup> Tun-jen Cheng and Stephan Haggard: 'Regime Transformation in Taiwan: Theoretical and Comparative' in *Political Change in Taiwan* ed. Tun-jen Cheng and Stephan Haggad. (Boulder Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers) p.1-33

In sum, as the ruling party which led an authoritarian regime, there were some difference between the KMT and other party leading the authoritarian regime. First, the KMT did not advocate the principle of proletarian dictatorship nor the long time monopoly of political power by the party. Second, the KMT regime permitted and organized subnational political contestation. Direct elections for both executive and council positions at the county, township and village levels have been held regularly since 1950, which helped the formation of the opposition power. Last but not least, the promotion of capitalist economy based on private property and a fairly wide scope of market exchange led to social change and offered the economic condition for democratization.

#### 2.1.2 Economic Growth, Social Change, and the Political Sociology of the Opposition

Since the business in Taiwan are small and unorganized, they are also beyond the reach of the government. The economic growth accelerates the social change, which prepares the democratization. As a consequences of economic development, the literacy rate and income per capita increased. What's more important, a rapid movement of labor entering in manufacture generated the differentiated urban sector and the professional middle class. The economic development has several characteristics as follows:

- The emerging bifurcation the political and socioeconomic elite overlapped the subethnic division between mainlander and Taiwanese populations. Because



national politics was reserved for mainlanders, Taiwanese pursued economic advancement and social mobility.<sup>8</sup>

- Capitalist development itself undermined the KMT's institutional capacity for mobilization and control. The rapid growth of civic and economic associations was simply beyond what the KMT could monitor.

The main agents of political change in Taiwan have been middle-class intellectuals who came of age during the period of rapid economic growth. The middle-class intellectuals that fueled the democratic movement appeared to be connected to small and medium-sized business via various social ties based on school, regional, and workplace affiliation.

## 2.2 Process: Strategic Interaction between Regime and Opposition

The first phase in the development of the political opposition started with a political reform movement, which was triggered by diplomatic setbacks. The second phase of the development of the opposition, and the beginning of the democratic transition in Taiwan, can be dated to the formation of an opposition camp—as opposed to the operation of individual independents—in the local election in 1977. As a result of this election, electoral politics became more competitive, and the opposition became the political force named Tangwai (It means out of the KMT).

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<sup>8</sup> Tun-jen Cheng and Stephan Haggard: 'Regime Transformation in Taiwan: Theoretical and Comparative' in *Political Change in Taiwan* ed. Tun-jen Cheng and Stephan Haggard. (Boulder Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers) p.1-33

Within the KMT, it is useful to distinguish between “hard-liners” and “soft-liners”. The hard liners included party cadres in the internal security apparatus who were concerned with the potential social disorder accompanying political change and the old guard, who defined the KMT’s mission in conservative terms: staunch anticommunism abroad, continued to recapture the mainland, and KMT dominance “tutelage”<sup>9</sup> at home. The soft-liners included younger cadres in the Department of Organization, a division responsible for conducting elections and intraparty affairs, and newer, Taiwanese recruits through the party.

A vital event that had influence over the strategy of both sides is the Kaohsiung Incident during the martial law period. The 1977 Kaohsiung Incident was a major conflict in Kaohsiung, Taiwan on December 10, 1979, International Human Rights Day. The members of the non-party movements used a magazine named *beautiful island* to organize a mass demonstration and speech on December 10, appealing to democracy and freedom, ending the party ban and martial law.<sup>10</sup> The violent shutdown in Kaohsiung forced both sides to reassess their strategy. On the opposition side, the jailing of radical leaders enhanced the moderates, who had argued against futile and costly confrontations with the regime. On the KMT side, they normalized the political process while maintaining various constraints on the activities of the opposition.

The hard-liner position weakened after the demotion of the head of the Department of Political Warfare, Wang Shen, in 1984, who attempted to launch a military intervention so as to be the success of Chiang Ching-guo. However, Chiang successfully

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<sup>9</sup> Roy, Denny. Taiwan: A political history. Cornell University Press, 2003. Chapter 3, p. 76-105

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

managed this threat.<sup>11</sup> As a result, solid hard-liner was ebbing within the government. Then the moderate leadership concentrated on rebuilding electoral support, using the Legislative Yuan as an arena for bargaining. The moderate leadership of the opposition also managed to extend its activities overseas. The very progress that moderate leaders made in the legislative and overseas triggered a leadership crisis. Discounting the incremental gains from either the legislative process or closed-door negotiations with the KMT, Young Turks once again sought street actions to force the pace of concession from the KMT. As a result of this revolt from below, many moderate leaders subsequently lost their election bids in the 1983 legislative election.

On the other side, the opposition power developed from an illegal organization to a legal opposition party. In 1970s political opposition to the KMT become known as Tangwai movement. The benchmark for the agenda of Tangwai includes two issues: greater democratization and the self-determination. The latter means that Taiwanese should have the right to decide the relationship with mainland China. Independence is one choice of this relation.

The factions among the Tangwai is due to their approach to realize their goals. The moderates argued that political change was achieved through the political system such as winning the election. The radicals attempted to launch large scale rebellion to force the government push for the political change. There was little coordination between the numerous Tangwai factions island wide until mid-1980s. Aware of their disadvantages as nonparty vis-à-vis the KMT, Tangwai activists made several attempts to create

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<sup>11</sup> Roy, Denny. Taiwan: A political history. Cornell University Press, 2003. Chapter 3, p. 76-105

organizations that would function as de facto parties without openly breaking the prohibition. These included the Tangwai Campaign Assistance Corps formed after the 1977 election, the extracurricular activities of the magazine Meilidao beginning in August 1979, and the Tangwai Research Association for Public Policy established after the 1983 election.

Chungli incident as well as Kaohsiung changed the strategy not only of the Tangwai but also of the KMT. The arrest of several major figures from radical faction in Tangwai enlarged the influence of the moderate activists among Tangwai. Meanwhile, the open trail of those arrested activists stimulated the empathy among the public which turned out as the support in the legislature election after these activists' release from prison. On the other hand, Chiang Ching-kuo also realized that the forceful quench for these street actions wasn't effective. On the contrary, it would sway the legitimacy of the KMT. Though the KMT led the economic takeoff during the last decades, the exclusion of ROC from the United Nations put considerable pressure on the KMT. In March 1986, Chiang portended the liberalization and rifted the Martial law through a new committee. The negotiation between the two sides on legalizing the opposition political parties was put into schedule. However, the Tangwai politicians were impatient to form an agreement for two reasons: first, they wanted to utilize the advantages as political party to rise funds and get support in the coming election. Second, the exiled Tangwai politicians attempted to establish a similar party overseas. Those who were in the island were not willing to lose

their leadership of the Tangwai movement. On 26 September 1986, the Tangwai politicians gathered in Taipei and formed the Democratic Development Party (DDP).<sup>12</sup>

### 2.3 External factors: the international context and the overseas Taiwanese

Other than domestic factors accelerating the democratization in Taiwan, the overseas Taiwan opposition movement also had impact over democratization. Two aspects explain why the external factors can have impact over the democratization in Taiwan. First, diplomatically, the Taiwan-US relation changed during the Cold War. As a result, the US government's attitudes towards the KMT authoritarian regime also changed. This created the possibility for the overseas Taiwanese intellectuals and activists to increase the visibility of Taiwan independence in the US. The strategic value of Taiwan was recognized when the US ended the Korean War. To contend the Socialism camp led-by the Soviet Union (USSR), the US government signed several treaties with the KMT government and recognized its legitimacy. The alliance between the US and Taiwan in this period ensured the autonomy of the KMT over the domestic affairs. However, this was changed after the signing of Three Joint Communiqués<sup>13</sup> between the PRC and the US, which marked the normalization of the Sino-US ties. The strategic value of Taiwan declined. Thus, the US government paid more attention to the human

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<sup>12</sup> Alexander Ya-li Yu, 'Political Opposition in Taiwan: The development of the Democratic Progressive Party' in Political Change in Taiwan ed. Tun-jen Cheng and Stephan Haggad. (Boulder Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers) p.121-148

<sup>13</sup> It contains three Communiqués: Joint Communiqué of the People's Republic of China and the United States of America (August 17, 1982), Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the People's Republic of China and the United States of America (December 16, 1978) and Joint Communiqué of the People's Republic of China and the United States of America (February 28, 1972), according to the website of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America. <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zmgx/doc/ctc/>

right issues in Taiwan, which created the opportunity for the overseas Taiwanese activists to seek support from the US Congress and give pressure to the KMT government.

Second, the overseas Taiwanese formed their organizations and spared no effort to make Taiwan issue with more visibility in the US by contacting the Congress and influencing the foreign policy towards Taiwan. The organizations set up by the overseas Taiwanese first founded in Japan but developed and expanded in the US. The aims of these organizations were establishing democracy in Taiwan and seeking Taiwan's independence. The Formosan Association of Public Affairs (FAPA) was the most influential among these organizations in the US. The majority of the FAPA's members are Taiwanese intellectuals with abroad education experience. The activism of these organizations like FAPA was stimulated by several reasons. After retreating to Taiwan, the KMT's corruption and mismanagement deteriorated the economy in Taiwan. Its effort to solve the economic problem, except the land reform, turned the situation even worse. Besides, the conflict between the local Taiwanese and the mainlander following the KMT to Taiwan was evident. What's worse, the KMT's control of national resources. These resources include both the economic and political resource. Besides, the bloody quench of the 2/28 Incident was significant to the Taiwanese opposition movements. Also, the launch of the Martial Law made the opposition intellectuals faced risk of being sent into prison or getting expelled. Thus, dissent and grievance spread among the overseas Taiwanese.

Finally, the effort of the FAPA to contact and educate several representatives in the Asia-Pacific Subcommittee of the House finally worked out. On 31 May 1984. The Asia-Pacific Subcommittee of the House held a hearing on the issue of lifting Taiwan's Martial

Law. After the hearing, the Subcommittee passed House Concurrent Resolution 129, which stated that the KMT government should speed up political liberalization and democratization, especially by terminating Martial Law and other emergency articles, and releasing political prisoners to guarantee and protect human rights.<sup>14</sup> Later, On 18 November 1985, the House Asia–Pacific Subcommittee proposed a Taiwan Democracy Resolution. Without directly challenging the existence of Martial Law, the resolution encouraged the KMT to allow an opposition party, to end press censorship and guarantee freedom of speech, publishing, and assembly, and to work toward a true parliamentary system of government. <sup>15</sup>By influencing the foreign policy of the US, the FAPA pushed the KMT regime to finally accelerated the political liberalization and democratization.

The influence of the overseas Taiwanese opposition movement was not limited on the democratization. Their advocacy of seeking Taiwan’s independence shaped the Independence/Unification issues in the presidential election, which will be discussed in the fourth section.

Thus, the Taiwan democratization was the outcome of multiple factors. In 1996, the first popular presidential election was held.

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<sup>14</sup> Chung mei kuan-hsi pao-kao [Report on SinoUS Relations ] 19831985 (Nankang, Taipei: Institute of American Culture, Academia Sinica, 1986), pp. 1819, 192-193.

<sup>15</sup>

### III. SHORT INTRODUCTION TO TAIWAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

This chapter covers a short introduction of each presidential election including its result, process and important events during the campaign. This chapter offers the facts of presidential election result which offers the platform for the next chapters. Popular presidential election starts at 1996 in Taiwan. Since then, Taiwan has witnessed six presidential election in every four years.

In 1996, at the beginning of the first direct popular Presidential Election, Lee Teng-hui, who was the incumbent president received support among the public, due to his attempt to push forward the rapid democratization. As a result, he was in the advantage to the opponent party DPP who advocated independence. In the election, the DPP nominated Peng Ming-min who was an exiled intellectual with no experience in the public office. During that election, Taiwan experienced the national security crisis caused by the PRC. Which attempted to influence the result of the election. However, it also made the Taiwanese suspect the prospect of seeking independence, which eliminate the appeal of DPP's campaign. Meanwhile, President Li got support due to the pride of Taiwanese avoiding succumbing to the PRC stimulated by the crisis. As a result, Lee Teng-hui won this election while Peng only won 21 percent of votes.

In the 2000 presidential election, the way for Chen Shui-bian to become president was indirectly paved by Peng's catastrophic movement in 1996. Chen showed his potential when he served as the mayor of the Taipei KMT in 1994. Abandoning Peng's "Tragic Taiwan" <sup>16</sup>appeal, Chen's campaign team proposed the image of a self-made

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<sup>16</sup> Schubert, Gunter, ed. Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Taiwan. Routledge, 2016.p. 123



“Son of Taiwan”<sup>17</sup>, transforming him from a dull defense lawyer into a manifestation of youthful vitality and hope for the future. On the other side, the KMT nominated Lien Chan as the presidential candidates. While James Soong, who left the KMT ran as an independent. They became allies to compete with DPP. Soong led in the polls till the media, in collusion with KMT broke a huge financial scandal. However, Lien did not benefit from defecting supporters and he eventually trailed home in third with 23 percent of the vote. Also, this is the first time that the non-KMT candidate came to power. It is a vital mark in the Taiwan political development.<sup>18</sup>

Encouraged by his performance, in 2000 as an independent candidate, trying to use the catastrophic failure of the Kuomintang and Lee’s political retirement, James Soong established the People First Party (PFP) in 2001. The PFP attracted many defectors from the Kuomintang. But later it became an ally of the Kuomintang in the legislature, and in 2004 facilitated the joint vote of the KMT-PFP presidential poll. After lengthy negotiations, James Soong agreed to serve as the vice president candidate for Lien Chan. Troubled by governance problems (mainly after the split of the government) and in the face of Taiwan’s first economic recession, President Chen Shui-bian was unpopular during the reelection campaign. However, Chen has been very successful in using the advantages of the incumbent to develop a campaign agenda, which is particularly evident in legislation affecting the referendum law, and then he seized a clause to promote a

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<sup>17</sup> The Quiet Determination of Taiwan’s New Leader:  
<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/world/asia/031900taiwan-chen.html>

<sup>18</sup> Ger, Yeong-kuang. "The Politics of Polling: An Analysis of Taiwan's 2000 Presidential Election." *American Journal of Chinese Studies* 8, no. 1 (2001): 7-12.

“defensive referendum” related to “Taiwan identity”.<sup>19</sup> The 2004 election was extremely fierce and fiercely competitive. The two sides organized separate street gatherings with more than 2 million participants in the election. At the end of the campaign, Chen Shui-bian defeated Lien Chan/Song at the meager profit margin, 50.1% to 49.9%. After their amazing and painful defeat, Lien and Soong led their supporters to protest outside the presidential palace. In the days that followed, the crowd swelled to 500,000 and was in a state of excitement as the Kuomintang/PFP politicians demanded Chen to step down.

By the end of Chen’s second term, the writing was on the wall for the DPP. Both Chen administration had been wracked by governance problems, international isolation, and corruption scandals. Not all of the problems were of Chen’s making. The KMT and its allies, and in terms of cross-Strait relations, Beijing, were guilty of obstructing Chen’s presidential agenda and pushing him towards extreme national identity positions. Ultimately Chen would be jailed for corruption soon after leaving office.<sup>20</sup> In 2008, the veteran DPP nominee, former Kaohsiung Mayor Frank Hsieh, didn’t have advantages compared to Ma. Hsieh gained the party’s nomination in part due to his performance in the 2006 mayoral election for Taipei, which he lost by a small margin. The KMT nominated Ma Ying-jeou, formerly Taipei mayor and Chiang Ching-kuo’s personal secretary who had long been groomed to be president. Ma campaigned on a platform of

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<sup>19</sup>: Taiwan’s leader wins reelection; tally is disputed: <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/03/21/world/taiwan-s-leader-wins-re-election-tally-is-disputed.html>

Taiwan’s first referendum: <http://edition.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/asiapcf/03/18/taiwan.election/>

John F. Copper’s: “Taiwan’s 2004 presidential and vice presidential election: democracy’s consolidation or devolution?.” *Maryland Series in Contemporary Asian Studies* 2004, no. 1 (2004): 1.

<sup>20</sup> Taiwan court jails former president for corruption: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/sep/11/taiwan-jails-former-president-corruption>

improving the economy and thawing relation with China, with Hsieh focusing on Taiwanese sovereignty and the promotion of Taiwanese identity. Ma easily won with 58 percent of vote.<sup>21</sup>

Since Ma's policy towards China has made several substantial positive results in his first term, he was perceived to win the reelection. However, he ran a campaign that almost lost his advantage. He released the message and advocates to seek the peace accord with China, which was misunderstood by the public, leading to the negative feedback from the voters. The public thought that the economic integration with China advocated by Ma would result in the unification with China. Thus, Ma's opponent from DPP, Tsai Ing-wen got a closer position in the competition. After Ma dropping that misunderstood idea, he focused on the economy and the relation with China. Ma Ying-jeou's attempt to achieve a partial free trade agreement with China, which favored entrepreneurs of big business instead of ordinary people, as a result, those who still suffered from the global financial crisis held negative attitude to it. Meanwhile, Tsai's campaign was more about economic justice. Other than that, Ma accepted the "1992 Consensus" that there exists only one China but with different about which political entity is the legitimate representative. While, Tsai argued for a "Taiwan Consensus" which advocates that bi-partisan agreement within Taiwan should precede further interaction with China.<sup>22</sup>

A horrible failure in the local election in 2014 made President Ma step down the chairman of KMT, but what's more, it makes the KMT much harder or even hopeless to

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<sup>21</sup> Dumbaugh, Kerry. "Taiwan's 2008 Presidential Election." Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 2008.

<sup>22</sup> Schubert, Gunter, ed. *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Taiwan*. Routledge, 2016.

win the presidential election in 2016. Ma's pursuit of a closer relationship with China irritated many voters. The depth of Taiwanese people's disapproval of President Ma has severely damaged KMT's chances of retaining the presidency. The scrimmage to succeed him inside the KMT has exposed a lack of viable candidates and the escalation of factional battles and grim succession politics raises the specter of splits that have historically afflicted the party.<sup>23</sup> On the other side, the DPP candidate Tsai Ing-wen advocated maintaining the "status quo" with China. She tried to get support to engage with more grass-root voters, which helped her establish her image as a kind person so that she could get more support.<sup>24</sup> What's more, as the first female president in the ROC's history, Tsai is bound to be an important part in the development of Taiwan democracy.

Through the brief review of the six times presidential election in Taiwan, it's obvious that the presidential election along with the party system functions well, consolidating the democracy in Taiwan.

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<sup>23</sup> The battle for Taiwan's soul: The 2016 presidential election <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-battle-taiwans-soul-the-2016-presidential-election-12790>

<sup>24</sup> Taiwan's Tsai Ing-wen has presidency, and history and within her reach: <https://www.latimes.com/world/asia/la-fg-taiwan-tsai-ying-wen-president-20160111-story.html>  
Tsai Ing-wen elected Taiwan's first female president: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35333647>

#### IV. WHAT INFLUENCES TAIWAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

This chapter is trying to find an answer to the question above through reviewing literature. I try to sort all the arguments into three dimensions: voters, candidates and social cleavage. Among the three dimensions, I pay more attention to the third, because of Taiwan's uniqueness. This chapter starts with a brief review of three major voting theories: rational choice, issue voting and economic voting. In social cleavage, the sole dominant social cleavage in Taiwan is national identity. Thus, a short review of its definition is included in this chapter. Election is one of the most important institutions in democratic society functioning as the linkage between political elite and the mass public.

As one of the vital process, the voting behavior weighs a lot in the study of any election. Several models based on various theories offer plausible explanation over the voting behavior. Among which I select several branches of the theories that I think related to the case Taiwan presidential election.

##### 4.1 Issue Voting.

###### 4.1.1 Theories

As Carmines and Stimson write “to speak of politics is to speak of issues”,<sup>25</sup> the importance of issues in politics is widely recognized. The question that this branch of voting theory tries to answer is how the policies or issues influence voters' decision. In my opinion, three pillars underpin the issue voting theory. They are: voters' preference, the salience of the issues and the ownership of the issues. Voters' preference towards

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<sup>25</sup> Carmines, E. G., & Stimson, J. A. (1990). *Issue evolution: Race and the transformation of American politics*. Princeton University Press.

certain issues is similar to points in a hypothetical space while the party's or candidate's stance on this issue. Then the voters seek the closet point to their own and vote for it. However, question about this argument is that the voters' preference is not as consistent as points especially when facing multiple policies. Instead, their preference is quite various due to the variety in their intensity, which is based on their perceived knowledge about that issue.<sup>26</sup> After the factors such as party identification, group membership, and identities are under control, the preference towards certain issues still is influential to voters' choice. (Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet 1968; Achen and Bartels 2017). Based on the voters' preference towards certain issues, several corollaries are drawn. The first is that the voters tend to evaluate the candidates based on their preference. This evaluation mainly focuses on whether the candidate can meet their expectations of the issue. (Krosnick 1990; Lecheler, de Vreese and Slothuus 2009) The second is that the voters tend to acquire more knowledge of the issues that they deem important during which they also attain the candidates' position about this issue. (Converse 1964; Holbrook et al. 2005; Iyengar et al. 2008; Bolsen and Leeper 2013; Henderson 2014) What's more, voters tend to be more active if the issues concern about their own stake are involved in the discussion. (Holbrook et al. 2016; Price et al. 2006) Besides, once the preference of certain issue forms, it tends to remain constant. ((Krosnick 1990; Lavine, Borgida and Sullivan 2000; Lecheler, de Vreese and Slothuus 2009) In this way, issue voting can be understood as the result of a process of sophistication based on the voters' preference.

Besides, the definition of issue ownership is also a multidimensional concept. The ownership of a certain issue can be sorted into two types: associative ownership and

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<sup>26</sup> Rabinowitz, George, and Stuart Elaine Macdonald. "A directional theory of issue voting." *American political science review* 83, no. 1 (1989): 93-121.

competence ownership.<sup>27</sup> The former refers to the identification of the parties and the issues regardless of the capacity to achieve the issue goals, while the latter refers to that the parties or candidates are perceived to obtain the capacity to deal with the issue. The theory of issue ownership posits that the parties hold reputations for their ability to handle certain issues. These reputations offer the candidates the reliability over issues associated with their party. (Petrocik 1991, Campbell 1960; Norpoth and Buchanan 1992). Issue ownership influences not only the voters but also the candidates. The issue trespassing<sup>28</sup> occurs during the presidential election campaign. The ultimate goal of the issue ownership is to get voters' support. To achieve this goal, the candidates try to step into other candidates' issue area by coming up with more attractive policies and promises. Context and the campaign process are two major factors that drive the candidates change their strategy according to Damore David F (2004). The social context including the voters' perception of the salience of issues dominate what issue can be involved in the campaign. The campaign process leads to the adaption of candidates' strategy in the campaign.

Last, issue salience is also important in the framework of the issue voting. It's straightforward that the voters tend to make decision in their perceived salience of the issue related to the candidate's position. The argument concern about issue salience itself is its measurement. With time changing, political participation online is more salient, which offers the resources for scholars to conduct research based on more empirical data.

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<sup>27</sup> Walgrave, Stefaan, Jonas Lefevere, and Anke Tresch. "The associative dimension of issue ownership." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 76, no. 4 (2012): 771-782.

Walgrave, Stefaan, Anke Tresch, and Jonas Lefevere. "The conceptualisation and measurement of issue ownership." *West European Politics* 38, no. 4 (2015): 778-796.

<sup>28</sup> Damore, David F. "The dynamics of issue ownership in presidential campaigns." *Political Research Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (2004): 391-397.

One of the most important measurement of issue salience is the media coverage not only traditional media but also internet social media platforms. (Epstein, Lee, and Jeffrey A. Segal, 2000; Mellon Jonathan, 2014, 2013. etc.)

#### 4.1.2 The manipulation and impact of issues in Taiwan

The issue is formed and manipulated by the interaction among voters, candidates and parties. Two mechanisms maintain this interaction as I mentioned in the beginning of this section. The candidates' propaganda, campaign strategy influences the voters' perception and evaluation. Meanwhile, the electorates' cognition, perception can easily fluctuate which offer the feedback for the candidates to adjust their strategy. For example, the candidates' decision to launch the "issue trespassing" is under the estimation of how much support they can get based on that feedback. The "issue trespassing" is a strategy that the candidates come up with more attractive promise on the issue which their competitors' owns so as to attract the voters who tend to support the competitors. This interaction not only has impact on the behavior of both candidates and voters, but also has impact on which issue becomes salient during the campaign. Issues differ in their distance from the voter's personal experience. Proximate issues, such as personal economic conditions, affect the vote decisions of highly informed and less informed voters equally. Distant issues, such as national economic conditions and foreign affairs, affect the vote of highly informed voters but not less informed voters<sup>29</sup>. The heterogeneity in partisanship in voters' network influences voters' behavior through the

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<sup>29</sup> Hsieh, John Fuh-sheng, Dean Lacy, and Emerson MS Niou. "Retrospective and prospective voting in a one-party-dominant democracy: Taiwan's 1996 presidential election." *Public Choice* 97, no. 3 (1998): 383-399.



political discussion, leading to the defection of a voter with partisanship of a certain party.<sup>30</sup>

In Taiwan several major issues often become salient in presidential elections. Lin Chiung-chu's article investigates the role played by issues in Taiwan's politics during the period 1996-2004. He exams the electorate's attitudes toward the unification of Taiwan with China or Taiwanese independence (the UI issue), economic growth versus environmental protection (the EE issue), the expansion of social welfare programs (the SW issue), and social and political stability versus political reform (the SR issue).<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile, in Sheng and Liao's research, they also estimate the impact of four issues: wealth distribution, environment protection/economic development, independence/unification, and reform/stability.<sup>32</sup> With time going by, the impact of different issue also fluctuates.

Debate over the environment protecting and economic development issue is focused on whether building the fourth nuclear energy plant. The rapid development in the 1980s deteriorated the environment, which stimulating the public's worry about the environment conditions. The violent conflict between police and citizens in Kongliao in 1991 was a burst out of the conflict over economic development and environment protection. This incident was out of the KMT-led government's plan to build a fourth

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<sup>30</sup> Liu, Frank CS. "Perceived partisan heterogeneity in communication networks and changes in party choice in a national election: evidence from Taiwan." *International Political Science Review* 32, no. 1 (2011): 61-78.

<sup>31</sup> Lin, Chiung-chu. "The Role of Issue in Taiwan." *Issues & Studies* 44, no. 1 (2008): 71-104.

<sup>32</sup> Shing-yuan Sheng and Hsiao-chuan(Mandy) Liao., 2017 "Issues, Political Cleavages, and Party Competition in Taiwan" in *The Taiwan Voters* ed.Christopher H.Achen and T.Y.Wang University of Michigan Press. Ann Arbor Michigan

nuclear energy plant in Kongliao. After this incident, citizens who concern more about the protection of environment were more likely to support the DPP which weighed more on environment protection. Thus, a polarized public opinion and party support formed. However, as DPP won the presidential election in 2001, it changes its policy direction also changed to focus on the economic development, which also frustrated voters who advocated environment protection. After President Chen's order to halt the construction of the energy plant, there was political fight among the President, the Executive Yuan and the Legislative Yuan over the construction of the fourth nuclear energy plant. The compromise was finally reached among these three parties that the construction of this plant restarted while the future prospect is a "nuclear free homeland"<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, the KMT's position remains stable emphasizing the development. But in order to attract voters, the candidates made promise about environment protection. In 2008 presidential election, Ma Ying-jeou made the promise to decrease carbon emission, launching energy tax and restoration of lands. The environment protection was taken back into public's concern when the nuclear energy plant exploded in Fukushima, Japan in 2011. As a result, the KMT's plan to enlarge the budget to accelerate the construction of the energy plant faced serious concern from public. Citizen's concern over the environment protection lasts. However, as time goes by, citizens' concern changes. They care more about the air quality instead of nuclear energy plant. This change can be reflected in citizens' alley abandoning the proposal "Nuclear Free Homeland 2025".<sup>34</sup> But on the other hand, though it advocates the environment protection, the DPP has to change its

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<sup>33</sup> The Executive Yuan Press Release:  
[https://english.ey.gov.tw/News\\_Content2.aspx?n=8262ED7A25916ABF&sms=DD07AA2ECD4290A6&s=155E35D2D703F15E](https://english.ey.gov.tw/News_Content2.aspx?n=8262ED7A25916ABF&sms=DD07AA2ECD4290A6&s=155E35D2D703F15E)

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3584619>

policy direction towards emphasis on economic development as KMT. As a result, both parties tend to have similar position on this issue, which eliminates the salience of this issue in the presidential election.

The impact of reform/stability issue is decreasing with the consolidation of democracy in Taiwan, all the major parties tend to hold a centrist position emphasizing social stability. During 1980s to 1990s, Taiwan was undergoing the transition to democracy. Reform and anti-reform was the most salient issue in public's focus for fear of the instability with rapid political change. As Chu argues, during this period, Taiwan government's economic policies were successful in accelerating the economic development and the distribution.<sup>35</sup> Besides, during this time period, this issue's formation and manipulation is accompanied with the Tangwai movement and the formation of DPP. As the opposition party, DPP tried to earn reputation and support by delivering their impression as reform party. However, at that time period, Taiwan citizens still perceived DPP as a radical and violent party. This violent and radical impression of DPP was due to the radical movement in Kaohsiung in 1979. Even after the DPP won the presidential election in 2000, its image was still a reform party according to the Cheng's study.<sup>36</sup> During his second term, President Chen Shui-bian launched a financial reform. However, he and his wife seized this reform to corrupt and misuse the government funds. As a result, Chen and several his family members were charged of these crimes. This events led to Ma Ying-jeou's proposal of legislative reform to monitor the administrative

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<sup>35</sup> Chu Yun-han "Party Competition, Conflict Structure, and Democratic Consolidation" Paper presented at the conference on Democratization and Party Politics and Elections, Taipei, July 8, 1994

<sup>36</sup> Cheng, Su-feng. 2004. "Party Image in Taiwan — an Application of Focus Group" *Journal of Electoral Studies* 11(2): 185-216

ethics in his presidential campaign. However, as time goes by, both DPP and KMT tend to hold a centrist position towards this issue, which means that this issue is likely to be congruent.<sup>37</sup>

Nevertheless, the welfare distribution has the potential to become salient. Welfare distribution can become more salient because of the wealth disparity due to the rapid economic development since 1980s. As a reform party, DPP came up with several proposals about welfare. To compete with DPP, as the incumbent, KMT also made several major politics towards increasing citizens' welfare. For example, the KMT made catch-all plans towards the welfare such as a national insurance program. However, during 2000-2008, the DPP is the incumbent. Facing the crisis in economic and finance, DPP was not so active in welfare distribution, which frustrated the supporters and changed the vote choice in later presidential election. Possibly, different social class holds different opinions towards this issue and seeking expression in political involvement. Nevertheless, the Sunflower movement has reflected the impact of this issue because the wider economic integration with China advocated by the incumbent KMT government stimulated the concern of Taiwan citizens about the distribution of wealth and welfare. This issue is going to be more salient if it is absorbed in the independence/ unification issue.

The independence/unification issue is the most salient issue, since the parties has clearly contradict position over it. The formation of this issue deeply rooted in Taiwan's history experience after the Second World War. Taiwan suffered from the conflict

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<sup>37</sup> Shing-yuan Sheng and Hsiao-chuan(Mandy) Liao., 2017 "Issues, Political Cleavages, and Party Competition in Taiwan" in *The Taiwan Voters* ed.Christopher H.Achen and T.Y.Wang University of Michigan Press. Ann Arbor Michigan

between the local Taiwanese and the mainlanders. The authoritarian KMT regime made this conflict even more irreconcilable. As a result, a strong sense of “Taiwan consciousness” emerged. This “Taiwan consciousness” met with Taiwanese advocacy for the autonomy of Taiwanese. In other words, local Taiwanese hope to be in charge of the Taiwan affairs and get rid of the KMT regime. Besides, the overseas opposition movement also advocated Taiwan’s independence out of their grievance and dissent to the KMT regime. They tried to form a distinct “Taiwan identity” to take the place of “Chinese” by forming the subjective boundaries based on ethnicity and collective history experience which I will explain in next section. So the independence/unification issue connects to the main social cleavage national identity.

After the first popular presidential election in 1996, the salience of this issue also fluctuated under different administrations. During his administration, Lee Teng-hui used indigenization to weaken and split the KMT, removing Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo’s political legacy. Though addressing speeches, changing history textbooks, He also tried to shake Taiwan citizens’ concept of “One China”. What’s more, by fostering the Taiwan independence movement and changing the ROC Constitution, Lee tried to establish the base of the de facto and de jure independent Taiwan. In Chen shui-pian’s administration, he used “de-sinicization” as critical strategy to achieve the Taiwan independence. eliminating the Chinese culture and fostering the Taiwanese collective memory such as the 2/28 Incident. In 2004, right before the 2004 presidential election, as the incumbent president, Chen Shui-bian used Article 17 of the referendum law to launch a defensive referendum against the mainland. Though this referendum failed due to low turnouts, it still led to antagonism between Taiwan and the mainland. However, after

winning the 2008 presidential election, Ma Ying-jeou came up several appeals so as to melt the antagonism between Taiwan and the mainland. As a result, the conflict on independence/unification was not so evident. The impact of this issue became more endogenous, combining with more issues about social justice. However, Cai Ing-wen's victory in becoming the Taiwan president in 2016 intensified the independence/unification issue since she indicated her support of the Taiwan independence. Thus, the independence/unification issue never steps out of the stage, with time goes by, this issue is still the focus of both the Pan-blue camp and Pan-green camp.

Since these two main camps have clear opposite position on the independence/unification, this issue becomes a bridge connecting Taiwan citizen's partisanship. Taiwan citizen's position on independence/unification also intertwined with their partisanship according to Lin's book.<sup>38</sup> Political elites from both camps try to attract the public in the discourse and propaganda. Also the public responses to the elites, forming their own attitude towards this issue. The citizens' attitude towards unification/independence has impact over their voting decision as several scholars argue.<sup>39</sup> Also, in his research tracing several presidential election, Fell concludes that the

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<sup>38</sup> Gang Lin. 林冈, *Taiwan diqu zhengdang zhengzhi yanjiu yi shehuifensi yu xuanju zhidu wei shijiao*. 台湾地区政党政治研究——以社会分歧与选举制度为视角 [Research on Party Politics in Taiwan——From the Perspective of Social Disagreement and Electoral System] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe 2014), 59.

<sup>39</sup> Cheng Tun-jen and Hsu Yung-ming. 1996. "Issue Structure, the DPP'S Factionalism, and Party Realignment" In *Taiwan's Electoral Politics and Democratic Transition: Riding the Third Wave*, ed. Tien Hung-mao, 137-73. Armonk, NY: M.E. Shape

Hsieh, John Fuh-sheng, and Emerson MS Niou. "Salient issues in Taiwan's electoral politics." *Electoral Studies* 15, no. 2 (1996): 219-235.

Hsieh, John Fuh-sheng, and Emerson MS Niou. "Issue voting in the Republic of China on Taiwan's 1992 legislative Yuan election." *International Political Science Review* 17, no. 1 (1996): 13-27.

DPP has a more pro-independence stance and the KMT has a more pro-unification stance from 2000 to 2008.<sup>40</sup>

In sum, the impact of these four major issues fluctuates as time going by. Since national identity is the only social cleavage that dominates Taiwan politics, issues absorbing this cleavage have the potential to be more salient. Meanwhile, the party competition will be more polarized which also impacts the voters' choice.

## 4.2 Valence Voting

### 4.2.1 Theories

In issue voting theory, the issue is positional which means different sides hold various or even contradict opinion. However, on the contrary, in valence voting theory, the issue is one-sided.<sup>41</sup> According to scholars who focus on valence voting theory, three principal heuristics that influence the voters' decision. The first is the evaluation of the candidates' competence and responsiveness. The second is the voters' view regarding the most important issue facing the country and estimating the ability of candidates to handle it. The last but not least is the partisan attachment.<sup>42</sup> In valence voting theory, two factors influence the voters' final decision, one is the candidates' policy position and the other is the candidates' characteristics. As a result, it is the voters' evaluation of candidates based on these two dimensions that has impact over their voting decision. Scholars pay

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<sup>40</sup> Fell, Dafydd. "The polarization of Taiwan's Party Competition in the DPP era." In *Taiwan's Democracy*, pp. 85-108. Routledge, 2013.

<sup>41</sup> Stokes, D.E., 1992. Valence politics. In: Kavanagh, D. (Ed.), *Electoral Politics*. Clarendon Press, Oxford.

<sup>42</sup> See Ho, Karl, Harold D. Clarke, Li-Khan Chen, and Dennis Lu-Chung Weng. "Valence politics and electoral choice in a new democracy: The case of Taiwan." *Electoral Studies* 32, no. 3 (2013): 476-481. Sanders, David, Harold D. Clarke, Marianne C. Stewart, and Paul Whiteley. "Downs, Stokes and the Dynamics of Electoral Choice." *British Journal of Political Science* 41, no. 2 (2011): 287-314.

attention to how the voters evaluate the candidates. Two models are used to explain the formation of the voters' evaluation of candidates. The first one is online model. In this model, individuals adjust their opinion when encountering new information.<sup>43</sup> The other is the memory model in which individual holds their opinion based on their long-term memory about the impression of the candidates.<sup>44</sup>

The economy is a typical issue in the valence voting. No matter how political parties, presidential candidates differ in other aspects, they have the same desire to push for economic development but with various methods. One of the most important part of valence voting explaining the voters' decision is economic voting theory, which contains two sides, both retrospective and prospective. The fundamental assumption of economic voting is that the voters reward or punish the incumbent government based on the situation in both macro level and micro level of economy. Economic voting theory contains not only the retrospective assessment of the incumbent performance but also the prospective assessment of the government in the next term. Several findings are drawn about the economic assessment of voters. There is a strong positive correlation between voters' choices and their assessment of the national economy conditions. (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier, 2000) Besides, voters' decision is also influenced by their personal economic experiences as major assessment. (Lockerbie 2008; Mackuen et al 1992) Other inquired the relation between the assessment and voting choice by considering the possibility of falsehood or endogeneity (Fiorina 1981; Erikson 2004; Anderson et al 2004; Evans and Andersen 2006; Evans and Pickup 2010; Hansford and Gomez 2015).

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<sup>43</sup> Kim, Young Mie, and Kelly Garrett. "On-line and memory-based: Revisiting the relationship between candidate evaluation processing models." *Political Behavior* 34, no. 2 (2012): 345-368.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.



These studies suggest that a person's scheduled vote will affect his or her perception of the economy, not the other way around. In the comprehensive review, Anderson (2007) described the inconsistent results in the economic voting literature as “emergency dilemmas” because the impact of the economy on voting choices may depend on the characteristics of voters and the electoral context.

Besides, the stability and the continuity of economic voting is also another issue under debate. The influence of economic voting fluctuates with the age of the newly established democracy. As Bochsler, Daniel and Hänni argued, the influence of economic voting can be separated into three stages.<sup>45</sup> The first stage comes with the strong anti-incumbency voting choice, regardless of the economic voting. After that, the second stage is typical of the voters’ combination of legitimacy of the key democratic actors with their economic performance. This combination is closely related to the support of the incumbent. As the development of democratic institutions, the impact of the retrospective voting is declining with voters’ more mature and deep understanding of democracy. Other than this, the stability of economic voting is also influenced by the information that the voter can get during the election. As Dean and Christenson argued that the diversity of the information the voter can get leads to the variety in the assessment of the retrospective economic voting.<sup>46</sup> The prospective economic evaluation matters a lot in the decision making process of voters who are the most informed.

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<sup>45</sup> Bochsler, Daniel, and Miriam Hänni. "The three stages of the anti-incumbency vote: Retrospective economic voting in young and established democracies." *European Journal of Political Research* 58, no. 1 (2019): 30-55.

<sup>46</sup> Lacy, Dean, and Dino P. Christenson. "Who votes for the future? Information, expectations, and endogeneity in economic voting." *Political Behavior* 39.2 (2017): 347-375.

#### 4.2.2 Valence voting in Taiwan

On the one hand, scholars focus on economic voting in Taiwan. Hsieh, Lacy and Niou supports that prospective voting was salient in Taiwan's first popular presidential election.<sup>47</sup> Sheng suggested that both prospective and retrospective economic perceptions were important in the 2008 presidential election.<sup>48</sup> Tsai argues that Taiwan voters tend to make the decision based on what the government plan to do in the near future. In this research, Tsai also finds that Taiwan voters tend not to punish the incumbent in the first term. A possible explanation is that the Taiwan citizens prefer gradual change of sudden change.<sup>49</sup> Focusing on the 1996 and 2004 presidential election and controlling ethnicity and population, Choi studied the relation between the way that educational level and the lifetime economic experience interact with the voter preference. Education and lifetime economic experience jointly affect the impact of economic evaluations on individuals vote choice. Those who became rich under the dominance of KMT were less likely to vote against the incumbent in 1996 election, while in 2004 election they voted against the incumbent DDP due to the short economy recession.<sup>50</sup> The economic experience influences the perception of both the performance of incumbent and the prospect of other candidates. However, different from these scholars, Wu and Lin's analysis showed no

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<sup>47</sup> Hsieh, John Fuh-sheng, Dean Lacy, and Emerson MS Niou. "Retrospective and prospective voting in a one-party-dominant democracy: Taiwan's 1996 presidential election." *Public Choice* 97, no. 3 (1998): 383-399.

<sup>48</sup> Sheng Shin-yuan. 2009. "The impacts of Economic and Welfare Issues on Voting Behavior: An Inquiry into the 2008 Presidential Election" [In Chinese]. *2008 nian zong tong xuan ju lun er ci zheng dang lun ti zhi guan jian xuan ju* [The 2008 presidential election: The critical election of the second party turnover], ed. Lu-huei Chen, Ching-hsin Yu, and Chi Huang. Taipei: Taiwan

<sup>49</sup> Chia-hung Tsai, "Economic Voting in Taiwan" in *Taiwan Voters* ed. Christopher H. Achen and T.Y. Wang. University of Michigan Press 2017. P.139-169

<sup>50</sup> Choi, Eunjung. "Economic voting in Taiwan: The significance of education and lifetime economic experiences." *Asian Survey* 50, no. 5 (2010): 990-1010.

effect of economic evaluation. What they emphasized is that the Taiwan Voters' perception of cross-Strait relations that matters more.<sup>51</sup>

Scholars also focus on the presidential candidates. Candidates' campaign strategy can guide voters' choice. One of the reasons why the KMT was defeated in the 2000 presidential election was that the Kuomintang misled people into believing their candidate was still leading in the polls, when he was really running third, and this misinformation led people to vote differently than they would have otherwise, possibly giving the election to the opposition party candidate.<sup>52</sup> Candidates' campaign and performance can decide whether the candidate become incumbent. According to Kieding's research on the Ma Ying-Jiue's campaign, by using the "New Taiwanese" identity and the Taiwanization in his campaign, Ma appealed enough voters to vote for him and became the president. However, Subsequent policies by his administration were later seen as a surrender of Taiwanization, a betrayal of the civic and ethnic components of identity, and this was perceived as Sinization. This partly accounts for the increase in voter's disapproval of him.<sup>53</sup> However, in Wang and Chen's research on the presidential candidates in elections between 2000 and 2012, they found that there exists correlation with voters' evaluation of candidates and the voting decision. But partisanship can

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<sup>51</sup> Wu, Chin-en, and Yi-tze Lin "Economic Voting and Presidential Elections: An Assessment of validity and endogeneity"[in Chinese] *Tai wan zheng zhi xue kan* [Taiwan Political Science Review] 16(2): 175-232

<sup>52</sup> Niou, Emerson, and Philip Paolino. "The rise of the opposition party in Taiwan: explaining Chen Shui-bian's victory in the 2000 Presidential election." *Electoral Studies* 22, no. 4 (2003): 721-740.

<sup>53</sup> Kaeding, Malte Philipp. "Taiwanized" new Taiwanese": The effect of Taiwanization on the 2008 presidential election campaign of Ma Ying-jeou." *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review* 9, no. 2 (2009): 19-34.

overshadow the evaluation. In other words, though some voters perceive that the nominee is incompetent but still vote for him.<sup>54</sup>

In sum, these voting theories, do emphasize the importance of information that the voters can acquire. For candidates, whether they can deliver the information about their issue ownerships and performance in not only economy but also other aspects as accurately and efficiently as possible has indispensable impact over the result of election. For voters, their voting behavior relies on their cost acquiring the information, which is base to form their issue preference and evaluation of the candidates.

However, current voting theories are based on western democracy practice. The development of democracy in major western countries is at least hundreds year old. As young democracy with totally different cultural and historical background, Taiwan is unique which means the western theories can't fully account for its democracy. To be more specific, the Taiwan voters' decision making in Taiwan's special social context is deserved to be paid more attention in further research.

#### 4.3. Social cleavage: national identity

##### 4.3.1 National identity: Theory

This section covers a brief review on the argument about national identity along with several research concerned about Taiwan national identity along with its implication. National identity is a multidimensional concept. To understand the national identity, it is unavoidable to involve several perspectives.

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<sup>54</sup> Hung-chung Wang and Lu-huei Chen, "Evaluation of Presidential Candidates' Personal Traits" in *The Taiwan Voters* ed, Christopher Achen and T.Y.Wang, University of Michigan Press, 2017 Ann Harbor, Michigan.

Identity is a psychological term. But it is necessary to combine personal psychological theories with social and even political issues. (Eric Erikson, 1994; Ross, 1999) For Erikson, identity is used to combine individuals with the social context. In his study, he argues that identity is referred to the point at which the demands of the developing individual-the adolescent-were met or failed to be met by the forms of social life in which he or she lived. <sup>55</sup>From the perspective of social identity, self is reflected in the social life<sup>56</sup>. By sorting themselves into different category according to several characteristics such as ethnicity, individuals identify themselves, forming their sense of belonging, in which process the identity forms. By comparison between themselves and the others, the similarity along with difference appear. In micro level, social identity strengthen their bond towards their same members in the same categories while possibly produce the antagonism against others. In this way, social identity constructs the “us” and “them”. At the macro level, social identity offers a reasonable lens to understand the group behavior. In research about political violence, genocide and civil war, scholars use social identity theory to explain the dynamic of the irrational behavior under specific situations such as Rwanda, Yugoslavia and Sri Lanka. Ross argues that the national identity constructs a “moral agenda”<sup>57</sup>. In this way, national identity suggests the members with the same national identity is responsible to other members instead of foreigners. Besides, the national identity should be in the priority in the identity sequence compared to other identities.

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<sup>55</sup> Erikson, Erik H. *Identity and the life cycle*. WW Norton & Company, 1994.

<sup>56</sup> Goffman, Erving. *The presentation of self in everyday life*. London: Harmondsworth, 1978.

<sup>57</sup> Poole, Ross. *Nation and identity*. Psychology Press, 1999. Pp. 60

Identity is the quality of any collectivity that leads its membership to identify with it.

<sup>58</sup>Such identification is useful in political development in order to draw the boundaries of the collectivity and to ensure the loyalty of its constituents. What causes the membership to identify with the collectivity is to some extent an empirical question, but it includes two broad dimensions: The first is characteristics of the individual constituents of the group such as shared language, culture or ethnicity, leading them to identify with one another; and the second is characteristics of the group itself, such as a founding, a narrative history, and a role in international society, leading to a sense of shared interest in the fate of the whole. <sup>59</sup>Collectivity is a fundamental characteristic of national identity. The collective memory forms the platform of national identity. MacCormick comes up that the national identity is a cultural identity, based on his argument about nation. He thinks that “a nation is constituted by a relatively large grouping of people who conceive themselves to have a communal uniting past and present and capable of being projected into the future.”<sup>60</sup> In his study about Cambodian national identity, Milton Takei argues that it is inevitable to scrutiny the Cambodians’ collective memory so as to understand their antagonism against Vietnam.<sup>61</sup> The notion “Mythscape” presented by Bell explains why the national identity can last through generation by generation. The mythscape constructs a realm for the myth, story and memory to be reconstructed, represented and transmitted constantly. Other than that, Liu and Hilton come up with a “the representation of history” theory. In their article, history defines a group’s and that group members

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<sup>58</sup> Dittmer, Lowell. *"Taiwan and the issue of national identity."* Asian Survey 44.4 (2004): 475-483.

<sup>59</sup> Dittmer, Lowell. *"Taiwan and the issue of national identity."* Asian Survey 44.4 (2004): 475-483.

<sup>60</sup> Neil MacCormick *Nation and Nationalism* in Beiner, Ronald, ed. *Theorizing nationalism*. SUNY Press, 1999.

<sup>61</sup> Takei, Milton. "Collective memory as the key to national and ethnic identity: The case of Cambodia." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 4.3 (1998): 59-78.

amend and renegotiate historical memories around them.<sup>62</sup> The collective memory and historical experience are built into the national identity. What's more, since it can be understood and demolished in various perspective, history experience can be selective. In this way, political elite in power can use the history memory and experience influencing the national identity to enlarge their interest by selecting and filtering the history. As a result, national identity can be amenable and changed in different time periods and different conditions.

In scholars' effort to seek the explanation of the definition of nation and nationalism, a close relation among national identity, nation and nationalism is established though it still has some ambiguity. As a standard setting scholar, Anthony Smith defines that "a nation is a named human population sharing an historic territory common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members." This definition points out the essential conditions and elements for a nation. Based on this, he argues that the nationalism is "an ideological movement, for attainment and maintenance of self-government and independence on behalf of a group, some of whose members conceive it to constitute an actual or potential 'nation' like others."<sup>63</sup>

Thus the relationship between nationalism and national identity is intertwined. The national identity can be understood as dynamic of nationalism while the nationalism can generate and strengthen the national identity in turn. As Montserrat Guibernau as observed, "the strength of nationalism derives all from its ability to create a sense of

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<sup>62</sup> Liu, James H., and Denis J. Hilton. "How the past weighs on the present: Social representations of history and their role in identity politics." *British Journal of Social Psychology* 44.4 (2005): 537-556.

<sup>63</sup> AD. Smith *Theories of nationalism* Holmes & Meier Pub; 1983, New York.

identity.”<sup>64</sup> Owning the recognition from others among the group as well as the sense of belonging form the perquisite for the nationalism.

In sum, national identity is the individuals’ identity with the nation to which they can have a sense of belonging from their common historical memory and experience. Nevertheless, to explain the origin of nation and nationalism, Smith also offers a fundamental typology theoretical approaches and fits them into four types: primordialists, perennialists, modernists and historical ethno-symbolists.<sup>65</sup>Primordialists argue that the nation is derived from kinship. As a result, national identity can be simply regarded as ethnicity. Perennialists advocate that the nation is the constant existing in the human history, which means that the development of nation in different stages of history is a circle. Thus, the national identity never changes. While modernism argues that the nation is constructed by the reinterpretation and selection of history, national identity in this perspective is an outcome of consciously construction. Nevertheless, the last approach is based on the perception that the nation is a cultural artefacts, which is more abstract compared to other three approaches.<sup>66</sup>It is closely related to Anderson’s argument that the nation is an “imagined community”<sup>67</sup>. Despite the disparity of these four approaches, they also have similarities. The national identity can be regarded as “genetically” determined or constructed. As a consequence, we can find that two major schools and their debate offer useful lens to understand the formation and transition of national identity. They are

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<sup>64</sup> Guibernau, Montserrat. *Nationalisms: The nation-state and nationalism in the twentieth century*. John Wiley & Sons, 2013.

<sup>65</sup> Smith, Anthony D. *Myths and Memories of the Nation*. Vol. 288. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.pp.10

<sup>66</sup> Bell, Duncan SA. "Mythscape: memory, mythology, and national identity." *The British journal of sociology* 54, no. 1 (2003): 63-81.

<sup>67</sup> Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Verso Books, 2006.



primordialists and constructivism. Influenced by biosociology, the former argues that the national identity is decided by the kinship, blood relations and the common ancestry. On the contrary, constructivism argues that national identity is the outcome as the representation of history. Thus, when looking into national identity in Taiwan, these two major schools offer a lens to understand the current characteristics of Taiwan citizens' national identity.

#### 4.3.2 National identity in Taiwan: Transition and Manipulation

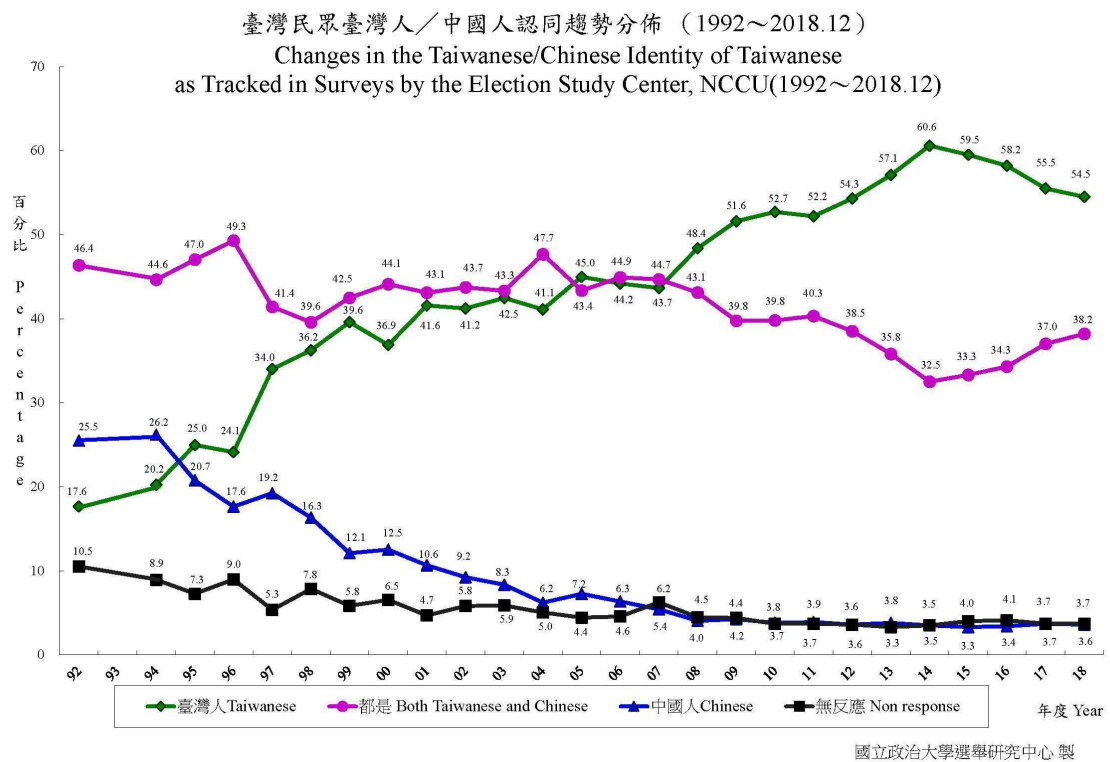
The work of Lipset and Rokkan has been highly influential for understanding voting behavior. According to their argument, once the social cleavage is formed, it tends to provide a durable basis for political conflict expressed through the ballot box.<sup>68</sup> Compare to social class, the diversity in national identity in Taiwan is more evident. National identity has been a dominating issue in Taiwan politics for a long time. It is the Taiwanese over Chinese identity that constructs the social cleavage in Taiwan. In Taiwan's democracy consolidation, the main social cleavage is regarded as a vital symbol that influencing the party system, citizens' partisanship and the competition in the presidential election. Thus, when it comes to Taiwan, it's inevitable to talk about the national identity.

As a key social cleavage that dominates Taiwan politics, lots of scholars pay attention to national identity in Taiwan. National identity is multi-dimensional in Taiwan. It contains two aspects. This issue should not only reflect in who the Taiwan citizens are but also reflect in their attitude towards the prospect of Cross-Strait relations. Generally,

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<sup>68</sup> Lipset, Seymour Martin, and Stein Rokkan, eds. *Party systems and voter alignments: Cross-national perspectives*. Vol. 7. Free press, 1967.

the literature concerned about the national identity in Taiwan can be sorted into two major branches. On the one hand, scholars put national identity as dependent variable and seek explanation in its change and transition. On the other hand, scholars put national identity as an independent variable to seek its implication and influence on the Cross-Strait relations along with the domestic politics.



Resources: Election Study Center, National Chengchi University<sup>69</sup>

As is shown in this graph from National Chengchi University, Taiwanese identity can be sorted into three main types: Chinese; Taiwanese and both. What is evident is that

<sup>69</sup> Figure is downloaded from National Chengchi University Election Study Center website: <https://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=166>

since the beginning of this tracked survey, the identity as Taiwanese is increasing though there is fluctuation. While the percentage of Taiwanese identifying themselves as Chinese is declining. The majority of Taiwanese are identifying themselves as both Chinese and Taiwanese. Several scholars try to seek the explanation of this. The literature can be sorted into several branches.

The first branch is that the national identity transition in Taiwan is the result of history process along with specific political events. The time periodization offers three waves of national identity change in Taiwan.<sup>70</sup> From the First Sino-Japan War till the end of the Second World War, Taiwan is colonized by Japanese. During this period, Japanese culture was forced by the authority to root in Taiwan. The Second part is Taiwan's return to ROC. During this period, the KMT regime carried out the Martial Law in Taiwan. The last is the democratization process from the 1980s remarked by the end of the Martial Law in 1987. The democratization in Taiwan changed the social environment. Brian Hall establishes a model to explain the formation of Taiwan national identity. As he argues, the emergence and construction of Taiwan national identity is closely related to the modernization.<sup>71</sup> It enlarges the contact among different ethnic groups which melts the boundary between them. As one of the most important process of modernization, political democratization spreads the idea of "equality" among the public. Thus, it also generates the sense of relative deprivation and inequality. As a result, it stimulates the self-consciousness. This kind of consciousness has fueled a more realistic pursuit of the group members' well-being. In Liao, Chen and Huang's research, two perspective can explain

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<sup>70</sup> Li, Yitan, and Enyu Zhang. "Changing Taiwanese Identity and Cross-Strait Relations: a Post 2016 Taiwan Presidential Election Analysis." *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 22.1 (2017): 17-35.

<sup>71</sup> Hall, Brian. "Modernization and the social construction of national identity: The case of Taiwanese identity." *Berkeley journal of sociology* (2003): 135-169.

the fading of Taiwan citizen identifying themselves as Chinese. One is that the political events have considerable and continuous impact over young and well-educated generations. Vital political events may cause the change in choice of national identity. The political events that cause the decline of Chinese identity can be sorted into two type: the first is about relationship between Taiwan and China and the second is that the political leaders' effort to distinguish the Chinese identity and Taiwanese identity. Another possible but not critical reason, according to the authors, is that the gradual passing of the first generation of mainlander (waishengren) who followed the KMT coming to Taiwan after the end of Chinese Civil War in 1949.<sup>72</sup>

The second part is related to the situation of Taiwan in the international relations. Other than the domestic social change inside Taiwan, external factors can also influence the national identity. As its influence on international stage increased, PRC took place of ROC in the United Nation in 1971. Since then, influenced by PRC's strong stance on "One China" principle, the number of countries that keep diplomatic relations with Taiwan decreases. The isolation in the international relations frustrates Taiwan citizens, which leads to a wider separation between China and Taiwan in their minds. Thus, as Zhong Yang says in his article, "State-and sovereignty-related factors especially external factors such as international recognition, redrawn boundary and relations with mainland China, play a crucial role in shaping the Taiwanese people's new national identity."<sup>73</sup> What's more, with the change of social context of both sides, the economic integration

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<sup>72</sup> Liao, Da-Chi, Boyu Chen, and Chi-chen Huang. "The decline of "Chinese Identity" in Taiwan?!—An analysis of survey data from 1992 to 2012." *East Asia* 30.4 (2013): 273-290.

<sup>73</sup> Zhong, Yang. "Explaining national identity shift in Taiwan." *Journal of Contemporary China* 25, no. 99 (2016): 336-352.

between China and Taiwan has been an indispensable issue. However, based on data collected from 1992 to 2009, Chiang tried to seek the relation between economic integration between the two sides and Taiwan citizens' national identity.<sup>74</sup> The increasing of Taiwan's investment in China results in an increase of Taiwanese identity. In their research, both skilled workers and unskilled workers are included in their sample. Compared to the skilled workers, the unskilled workers have a stronger Taiwanese identity and tend to vote for Pan-green camp instead of Pan-blue camp. The disparity in wealth distribution can account for this. Those unskilled workers can't benefit from the economic integration between China and Taiwan.

Other than these explanations, as the dominant cleavage, national identity was functioned as useful tool for political elites to achieve their goals. It was strategically manipulated. The KMT took over Taiwan from Japan at the end of the Second World War. However, the relation between the KMT and the local Taiwanese wasn't so harmonious. Since Taiwan was occupied by Japan for several decades, the KMT regime suspected Taiwan citizen's loyalty. On the other hand, lacking discipline, several conflicts between the KMT soldiers and local Taiwanese happened. A negative impression of the KMT formed in the minds of Taiwanese.

From February 27<sup>th</sup> to May 16<sup>th</sup>, 1947, massive anti-government and bloody quench from government happened in Taiwan. On February 27<sup>th</sup>, the KMT investigator suspected a Taiwanese widow of selling contraband cigarettes, and beat her, which ignited the dissatisfaction the crowd. Massive anti-government rally and protest was organized on February 28<sup>th</sup> in Taipei. Then, the anti-government uprising spread to other cities. The

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<sup>74</sup> Chiang, Chun-Fang, Jin-Tan Liu, and Tsai-Wei Wen. "National identity under economic integration." *Journal of Population Economics* (2019): 1-17.

KMT regime sent police and soldiers to quench the protest by violence. Numerous citizens were killed or injured. Since the uprising starts on 28<sup>th</sup> February, it is called “2/28” Incident. This incident made the KMT regime labelled as the “alien regime” in the mind of the local Taiwanese. On May 19<sup>th</sup>, 1949, the KMT launched the Martial Law in Taiwan. It prohibited illegal assembly, association, procession, petition and strike. Besides, it also initiated strict censorship over media and books. Also an enforcement on a “great China” identity was launched as to sinicize the local people.<sup>75</sup> The KMT pushed several cultural and educational policies and campaigns to achieve this goal. Since 1956, the KMT carried out a campaign named “*Du Zun Guo Yu*”, which aimed at elimination of the use of the local Taiwanese language.

The Taiwan independence movement also had impact on the formation and manipulation of Taiwanese national identity. One of its priority missions is to contribute and propaganda a new Taiwanese national identity. For the Taiwan independence movement, the 2/28 Incident was significant for its attempt to form the exclusive Taiwanese collective memory. The rapid democratization in 1980s to 1990s offered space of the propaganda of the Taiwanese national identity. The lift of martial law along with the expanded freedom of speech reopens the space of discussion and research about 2/28 incident. As a result, the “Great China” identity was gradually replaced by the Taiwan identity. As for the grass roots, the 2/28 incident can be regarded as a burst out of Taiwanese consciousness against the KMT regime.

However, after the successful democratization, Taiwan witnessed the rise of civic nationalism which is the dynamic of the “Sunflower movement”. The rise of civic

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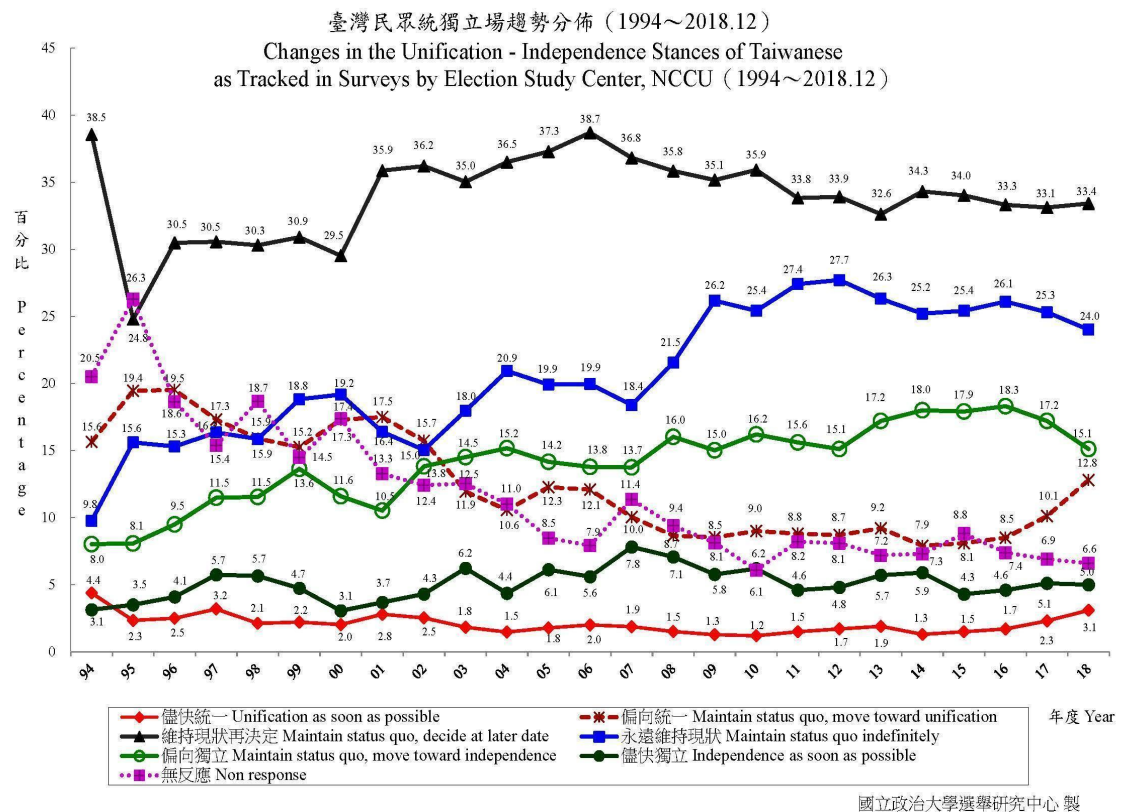
<sup>75</sup> Wachman, Alan M. *Taiwan: National Identity and Democratization: National Identity and Democratization*. Routledge, 2016.

nationalism indicates a prominence for free and democratic liberal values which are contributing to the further rejection of an ethnonational Chinese identity, which is back dropped against question of increased economic interdependence on Mainland China.<sup>76</sup> Thus, through various research about national identity in Taiwan, it is obvious that Taiwan citizens' national identity is both related to their common historical experience, but also the construction by not only political elites but also the grass roots. As Chen argues, Taiwanese citizens' national identity has a two dimensional (primordial and political) structure.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Kwan, Justin P. "The rise of civic nationalism: Shifting identities in Hong Kong and Taiwan." *Contemporary Chinese Political Economy and Strategic Relations* 2, no. 2 (2016): 941-973.

<sup>77</sup> Chen, Rou-Lan. "Beyond national identity in Taiwan: A multidimensional and evolutionary conceptualization." *Asian Survey* 52, no. 5 (2012): 845-871.



Resource: National Chengchi University Election Study Center<sup>78</sup>

As is shown in the graph, the public's attitude towards the prospect of the relation with China varies. Other than Unification as soon as possible remaining stable in a low percentage, other attitude all has fluctuation with time going by. Generally, maintaining status quo (including Maintain status quo indefinitely and maintain status quo, decide at later date) takes up high percentage among citizens.

The future of Taiwan, depends on non-committed rationalists.<sup>79</sup> They can mitigate the conflict between the committed advocates over unification and independence. But in

<sup>78</sup> Figure is downloaded from National Chengchi University Election Study Center website: <https://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=167>

<sup>79</sup> Chu, Yun-han. "Taiwan's national identity politics and the prospect of cross-strait relations." *Asian Survey* 44.4 (2004): 484-512.



the long run, the rationalists may change the political equilibrium towards independence or unification. However, it also depends on whether the external conditions favor unification or independence. What's more, Chu argues that the result of presidential election probably influences the future scenario of the cross strait relations, but it's not the decisive factor.

After comparing the national identity theory with Taiwan national identity, several characteristics are evident. First of all, a conflict which is hard to solve exist between the cultural or historical identity and the political or realistic identity. Second, though according to national identity theory, national identity should be constant due to historical experience. The national identity in Taiwan can be relatively malleable under the influence of the social reality. Last but not least, national identity in Taiwan is more evident that bound to be attached to citizens' voting behavior. What's more, due to the increasing influence of the PRC on the other side of the Taiwan Strait as well as Taiwan's relation with the US, Taiwan citizens' national identity, though evident, is still limited. The pursuit of the sovereignty or self-determinism is constrained by the "One China" policy. Though the conditions has changed dramatically, the PRC and ROC still have diversity over the exact meaning of "One China". To be specific, there is conflict between the two regimes seeking legitimacy representation as China. As a result, a potential civic nationalism may appear in the near future with more young generation participating into the politics. It may result in social movement to drive things hard to predict.

Though several scholars argue that national identity has the influence over domestic politics and then influence the prospect of Cross-Strait relations.(Chu 2004; Weng and

Liu, 2004; Wu, 2005; etc.) But concise empirical test of the correlation between national identity and voting choice is still needed. Vital questions still remain. National identity and the future status are still significant variables playing a declining role in overall voter calculus. The remaining influence that these factors play on voter choice in presidential elections is not consistent across party identifiers, which makes it harder to predict the voting behavior according solely on the voters' attitude towards the issue of identity. (Balderas and Stockton, 2013)

If a Taiwan citizen identifies him/herself as Chinese, then will he/she be bound to support the unification with mainland China and will he/she vote for the Pan-Blue camp which is thought advocating unification with mainland China? Further research with wider range respondent is needed.

In sum, the transition of Taiwan citizens' national identity is deeply influenced by the change in social conditions. But as time goes by, the cognition and perception of who they are and what they are going to pursue is becoming more and more stable instead of more extreme. The casual mechanism between national identity and presidential election is similar as I mentioned in the issue voting part. By the widely recognized issue ownership, both two Pan-Blue and Pan-Green has there stable voters' group.

#### 4.3.3 National identity and Politics

National identity has impact over politics not only in Taiwan but also in other countries and areas. Based on social identity theory, a prediction that a strong national identity is expected to increase political involvement, which is proved in Huddy and

Khatib's empirical analysis in the U.S.<sup>80</sup> As an important measurement of the attachment of nations in the approach of social identity theory, national identity functions as the dynamic of political involvement, which is also different from the patriotism in the past researches<sup>81</sup>. What's more, the authors uses political attention, knowledge of political events and voters' turnout as assessment of political involvement. However, this research doesn't distinguish the influence of other factors such as political interest in political involvement.

Other than democracy lasting for a long time, scholars pay attention to the countries where the citizens have conflict in their national identity. A widely accepted theory is that economic factors such as social class drive the election in post-communist countries after transition to democracy. However, Poland's situation contradicts to this theory. In his paper, Krzysztof argues that the past of Poland is still intertwining with the present.<sup>82</sup> The voters' voting behavior is determined by multi-dimensions cleavages. First is that the region divides voters' voting choice, people in areas controlled by Germany tend to vote for the Civic Platform (PO) political party, while those people dwelling in the areas ruled by Russia tend to vote for the Law and Justice Party. Besides, this division in voting preference is accompanied with another cleavage in citizens' value. The variety in citizens' value has impact in their supporting of a conservative candidates or a liberal candidate. The traditional system of values, which defines Polish national identity in terms of ethnic nationalism, strong attachment to Catholic dogmas,

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<sup>80</sup> Huddy, Leonie, and Nadia Khatib. "American patriotism, national identity, and political involvement." *American journal of political science* 51, no. 1 (2007): 63-77.

<sup>81</sup> Munck, Gerardo L. "Democratic theory after transitions from authoritarian rule." *Perspectives on Politics* 9, no. 2 (2011): 333-343.

<sup>82</sup> Jasiewicz, Krzysztof. "'The Past Is Never Dead' Identity, Class, and Voting Behavior in Contemporary Poland." *East European Politics and Societies* 23, no. 4 (2009): 491-508.

and denunciation of communism as a virtual negation of those values defines and represents one end of the spectrum and conflict between populist and liberalism. The other end of this continuum is defined more by rejection of this nationalistic-Catholic “imagined community” than by any positive features. Also, this cleavage has impact over solidarism-liberalism as the new political cleavage in Poland.

However, in some cases, the national identity doesn’t function as the key predictor of voters’ voting behavior. After the decolonization and democratization in African countries, popular election is established in several countries. With a lack of a national identity establishing the attachment of the nation, ethnic identity becomes the way that citizens’ identify themselves. It partially accounts for the instability of democracy and some political violence. However, in Bratton, Bhavnani and Chen’s research about the voting intention in Africa, the authors analysis 16 countries’ data and find that the economic interest becomes the uppermost factors in voting intentions instead of the identity.<sup>83</sup>

#### 4.3.4 National identity and Taiwan voters

Thus, through studies of other countries, national identity has various impact over politics. It is unique to Taiwan due to several reasons. First, national identity is the sole social cleavage that dominates the Taiwan politics. In many other cases such as Poland, the national identity is combined with the diversity in religion, functioning jointly as the dominant social cleavage. The Taiwan voters aren’t different so much in their ethnicity. Second, national identity in Taiwan has impact not only to domestic politics by

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<sup>83</sup> Bratton, Michael, Ravi Bhavnani, and Tse-Hsin Chen. "Voting intentions in Africa: ethnic, economic or partisan?." *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 50, no. 1 (2012): 27-52.

influencing the presidential election but also to international relations. How Taiwan citizens identify themselves directly reflects how they view China. A hostile China in Taiwan citizens' view makes the cross-Straits relation likely to be unstable through public's influence on the making of policy towards China. Last but not least, national identity in Taiwan is inevitable in Taiwan politics. Its formation and transition largely due to the manipulation of the different parties. As a useful tool to attract and mobilize voters, national identity is combined with the independence/unification issue. The Pan-blue camp and Pan-green camp as well as their supporters are polarized by their opposite position on national identity, constructing the dynamic of party competition and consolidating democracy through presidential election. As for Taiwan, the national identity is closely related to the polarized party partisanship. In Su-feng Cheng's paper, she uses the "Taiwan consciousness" to explore the effect of national identity in the presidential election. This "Taiwan consciousness" contains two dimensions' measurement, including the Chinese/Taiwanese identity and independence/unification issue. The respondents score 2, 1 and 0 when they identify themselves as Taiwanese, both Chinese and Taiwanese and Chinese, respectively. While the respondents score 2, 1 and 0 when they tend to support independence, status quo and unification. The result adding these two scores is the measurement of the "Taiwan consciousness". 0 means the weakest while 4 means the strongest. She concludes that voters with strong "Taiwanese consciousness" tend to vote for the Pan-Green camp candidates while voters with weak "Taiwanese consciousness" tend to vote for Pan-Blue camp candidates.<sup>84</sup> After tracing the trajectory of national identity transition in Taiwan, Wang argues that national identity

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<sup>84</sup> Cheng, Su-feng. "Ethnicity, Identity, and Vote Choice in Taiwan." *Journal of Electoral Studies* 16, no. 2 (2009): 23-49.

in Taiwan sets the boundary between the voters. The ethnic division and their origin of ancestry is replaced by the Chinese/Taiwanese consciousness. And in the near future, as this division of national identity remains, this trend tends to change into a united de facto independent Taiwan against a hostile China.<sup>85</sup> Since the two major parties, DPP and KMT have strongly opposite position on national identity. On the one hand, national identity is the focus of political dispute in Taiwan. On the other hand, the voters' partisanship follows this division. In other words, the partisanship is embodied in the national identity.

National identity is also intertwined with the Cross-Strait relations. It blurs the voters' choice. One of the voters' key concern is that the close economic relation with China will lead to unification, though the economic integration between Taiwan and China does accelerate the economic development of Taiwan for China's cheap labor and large market. However, as President Ma tried to push policies towards a deeper level cooperation with China, he faced pressure from citizens. The economic dimension of the cross-Strait relationship is a significant factor that influenced Taiwanese voters' decision in the 2012 presidential election according to Wei, Hung and Tung's empirical analyzation which sorted voters into Cross-Strait Relationship Voters and Cross-Strait Economic Voters.<sup>86</sup> Whether they voted for Ma in 2012 presidential election and whether they are satisfied with Ma's first term is also taken into consideration in this classification. Also, as Wu and Lin argued, "The concern with the impact of the negative

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<sup>85</sup> T.Y.Wang 2017 "Changing boundaries" in *The Taiwan Voters* ed. By Christopher Achen and T.Y.Wang, University of Michigan Press, Ann Harbor, Michican.

<sup>86</sup> Wei, Mei-chuan, Yao-nan Hung, and Chen-yuan Tung. "The Economicization of the Cross-Strait Relationship: The Impact of the Cross-Strait Economic Relationship on the 2012 Presidential Election in Taiwan." *Issues & Studies* 52, no. 02 (2016): 1650006.

development of the cross-Strait economic relationship on Taiwan's economy had Ma Ying-jeou lost the election significantly influenced the decisions of those voters who were dissatisfied with President Ma's performance during his first term and yet still voted for him in the election mainly because of Ma's position on the cross-Strait relationship."

<sup>87</sup>Although the cross-Strait economic relationship did not directly affect most Taiwanese people's economic interests, the cross-Strait economic relationship did influence the people's voting behavior because people thought it would impact the Taiwan economy in general. <sup>88</sup>But on the other side, the candidate who's from DPP or KMT can also have influence over China's policy dealing with Taiwan. Since PRC's standing is valid to pursue the peaceful reunification, its attitude towards the Taiwan's activities which regarded as seeking sovereignty is becoming stronger, along with its increasing military power. This may make Taiwan citizens becoming more worried about their fate. In voters' mind, an ideal situation is that a balance between the PRC and ROC, where the economic cooperation maintains along with the autonomy of Taiwan. But it's hard to achieve. Thus, presidential election is a vital benchmark for the tendency of the future, though it's harder and harder to predict.

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid

<sup>88</sup> Wu, C. E., and Y. T. Lin. "Cross-Strait economic openness, identity, and vote choice: An analysis of the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections." *Journal of Electoral Studies* 20, no. 2 (2013): 1-35.

## V. FURTHER RESEARCH

This paper functions as a preparation of the further research towards Taiwan politics especially presidential election as one of the main institutions of Taiwan democracy.

After reading the literature about this topic, several questions still need to be answered.

Seeking answers and explanations for these questions is the direction of further research.

First, Taiwan citizens' national identity is still in change with the development and consolidation of Taiwan democracy. As the dominant issue of Taiwan politics, the impact of national identity faces the change of other issues such as the economic justice and minority groups' civic rights. Whether the impact of national identity changes in the voters' decision-making process should be paid more attention.

Second, with Tsai Ing-wen's success in 2016 presidential election, gender politics comes into stage. Whether the difference of gender in voters' decision making is becoming more salient is remained to be seen. Besides, whether the females' political participation is enlarging in presidential election after 2016 presidential election is also another topic.

Third, due to the spread of internet, social media plays more and more important role in politics. It offers new platform for both candidates and public delivering information. Thus, how does the media influence Taiwan's presidential election and will this impact become more salient is another focus of future research.

Nevertheless, potential innovation exists in the methods applied to measure the citizens' attitude. For example, a cross time panel analysis can be applied in explaining the change of citizens' attitude towards Cross-Strait relations and national identity.



## VI. CONCLUSION

This paper is trying to seek a review over the Taiwan presidential election. What influences the result of the election is the question that this paper tries to answer. Based on the history background, factors that influence the presidential election is sorted based on three dimensions: issue voting, valence voting and social cleavage. As one of the most important institution in democracy, presidential election decides the prospect of one state in the next a few years. Though what influences the result of presidential election in Taiwan is complex, based on the voting theories, we can find that presidential election does have similarity as the presidential election in other democratic countries. The voters' decision is influenced by the issue preference, issue salience and evaluation of the candidates. But what makes the presidential election in Taiwan special is that Taiwan is the society with only one dominant social cleavage. National identity intertwines with the issue independence/ unification and Cross-Strait relations. The presidential candidates can't avoid mention this interaction during the campaign while the voters can't neglect the impact of the national identity on their choice. But for further research, the national identity and its impacts over election needs more concise measurement.

As the success of Tsai Ing-wen becoming president in 2016 is regarded as an important benchmark of Taiwan political development, the gender politics and issues concern about the minority groups tend to be a more salient issue. Thus, in the further research, the joint effect of multi-factors should be paid much more attention. What's more, the failure of DPP in the local election in the end of 2018 made the prospect of DPP in 2020 election. While on the other side, the Pan-Blue camp is suffering from lacking a charming candidates in my opinion. Both Han kuo-yu and Ko wen-je, who are

elected as the mayor of KaoHsiung and Taipei is unlikely to becoming the presidential candidates according to the Taiwan media. Thus, the 2020 presidential is becoming hard to predict, whether there will be a political neophyte is remained to be seen, which may add some new factors to the Taiwan presidential election.

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