

# Cross-Strait Relations: Recent Developments and the Impact on the U.S. Hegemony in Asia-Pacific\*

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper explores strategic competitions in Asia Pacific, and Taiwan's role in the strategic game. Based on the research, cross-Strait relations should be probed in a broader context of the great power rivalry/cooperation in this area.

To address the topic, it will follow two theoretical points. First, to examine the issue can be based on a theoretical model called "Pliers Strategy from the Pacific Ocean toward Eurasia." Geostrategically, geopolitically and geoeconomically, from American west-coast to the Pacific Ocean, the U. S. can integrate the other nations and areas under her influence to design them, from functional point of view, as a pair of pliers which bites the Asian side of the Eurasian continent: the Korean Peninsula and the Indochina Peninsula may play the role of two edges of the geographic pliers, and Taiwan is the motional fulcrum of it. The U.S. is in the position to control this mechanism.

Deduced from this geo-strategic assumption, it is proved that the best choice for the U.S. Asian policy is to maintain the status quo across the Taiwan Strait. Looking at the situation in this area, paradigm shift is on the agenda; the US Taiwan policy cannot be pursued due to the rise of China. There is a contradiction between

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America's striving for its regional hegemony and its commitments under Taiwan Relations Act. Its support of Taiwan's independence posture may lead to war, and there will be no winner in the region except Japan. In addition, just leaving the US-China's security dilemma unresolved in the short run, the U.S. can exploit China's influence on North Korea.

The second point will touch upon the strategic guideline to answer the following questions:

- 1: In what way can the U. S. secure the status quo across the Strait?
- 2: How will China respond to the US arms sales to Taiwan? And will this stir up a new cycle of arms race in the region which eventually leads to the establishment of the comprehensive TMD system? and
- 3: Can Taiwan still remain to be 'an unsinkable aircraft carrier' in US-China confrontations?

**Keywords:** geostrategy, geopolitics, cross-strait relations, the status quo

The reality is that no serious player on the international scene can embrace a unipolar world....There would have been diminished temptation for the Bush Administration to embrace unilateralism as a policy except that the emergence of a unipolar world made unilateralism an option....We are indeed confronted by Strategic fatigue. We did not create all of the conditions that led to the emergence of a unipolar world; obviously, the collapse of the USSR had much to do with it.

Graham E. Fuller<sup>1</sup>

It has been argued that Central and West Asia play a secondary role in China's foreign policy as she does not seek direct political or economic influence, while the economic potential of Central Asia is of interest, as are the questions of security linked to Xinjiang province, once again the most important foreign and security policy issues are not located within Central Asia. *Within security the question of Taiwan remains paramount*, while the energy potential of Central Asia is matched by the South China Sea and Siberia.

Matthew Edwards<sup>2</sup>

## I. Introduction

In terms of size and national strength, Taiwan is small. In the 1980s, few American people knew where Taiwan is, needless to say, what the cross-Strait relations is. Comparatively China is a big power and has always claimed her sovereignty including Taiwan; how can a small Taiwan counter a big power and build a framework of cross-Strait relations? Obviously, the cross-Strait relations cannot be an independent or isolated issue; it cannot exist or will collapse once it is disengaged from the world power structure. Therefore, cross-Strait relations should be explored in a broader context of the great powers' rivalry/cooperation, especially the U.S., China and Japan, in the Asian Pacific.

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<sup>1</sup> Graham E. Fuller, "Strategic fatigue", *The National Interest* (Summer 2006), pp.37-42.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Edwards, "The New Great Game and the new great gamers: disciples of Kipling and Mackinder", *Central Asian Survey*, Vol.22, No.1 (London, U.K.: Carfax Publishing, March 2003), p.94.

By the same logic, will this century be an Asian century? Conceivably, people would not be able to foresee if Asia per se emerges to be the most influential region in the world in this century economically, politically or culturally. In terms of culture or civilization, some people articulate that the so-called Asian values<sup>3</sup> would not globally be acceptable, especially to the West. Despite the fact that some other people might, based on Realism, argue for the affirmative statement, the decisive factor of Asian influences is not because Asia's power or strength will be distinctive or surprising, but because the US hegemony might be challenged in Asia or by Asian regionalism. In other words, Asia might become the main realm of competitions between the US hegemony and the challenger; that will focus the attention of the world in this century--Asian century.

Since the late twentieth century, the US triumph over the Soviet has also worn America's national strength down. The U.S. cannot retain its hegemonic influences only by traditional material sense<sup>4</sup>. During the period of American-Soviet competitions, a global networks of interdependence in multi-dimensions has gradually emerged to be a functional mechanism due to highly technological progress, especially in transportation and communication; globalization has become an effective means for the U.S. to continue its hegemonic influences. Fuller demonstrates that "globalization is now increasingly perceived as a particular American agenda designed to serve American interests."<sup>5</sup> However, mechanism of globalization still needs to hold foot on soil and human societies, thus, geographical relations among various societies or nations will be distinctive elements of globalization. As Keohane and Nye Jr. articulate that "globalization refers to the shrinkage of distance but on a large scale" and "would be an odd word for proximate regional relationships."<sup>6</sup> "Geopolitics has indeed become a key concept with respect to the redefinition of national interests."<sup>7</sup> According to O. Tuomi,

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<sup>3</sup> Fareed Zakaria, "A conversation with Lee Kuan Yew", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.73, No.4 (July/August 1994), pp.109-127.

<sup>4</sup> Robert O. Keohane, *After hegemony: cooperation and discord in the world political economy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), Chapter 3.

<sup>5</sup> G.E. Fuller, op cit, p.41.

<sup>6</sup> Robert O. Keohane & Joseph S. Nye Jr., "Introduction", in Joseph S. Nye & John D. Donahue, editors, *Governance in a globalizing world* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Visions of Governance for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, 2000), p.2

<sup>7</sup> D. Weiser, "Geopolitics-renaissance of a controversial concept", *Aussenpolitik*, Vol.45, No.4 (1994), p.402.

Theoretical Geopolitics studies the relation between physical space and international politics, develops models for the spatial division of the world into cooperating and competing parts for historical, economic and political reasons, and analyses how the participants interpret the political, economic and military consequences of this division.... The Geopolitics of a state or other territorially defined society means its pursuit of geographically dimensioned aims that are connected with its economic and political position, security and culture.<sup>8</sup>

Consequently, each country will be affected by globalization and competes for preponderance in geographical maps with multi-dimensions. The profound content of cross-Strait relations should also be explored from these approaches: globalization, regionalism and geo-strategic theories.

## II. Globalization and Asian Regionalism

By utilizing the mechanism of globalization, the US hegemony is significantly enhanced, and simultaneously the size and scale of its challenge is also enlarged<sup>9</sup>. Since coming of this century, globalization, from phenomenon, process to formation of a mechanism, affects most countries in the world and be affected by them. The effects will come to an upshot: impacts upon each country and degree of influences on the globalization by individual country vary with its national strength or its capacity of power. In an evolutionary-structural approach, the United States undoubtedly owns the central position in the global networks of interdependence, which creates the most capacity of “soft power.” The U.S. will to some extent be able to conduct the mechanism of globalization and to exercise power in the global cyberspace; through exploiting that, it can dominate other countries in many aspects. That means, “globalism today is America-centric.”<sup>10</sup>

According to the dialectical theory of Marxism<sup>11</sup>, a trend of globalization will spontaneously draw out a phenomenon of anti-globalization. And interactions of the

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<sup>8</sup> O. Tuomi, “The new geopolitics-the world system and Northern Europe seen from a modern geopolitical perspective”, *Finnish Defence Studies*, No.11 (Helsinki: National Defence College, 1998), p.28.

<sup>9</sup> Graham E. Fuller, op cit, p.39.

<sup>10</sup> Keohane & Nye Jr., op cit, pp.8-12.

<sup>11</sup> Karl Marx, *Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1959); Howard Selsam, *Dynamics of Social Change* (N.Y.: International Publishers, 1970).

two dialectical functions will come to the tendency of regionalism<sup>12</sup>: regional multi-dimensional integration in geographical and functional terms to form a regional cyberspace. Functionally regionalism will become a buffer mechanism in the context of interdependence or reciprocal actions between individual nation-state and globalization. At present, most countries have perceived impacts of globalization and threats of US hegemonic influence created by exercising the mechanism of globalization, especially in the post-cold war era and the post-911 era of unilateralism; few country can alone counter that<sup>13</sup>. Under the circumstances, only will regionalism, as a buffer zone or function, be able to mitigate the impact and threats for each state's survival and security. That is why the idea of Asian century comes out. The statement on China's threat, proposed by the U.S., is also induced from that situation: China's forceful objection against America's hegemony. In terms of regionalism, many people would probably like to mention the solid integration of the European Union; why not is it the European century? The reason is that the EU does not perceive the US aggression and threats so fiercely and sensitively as Asian states do, and thus challenges the US hegemonic influence. The fierce challenge might occur to the U.S. in Asia Pacific rather than in Europe. Although the U.S. has been obsessed with issues on the Middle East at this moment, the Asian regionalism, possibly conducted by China, will in the long run stymie America's will as an invariable hegemony.

### III. Cross-Strait Relations and the US Hegemony:

#### Geo-strategy in the Asia Pacific

As mentioned above, globalization is global networks of multi-dimensional interdependences. If extending G. Allison's analysis, this kind of networks will display a cybernetic function and make up a cyberspace; there should be key nodes determining the supremacy of competition.<sup>14</sup> Based on interactions of each state's struggles for survival and power, the global system will form a power structure of

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<sup>12</sup>Chih-Cheng Yang, "Chinese cosmopolitanism and Managing the Challenges of Globalization", *Feng Chia Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, No.10 (June 2005), pp.131-154.

<sup>13</sup>Clyde Prestowitz, *Rogue nation: American unilateralism and the failure of good intentions* (New York: Basic Books, 2003).

<sup>14</sup>Graham Allison, "The impact of globalization on national and international security," in Joseph S. Nye & John D. Donahue, editors, *Governance in a globalizing world* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Visions of Governance for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, 2000), pp.72-76.

competitions between land power and sea power<sup>15</sup>; in the cybernetic structure, those countries, located in the rim between the ocean and the continent, will own more strategic values thereupon<sup>16</sup>. As the U.S. becomes the sole superpower in the world, it would certainly tend to keep the primacy position in the global power structure. In the book "The grand chessboard: American primacy and its geo-strategic imperative", the US strategist Zbigniew Brzezinski indicates that would the U.S. keep a dominant position in the new century, the end is to suppress any other nations in the Eurasia continent being powerful enough to contend with the U.S.<sup>17</sup>. However, while an emerging China, integrating countries in the Eurasia continent and drawing the regional doctrine in Asia, has been challenging the US hegemony; the competition in the Asian Pacific area of the global cyberspace will show three nodes of connection in the rim-land: the Korea Peninsula, the Taiwan Strait and the Indochina Peninsula.

From American west-coast to the Pacific Ocean, the U.S. can integrate the other countries or areas under American influence to design them. From the functional point of view, this design will be like a pair of pliers which bites the Asian side of the Eurasian continent: the Korea Peninsula and the Indochina Peninsula may play the role of two edges of the geographic pliers, and Taiwan is the motional fulcrum of it. The U.S. should be in a position to control this mechanism. That design would offer the U.S. to bring strategic functions into full play, and strive for the supremacy of competitions in Asia.

In the geographical structure, as the fulcrum moves to the American side, the U.S. can, more easily, exercise forces and influences on the Eurasian continent by conducting the pliers. Accordingly, China will bear greater pressure. The rebounding forces will inevitably increased and directly introduced to the United States. The 1997 Asian financial crisis is a case in point. Conversely, if the fulcrum moves to the China side, function of the pliers will become more flexible and its biting force thereupon be loosened; that will reduce the control strength which the U.S. can conduct.

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<sup>15</sup>Robert H. Scales & Larry M. Wortzel, *The future U.S. military presence in Asia: landpower and the geostrategy of American commitment* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1999); Chih-cheng Yang, "Strategic planning for the ROC national security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century", *Feng Chia Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, No.3, (November 2001), pp.247-269.

<sup>16</sup>M. Hauner, *What is Asia to US?* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1992). The heartland-rimland theories were proposed, respectively, by Mackinder and Spykman. Mackinder argued that the heartland would dominate world politics, whereas, Spykman argued that the rimland-the circle of land surrounding the heartland-could be used to contain the heartland and nullify its influences. Cited from M. Edwards, op cit, p.102.

<sup>17</sup>Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The grand chessboard: American primacy and its geo-strategic imperative* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), pp.123-125.

Applying this logic to analyze the contemporary situation across the Taiwan Strait, if Taiwan's Mainland policy tends to relative independence, the strategic space which the U.S. can operate will certainly increase, but once an excess of Taiwan's posture of independence appears, China would probably abuse a fight, in order to safeguard its so-called "sovereignty and territorial integrity". Under the circumstances, the U.S. ought to abide by "the Taiwan Relations Act" to intervene the confrontations across the Taiwan Strait; that might further induce a Sino-American war. No matter what the result is, in terms of the vested status as hegemony, the U.S. is a loser; certainly, in terms of national development, the rising China is a loser too. In addition, Taiwan must be the poorest loser; and Japan will be the only winner.

In an opposite perspective, if the U.S. decides not to get involved in the confrontation across the Strait, people would presume that the U.S. tempts to ignore the responsibility of enforcing Taiwan Relations Act. Theoretically, the TRA belongs to American domestic law; according to the principle of democratic politics, the Administration should take it as precedence over international pacts. If the TRA with more legality of enforcement dooms to failure, queries on the international pacts, which the U.S. has signed with allies, will be raised. Accordingly, the US credits and reputation as hegemony will soon go bankrupt; the U.S. will definitely be a loser. Moreover, if the U.S. fails to intervene into the situation promptly, unification of China, in words or in essence, might occur, especially in a situation that two sides of the Taiwan Strait were out-of-balance in military strength. The emergence of a rising-China will create powerful momentum thrusting into the US hegemony; from this perspective, the U.S. is a loser too. Therefore, looking through the deductive arguments of this geo-strategic assumption, one can presume that it would be the best choice for the US Asian policy to maintain the status quo across the Taiwan Strait for keeping the situation peace and steady, and retaining US interests.

Some people would argue that paradigm shift is on the agenda<sup>18</sup>--the US Taiwan policy can hardly pursue its goals due to complexities caused by the rise of China and the imbalance of forces across the Taiwan Strait. There is a contradiction between America's retaining its regional hegemony in Asia and its commitments under the TRA. Its support of Taiwan's independence posture may lead to war, and there will be no winner in the region except Japan. In addition, just leaving the US-China's security dilemma unresolved and preventing unification in the short run, no matter what

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<sup>18</sup>Ron Raticliff, "U.S. responsibility and maritime strategy in Asia," presented in the "Asian Century? Common Challenges, Emerging Strategies" Conference held in Newport, RI, USA, on September 19-20, 2006.



peaceful unification or unification by force, the U.S. can exploit China's influences in the North Korean.

## IV. Conclusion: Feasible Policy in Response to Concerned Issues

Since it is the best strategy for the U.S. to maintain the status quo of the cross-strait relations, the induced question would be 'how the U.S. utilizes its foreign policy to accomplish the strategic objective.' Concerning this point, this paper would logically discuss it in two aspects. First, what 'the status quo of cross-strait relations' means should be explored; it is requisite to get at an 'operational definition'. The other aspect is 'in what way the U.S. can secure the status quo across the Taiwan Strait. Since the 1980s, the cross-strait relations has gone through numerous entanglements among three concerned entities--China, America and Taiwan. The tripartite interactions have rotated between rational and irrational. In any case, the situation, under the US hegemonic influence, gradually comes to a rational course. Although neither the Chinese nor the Taiwanese might be satisfied, in order for peace and stability across the Strait, they are nearly reaching consensus on the cross-strait relations; the tacit agreement is the status of 'neither unified nor independent'. An operational content of it would be the principle of 'non-independence of Taiwan, no war initiated by China'.

As a pragmatist, the Chinese leader Hu Jintao would realize that it is impossible to conclude a resolution across the Strait by only authorities of the two sides, and meanwhile, he also acknowledges that there exists a dialectical contradiction between resolution of the Taiwan Issue and China's national development at this moment; they can hardly be accomplished simultaneously. In order to persist with China's comprehensive national development, Hu Jintao has adopted a policy that China should secure an invariable suppression of Taiwan's independence as the prerequisite rather than fulfillment of unification, and thereby gains time to promote national development. Eventually, China will be able to solve the Taiwan issue thoroughly.<sup>19</sup>

By this strategic thinking, in order to secure the bottom line of preventing Taiwan's Independence, China must create a legal image of symbolic unification or

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<sup>19</sup>Chih-Cheng Yang, "keeping the inherited policy or striking out on a new path: policy implications of Jarg Chin-lin's clarifying the Chinese position on cross-strait relations in January 28, 2005", *The Strait Review*, No.171 (March 2005), pp.21-24.

unification in form at present; that will offer China the legitimacy of exercising military force to suppress Taiwan's independence in case. Therefore, China, taking all perplexities from international realm with the smooth, passed 'the Anti-Separation Law' in 2005. It aims to articulate by legal terms to the international community that China's sovereignty contains Taiwan, and meanwhile to imply that once Taiwan tempts into independence, China, articulating the law, could resort to force for solving the problem, and this event is an attribute of internal affairs, not acceptable to foreign interference<sup>20</sup>. Despite that, the China's position might not necessarily jeopardize the US interests and deny the principle of securing the status quo across the Strait.

From American side, the formulation and enforcement of the Taiwan Relations Act has already implicated to guarantee the status quo across the Taiwan Strait; once the U.S. sticks firmly to the TRA in its China policy, a state of disunity across the Strait should be secured. This is the reason why China has discontented at this US position all the time. Objectively, according to the UN charter or international law, the U.S. should not have any position to object any independent country pursuing unification. However, the TRA, as a historical legacy, has been a vested legal institution beyond China's influence; the U.S. enacted it before the signature of Sino-American diplomatic tie. As a TRA institution is build, it would theoretically not be terminated unless either of the related parties expresses its will of abolition; the status quo of disunity across the Taiwan Strait would not easily be changed. Nevertheless, power structure in the Asian Pacific has changed in the last two decades: a rising China emerges and its influences are increasing, whereas, the US hegemonic power is sapping due to US-Soviet confrontations in the Cold War and over-expansion of the US unilateralism in the post-911 era<sup>21</sup>. Under the circumstances, the Taiwan issue, which concerns China's sovereignty, cannot totally rely on the declaration of TRA to stabilize the cross-Strait relations, and then safeguard the stakes of America.

Although an independent Taiwan might have been one of strategic targets of the US Asia policy since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>22</sup>, foreign policy should be flexible and responsive to the realities for maximizing national interests. It is prerequisite for peace in the cross-strait relations to maintain an equilibrium state among the US interests, China's national integrity and Taiwan's security. That means: not only does 'the state

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>G. E. Fuller, op cit, Ref 1, pp.37-42.

<sup>22</sup>Xiao-Po Wang, *Collected Essays on the Cross-Strait Relations* (Taipei: the Strait Academic Publishers, 1997), pp.26-66.

of disunity across the Strait' continue to meet US interests and Taiwan's security, but also a creditable non-independence of Taiwan should be insured to smooth down Chinese nationalism.

Nonetheless, 'a creditable non-independence of Taiwan' is in fact beyond China's and America's aspirations. This issue, to a large extent, is determined by the political situation in Taiwan and intentions of the Taiwan authorities. Admittedly, people would emphasize that the situation across the Strait has been very often shaky and unstable due to domestic political tensions in Taiwan. Due to imperfection of the institutional setting in Taiwanese democracy, a person in power who can avoid legitimate process simply declare the abolishment of the National Unification Program and its executive body just by an occasional speech<sup>23</sup>. By a similar procedure, he might also be able to declare 'Taiwan Independence' and then initiate the enactment of a new Constitution--one of the Republic of Taiwan. Under the circumstances, no single political force is able to prevent such an action executed by the president. In response to this situation, China might accordingly enforce the Anti-Separation Law to conduct a military operation. It will form a vicious cycle of actions across the Strait; that will lead to the declaration of the martial law in Taiwan and, possibly, to dictatorship by the President. Once the Taiwan President initiates the procedure, the United States would hardly interfere promptly to stop deterioration of the situation. Therefore, the U.S. should undertake some measures of precaution to prevent the case in point.

In order to certainly guarantee the policy of "no independence, no war," the United States could take diplomatic means, on the one hand, to pay more attention to the domestic political situation in Taiwan, and work out some counter-measures for such a scenario. Most importantly, the U.S. will have to do its best to keep the final words in the issue of Taiwan's independence. On the other hand, the U.S. should meanwhile promote negotiations with China to discuss the concerned issues on concrete terms of Taiwan's independence, and eventually to reach consensus on objective criteria of Taiwan's independence. The U.S. and China should tend to agree at "what actions could be taken in response to the situations of confrontation across the Strait" for preventing an accident over there. Even if an accident takes place, both states must communicate and confirm about their perceived situation through a hot line, and then adopt a mutual-acceptable action. Based on a foundation of mutual

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<sup>23</sup>Chih-Cheng Yang, "Political plight pushing Chen Shein-Bian to seek temporary relief regardless of the consequences: policy implications of abolishing National Unification Act and National Unification Committee", *The Strait Review*, No.183 (March 2006), pp.15-18.

understanding beforehand, both countries can rationally deal with the accidental situation. Thus, if the U.S. treats the Taiwan issue in sincerity at the critical time, it shall to some extent request China in return; the US national interests vested in the status quo should be ensured.

After discussing the strategic principle, this paper would then probe some tactical issues, for example 'issue on US arms sale to Taiwan' and 'the possibility of arms race across the Taiwan Strait'; in fact, the two issues are correlated. According to Deng Xiaoping's doctrine on 'one country, two systems', even in the system of China's reunification, China would allow Taiwan to have its own army<sup>24</sup>. Therefore, arms sale to Taiwan should not be as critical to China as it is widely perceived.

No matter what, China is a big power: big size in land, large in population, and high in GNP, there is always a big gap in military strength between the required level of China's defense capability and Taiwan's all out military force. It would not be rational to suppose that China will exercise only the troops in Nanjing Military Region or several military regions to conduct a cross-Strait war. Conceivably the Chinese might mobilize almost all military capabilities to win the war. Besides, most of Taiwan's arm forces belong to defensive weapons, whereas, in terms of quality and quantity, China's arm forces in recent years have nearly reached the advanced level in various aspects, such as SU30 fight jets or even SU35, nuclear submarines, missile systems...etc. Obviously, the disparity in military strength across the Strait is too big to be replenished. The inferiority engendered by this disparity is mainly deterred by the U.S. hegemonic power; the situation across the Strait can only be stabilized by that. In other words, given Taiwan's military strength, it is no matter how big the arms sale is, the Chinese already have confidence that China is powerful enough to suppress Taiwan's independence without US intervention.

So, the US arms sale can be considered as a symbolic demonstration of US commitments to intervene, and that is why it can be qualified as a means of deterrence. If China really cares about the arms sale to Taiwan, how could French arms sale to Taiwan get Chinese tacit approval?<sup>25</sup> In spite of insistence on the arms sale, the U.S. would not supply Taiwan arms enough for its pursuing independence either. In concrete terms, the US arms sale probably aims to help Taiwan survive at least two

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<sup>24</sup>There are 4 principle points in the content of 'one country, two system': 1.one China, including Taiwan; 2. two systems coexisting; 3. high degree self-governance; 4.peaceful talks. In the third point, it shows that Taiwan can hold its own military forces. Zu-Lun Mao, *Statements on 'one country two systems'* (Taipei, the Strait Academic Publisher, 2004)

<sup>25</sup>Wu-Liu Tau, *Chen, Shein-Bain's shock*, <zh.wikipedia.org/wiki>; check <www.epochtimes.com/b5/5/11/27/n1134394.htm>

weeks before the U.S. makes a decision in response to any type of a cross-Strait crisis. Conceivably, China's protests against the US arms sale to Taiwan just refer to a symbolic meaning of the integrity of its national sovereignty. Concerning the 7-8 hundred warheads of ballistic missile targeting at Taiwan, China's real attempt is not to attack Taiwan only; logically, it doesn't need so many missiles to destroy Taiwan. The real target should be the military forces deployed under the US-Japanese Security Treaty in the Asian-Pacific. In Chinese view, to set the temporary target at Taiwan can reduce susceptibility and anxiety of America and Japan, especially prevent Japan from revitalizing its militarism.

Moreover, China's Taiwan policy is effective in economic aspect to cause industry cavity in Taiwan. Coupled with the government's corruption<sup>26</sup>, Taiwan has already confronted crises; that also results in a plight to the US arms sale. Strategically, China would like to exhaust Taiwan's economy by accelerating the arms race across the Strait. That will draw to Taiwan's economic and financial crises, and simultaneously cause high dependence on China economically and then politically. Under the circumstances, peaceful reunification would get momentum.

Now, the paper will turn to the hot topic about the deployment of the Theatre Missile Defense (TMD) system in the Asian Pacific. From scientific and technological points of view, it is still arguable if the TMD will really be effective to counter the attack of ICBMs. However, since the deployment of an effective TMD can produce high scores in national security and will cause serious impacts on security of the countries involved, any country cannot afford to ignore it and disregard this issue. Looking into the strategic situation across the Strait, if Taiwan is included in the TMD system, the plan will offer China an excuse to look for some effective means to break through the system. China would publicly object the U.S. to include Taiwan into the TMD system, because that will undermine the present equilibrium in the cross-Strait relations. In fact, China cares more about the deployment of the TMD system into the broader Asian-Pacific area; that deployment will enhance American influence over the area and break the balance of power in it. Presumably, China will turn to the policy of preemptive strike or refer to some kind of coercive diplomacy<sup>27</sup> to counter the TMD project. However, on the other hand, if the TMD system does

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<sup>26</sup>Since the early 2005, the mass media in Taiwan has exposed a bunch of cases about government's corruptions; the involved rank has nearly reached to the presidential level. The legal system carried out investigations; the procurator has sued many corrupted officials at the law. Check <[www.mac.gov.tw/big5/risk/4-9.pdf](http://www.mac.gov.tw/big5/risk/4-9.pdf)> and <[member.ettoday.com/talking/index01.php?tid=124990](http://member.ettoday.com/talking/index01.php?tid=124990)>

<sup>27</sup>Concerning 'preemptive strike' and 'coercive diplomacy', please check the following references: Alex Roberto Hybel, *The logic of surprise in international conflict* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington

not include Taiwan, both China and Taiwan might get wrong perception that the U.S. will accept China's aspirations for unification. So, it might be necessary to convene an international forum to discuss the issue on the TMD for offering clear messages and getting to mutual understanding; that will secure the stability and peace of the Asian-Pacific area.

The final issue is Taiwan's role as the US unsinkable aircraft carrier in the US strategy. In fact, Taiwan has been playing this role since the 1950s; that used to secure Taiwan's relative independence versus China. That worked simply because the US hegemony had exerted decisive effects over the area, coupling with that China lacked enough naval and air forces to counter this. However, after the cold war, the power structure in the world has shifted; distribution of their influences also reshuffles. The US hegemonic power as 'the world policeman' has weakened relatively while China is emerging to be a big power and actively participating the international community to raise Chinese influences. Besides, as an unsinkable aircraft carrier, Taiwan must be unsinkable first. Therefore, the U.S. has helped Taiwan in military, economic and political aspects to keep Taiwan unsinkable during the cold war era. However, Taiwan has recently been sinking in these aspects<sup>28</sup> and highly influenced by China<sup>29</sup>. Consequently, once the Sino-American confrontation is initiated, Taiwan, with de facto ability and will, can only play the role as a shaky tactical gangplank to Chinese mainland rather than 'a carrier' for US military operations against China.

Psychologically, since China, guided by previous perceptions, is still suspicious about Taiwan's role; Taiwan as an unsinkable aircraft carrier for the U.S. is still valid unless there is a military clash between the U.S. and China. However, under the existing circumstances, Taiwan can no longer be a US solid and unsinkable aircraft carrier in ability and will, even as a tactical gangplank of the US military operations is still doubtful in Sino-American confrontation. That Taiwan is sinking in military, economic and political aspects and thus highly dependent on China in these aspects should be the key concerns for the US global strategy in the Asian-Pacific. That is

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Books, 1986); Robert D. Worley, *Waging ancient war: limits on preemptive force* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2003); Peter Viggo Jakobsen, *Western use of coercive diplomacy after the Cold war: a challenge for theory and practice* (Basingstoke, Hampshire [England]; Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's, 1998); Robert J. Art & Patrick M. Cronin, *The United States and coercive diplomacy* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace press, 2003)

<sup>28</sup>Zong-Shein Yu, *From dragon head to dragon tail: how Taiwan's economy should do?* (Taipei: Wu Nan Books Co. Ltd., 2006); Kuo-lin Chen, *Taiwan's Mafia mechanism: Revelation of political situation and economic situation in Taiwan* (Taipei: Shang Zhou Publishers, 2004)

<sup>29</sup>Check <[www.fics.org.tw/publications/monthly/paper.php?paper-id=593&vol-id=55](http://www.fics.org.tw/publications/monthly/paper.php?paper-id=593&vol-id=55)>

also the reason why the U.S. should take the policy of maintaining the status quo across the Strait as the best strategy to keep Taiwan unsinkable and secure US national interests.

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## 兩岸關係的新形勢對美國亞太霸權的意義\*

楊志誠\*\*

### 摘 要

本論文旨在探討亞太地區的戰略形勢及在此形勢下台灣的角色。根據本文的研究，兩岸關係的探討應該從更廣大的亞太戰略網絡中去瞭解，必須分析該區域相關主要國家的競爭形勢或合作形勢。該主題基本上是從二個層次加以論證：一是透過「鉗子戰略模型」的建構，其次則透過模型的演繹，探討相關的戰術議題。

從美國西岸往太平洋延伸，進而到廣大的歐亞大陸，依循著地緣戰略、地緣政治及地緣經濟的運行機能，美國有足夠的能力整合其亞太地區的盟邦或對其沒有敵意的國家，建構一把咬住歐亞大陸邊陲的鉗子：朝鮮半島及中南半島分別是二邊鉗口，台灣剛好是這隻鉗子的支點。美國透過這樣的戰略模型將可以立於操控的地位。

震顛該區域各國權力關係的演變，隨著中國的崛起以及美日權力的消長，一般深信該區域的國際關係典範已逐漸產生了轉移；冷戰以來的美國在台政策可能也將隨之變化。以當前的形勢來看，美國想一方面堅守「台灣關係法」的承諾，同時又試圖繼續維持在該地區的霸權，顯然是越來越困難了。美國如果一味無視於台灣傾向獨立的態度，中美之間將可能爆發嚴重的衝突，甚至兵戎相見；果若如此，中、美兩國都將是輸家，而台灣可能是最大輸家；日本也許是惟一的贏家。進一步來說，短期之內，台灣問題的糾葛在某種意義上也可以提供美國影響中國的空間，藉以防止北朝鮮核武問題的失控。根據該地緣戰略的模型，本文得出結論：維持台海現況將是美國亞太政策的最佳選擇。

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本文論述的第二個層次是延伸上述的戰略準則，回應下列三項戰術運作的議題：一、美國應採取怎麼樣的戰術以確保台海情勢的現況？

二、中國對美國軍售的問題將會做出怎麼樣回應？美國軍售是否會導致兩岸的軍備競賽，進而促成「飛彈防衛系統」在該地區的部署？和

三、一旦中美兩國發生衝突，台灣還能否扮演美國的不沉航空母艦？

**關鍵詞：**地緣戰略、地緣政治、兩岸關係、維持現況