

Some Prudent Advice for Taiwan: The Role of Historical Analogies in Understanding the Taiwan Question

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to deconstruct analogical reasoning by analyzing various historical analogies used to comprehend different events, with a focus on Taiwan's current predicament with its security threat, the People's Republic China. Historical analogies are frequently used tools to conceptualize current events by linking them with previous situations that they share a resemblance with. Although this method can suggest prudent advice on foreign policy decision-making, the outcome of utilizing analogies have experienced varying degrees of success and at times even resulted in disastrous political ramifications. A critical analysis of the analogies used to describe Taiwan's current situation will help highlight the errors of the more western-centric analogies that don't necessarily provide Taiwan with the necessary lessons to aid it in handling its predicament due to the cultural and political differences. In addition to presenting the often overlooked Taiwanese discourse on Crimea and the Russo-Ukrainian War, which has involved different aforementioned historical analogies, I will also finally offer an alternative analogy, the North-South Korea divide, to the Taiwan crisis that could provide a different perspective.

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Also a huge shoutout to my Earlham advisor Ahmed Khanani for pushing me during undergrad and making me a better student and person.

To my best friends I met at Earlham, Partev, and CEU mates: thank you for putting a smile on my face everyday.

Finally, I must state that this thesis does not reflect my stance on the Taiwan Question and should not be misconstrued as advocacy for Taiwan independence. I am half Chinese and have lived in China for over 12 years, so I understand more than anyone how complicated the Taiwan question is. I am not taking any sides; I merely wish to critically analyze the various narratives and analogies surrounding cross-strait relations and offer a different perspective.

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Introduction

In 2014, the Russian Federation conducted a military operation in Crimea, currently still recognized as Ukrainian territory under international law, that gave Putin's regime de facto control over one of the Black Sea's most important ports. Russia's expansionist practices, however, did not end there. Since February 2022, Russia and Ukraine have engaged in a proxy war that has almost exclusively occurred on Ukrainian soil. Thousands of lives have been lost, millions have been displaced, and the global economy has suffered as a consequence.

To Russia's east, another authoritarian regime that has frequently been compared to Putin's Russia also seeks to fulfill its irredentist goal. Xi Jin Ping, China's paramount leader, announced the People's Republic of China's (PRC) desire to achieve "the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation"(Xi, 2022) by 2049. In addition to the typical Chinese communist propaganda such as raising the "great banner of socialism with Chinese characteristics," and to build "confidence and strength," Xi's 20th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party report specifically mentioned that in order to bring forth the great rejuvenation of China, the "One Country, Two Systems" approach must be revised and administered by "patriots," and the Taiwan Question must be resolved, whether through a peaceful "reunification" or military force. China has since conducted multiple military drills and shown increasing aggression towards the island with the hopes of deterring the US from developing diplomatic ties with Taiwan and emboldening its independence movement.

Tsai Ing-wen, leader of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) who is now serving her second consecutive term as president of the Republic of China(RoC), has gradually distanced her party and country from Beijing and repeatedly stated that China must "face reality"(Kuo 2020) of Taiwan's independence. With over 76% of the Taiwan population

considering their country an independent country under the status quo (Everington 2022), there has been growing discourse within the nation on Taiwan's status. "Russia's invasion of Ukraine shows that authoritarian regimes will use any method to accomplish their expansionist goals," says Tsai Ing-wen, President of the Republic of China, at Liberal International's 75th Anniversary Congress, "our effort must not stop here. We must educate ourselves on the authoritarian playbook" (Tsai 2022). In order to better understand their own predicament with the hopes of gaining support and even proffering a potential solution, Taiwanese and non-Taiwanese scholars, officials, and even citizens have attempted to analogize other similar situations to their own, such as the annexation of Crimea, invasion of Ukraine, and even the US' abandonment of Afghanistan. But are these analogies accurate? If not, are there alternative historical analogies that could provide a different outlook of the situation and offer other steps to take? The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate historical analogies' ability to conceptualize the Taiwan question, understand the context behind said predicament, and proffer suggestions that could aid Taiwan in its foreign policy decision-making process by analyzing the social, political, and academic spheres of Taiwanese discourse in addition to the Afghanistan, Ukraine, and Korean Peninsula analogies.

In this paper, I will break down the various historical analogies implemented regarding the Taiwan Question, specifically focusing on Taiwanese discourse and how the Taiwanese view their very own predicament, and suggest additions to the existing analogies. In the first chapter, I will provide a chronological overview of Taiwan's relationship with China and the US since they are the most involved stakeholders in the Taiwan crisis. This will help flesh out the significance of the issues and offer some historical background and contemporary updates. For Chapter 2, I will present my theoretical framework on creative arguments and analogical reasoning and critique on some of the more popular historical analogies. The next main

chapter will analyze different narratives and analogies the Taiwanese people have engaged in. The aim of this chapter is to break down the usage of analogies and put emphasis on the social, academic, and political spheres of Taiwanese discourse that could offer better insight on the Taiwan's current predicament which would in turn guide me to an alternative analogy for Taiwan. The last chapter will be my offering of a different historical analogy that provides a different perspective that could potentially have different foreign policy suggestions.

Chapter 1: An Overview of the Current State of the Taiwan Question

The reunification of Taiwan with China has long been amongst the top priorities of Chinese politics. Throughout all the policy changes and reforms, China's stance on its "One China Principle" has never changed. For the most part, the government's strategy has been pursuing peaceful reunification. In recent years, however, tension has risen amongst the United States, China, and Taiwan on Taiwan's sovereignty. This chapter will lay out some of the more significant milestones and events that have led to the current situation.

The question of whether Taiwan is a part of China or not has been the subject of international debate. Why does the PRC insist on Taiwan being an inseparable part of its territory even though the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has never maintained any form of de jure control over Taiwan? Taiwan was first annexed by the Qing Dynasty in 1683 and the territory hadn't changed hands until the turn of the 19th century when the Qing government ceded sovereignty of Taiwan to Japan after the First Sino-Japanese War in 1895. Japan continued to rule the island until 1945. The Cairo Declaration in 1943 saw RoC leader Chiang Kai-shek meet with U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in Cairo where the leaders of the allied forces stated that Taiwan shall be restored to the Republic of China. The constant juggling of Taiwan between states is one of the reasons to why the PRC states that Taiwan "has always been a part of China" and continues to uphold the "One-China Principle". In reality, however, since the Kuomintang in 1949 crossed the strait for the island after their defeat at the hands of the CCP, Taiwan has mostly always been governing itself via a democratic system(at least after martial law was lifted in 1987). After the Chinese civil war in 1949 that resulted in the Chinese Communist Party's victory over the Kuomintang, the latter subsequently relocated to Taiwan where they successfully fended off a CCP invasion on the northwestern coast of the island on October 25th, 1949. In 1954, the US

and Taiwan signed the Mutual Defense Treaty in Washington. Taiwan formally withdrew from the United Nations in 1971 after the United Nations recognized the People's Republic of China as the only legitimate representative of China to the world. In 1979, the US congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act that paved the way for substantial yet non-diplomatic dialogue between the US and Taiwan. Cross-strait relations began after the 1992 consensus that has seen significant growth in trade and migration between mainland China and Taiwan.

Under Kuomintang rule, Taiwan seemed to inch progressively closer to Beijing, especially under then President and KMT party leader Ma Ying-jeou. Since 2016, however, Tsai Ing-wen, leader of the Democratic Progressive Party, became president after winning both the 2016 and 2020 elections. Her stance on China's desire for reunification has always been to maintain the status quo, and this was further strengthened by her "four commitments" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs RoC 2021) that emphasized on protecting Taiwan's sovereignty and democracy.

At the 20th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, Xi (2022) stated he would not renounce the country's right to use force to incorporate Taiwan. In his report, he presented the Chinese government's position in three specific areas: the government is against separatism and external influence in Taiwan affairs; the CCP will strengthen strategic initiative for China's complete reunification and consolidate commitment to the 'One-China principle'; and the party has recognized that the 'One Country, Two Systems' policy that was implemented in Hong Kong were not well-developed and threatened national security. These three key plans show China's determination to, if needed, forcefully resolve the Taiwan question and scrap the 'One Country, Two System' policy that they believe have undermined the CCP's control and authority in its previously implemented region, Hong Kong. For the Taiwanese, however, that would mean the bereavement of their democratic rights and

lifestyle. As I will demonstrate later on in the thesis, the majority of Taiwanese people wish to either maintain the status quo or gain independence. According to the RoC's Mainland Affairs Council's public opinion survey, 79.4% (Mainland Affairs Council 2022, 1) of the population doesn't consider the "peaceful reunification; one country, two systems" policy laid out by the CCP at the 20th National Congress to be the most appropriate method for Chinese reunification; 74.4% (2022) of the population believes Taiwan should stand firm on its "Four Commitments"; 88.6 % (2022) disagrees specifically with the "one country, two system" policy and fears the RoC would effectively cease to exist. Chinese aggression towards the Taiwanese who wish to maintain their current autonomy and democracy has become concerning for other powers, such as the West and more specifically the US.

The tension between China and the US, greatly due to growing US-Taiwan relations, has already impacted the Asia-Pacific region's stability. According to the Annual Threat Assessment published by the US' Office of the Director of National Intelligence (2023), Xi's China envisions to become the preeminent power in East Asia and a "major power" in the world. The report states that Beijing considers the growing tensions with the US to be a result of the geopolitical shift and views Washington's measures taken against China to be an attempt at undermining the CCP and preventing China's rise (2023, 6). The US has achieved bipartisan consensus on facing China as the main threat to the US. Chairman of the House Select Committee on the Strategic and Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party Mike Gallagher asserted that China represents an "existential struggle" in which "the most fundamental freedoms are at stake" (Heer 2023). Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang has responded to questions on growing tensions between the US and China and stated that if the US continues to provoke China, there will "surely be conflict and confrontation" (PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2023). Strategic ambiguity' has been the

US' dominant foreign policy on the Taiwan problem. By deliberately adhering to the "One China Policy" (in lieu of the "One China Principle"), the US has allowed itself to build relations with China while also maintaining the pro-democracy government in Taiwan. Nancy Pelosi's visit to the island exacerbated already tense relations between the rising hegemon in the east and the leader of the liberal International order in the west. Despite China's aggression, however, experts such as CIA's Director William Burns and a vast amount of scholars have stated that China's potential invasion of Taiwan would be a costly and incredibly difficult one. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (F. Cancian, Cancian & Heginbotham 2023) developed a wargame for a Chinese amphibious invasion of Taiwan and ran it 24 times. The result was an unsurprising lose-lose-lose (much worse for China) situation where all three parties suffered heavy losses and Taiwan maintained its sovereignty.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

Historical analogies have been used extensively in academia and politics. For policy makers, analogies can provide insight, relatability, and guidance on what steps to take for a situation that is similar to a historical event. The Hudabiyyah Peace analogy references the peace treaty between the state of Medina and the Qayash tribes of Mecca in 628 which resulted in the Prophet Muhammad amassing a large enough army during peace time to conquer Mecca. This analogy has been used by Iran's decision-makers when they signed the JCPOA nuclear deal with the West to analogize the Prophet's great foresight in signing a peace treaty to their very own decision to conclude a nuclear deal with the "world leaders of disbelievers (Kamali 2019, 216). For academics, historical analogies are useful when a new occurrence demands explanation and can help conceptualize the new situation by studying aspects of the previous event that resonate with those of the newly emerged circumstance. Some of the more commonly used historical analogies in foreign policy and international relations are the Munich analogy (Kopper & Peragovics 2019, 365) and often the Cold War analogy (Westad 2019) in regards to the US and China's rivalry. The Munich analogy references European powers' erroneous decision to appease Nazi Germany in the 1930s by appeasing the latter instead of attempting to contain Hitler. The core characteristics of this analogy are appeasement and containment. It has led to the "no more Munich" (Khong 1992, 4) syndrome in politics. The Cold War analogy has been used frequently to describe current US-China relations since both the Soviet Union and China share numerous similarities. One was a communist hegemon of a bipolar world that ruled with an iron fist, and the other is also a communist authoritarian state that has one of the world's fastest growing economies which could eventually rival that of the US in addition to practices such as political and military extortion, divide-and-rule tactics (Westad 2019).

More recently, there have been many instances where scholars and politicians compared Taiwan to Ukraine, Russia to China, and the US retreating from Afghanistan to the US potentially leaving Taiwan behind. Pro-China politician Jaw Shaw-kong (2021) greatly doubts the US' commitment to Taiwan and considers the Taiwanese people's belief that the US would come to Taiwan's aid to be wishful thinking that has no ground.

But are all of these analogies accurate and can they provide clear and reliable strategies for states to implement? This chapter will offer a better understanding of creative arguments (e.g, inferences and analogical reasoning), break down some of the aforementioned historical analogies, and analyze the effectiveness of the Afghanistan and Taiwan-Ukraine analogies. In order to supply the Taiwan-Ukraine analogies with sufficient context, I will mostly be drawing discourse and analogies from Taiwan's social, academic, and political spheres.

2.1 Creative Arguments

Analogical reasoning is one of the main forms of creative arguments. Unlike logical reasoning in which no new information is added or inferred as one progresses through his/her argument, creative arguments are ampliative, non-truth preserving, and non-monotonic (Robert 2005, 703). Monotony in this sense means that additional information added to an argument or equation doesn't affect the validity of the conclusion. Essentially, creative arguments—and by extension analogical reasoning—are ways of conceptualizing an occurrence by involving multiple factors and actors that could potentially modify the conclusion or even lead to inaccurate predictions.

When one is faced with issues that we do not understand, one naturally tends to find solutions by comparing unfamiliar phenomena with previous events that occurred which could potentially proffer suggestions to aid one in resolving said issue. According to Yuen

Foong Khong (1992, 13), the psychology behind analogical reasoning is the means of which one copes with an abundant of information by relying on a knowledge structure. One of the knowledge structures is analogies. The use of analogies is a cognitive and natural one. As Serge Robert (2005, 701) states, the use of analogical reasoning is an “intentional generalization” that utilizes the resemblance shared by different individual experiences to construct a general entity with the goal of gaining insight from the previously resolved occurrence that could translate its success to the current predicament. Robert introduces Holyoak and Thagard’s (1995, 39-100) different analogies: object sameness (O-sameness), relation sameness (R-sameness), and relation of relations sameness (R²-sameness). R²-sameness explains human’s tendency to identify causes and effects, which is not the priority of this thesis so it will not be used.

O-sameness can be used in two different scenarios. The first one is relatable when the resemblance between similar individual experiences or entities happen at different times; consequently, these different occurrences can be thought of as successive occurrences of the same object. The other way to implement O-sameness is when individuals, experiences, or entities of a similar nature occur at the same time, which indirectly encourages us to group up these similar but different objects into the same category or to perceive different occurrences as the same object. Robert (2005, 704) uses the example of a lion recognizing an animal being a member of the wildebeest category. For those well versed in the international relations discipline, a simple example I would use that is pertinent to this paper is scholars’ placing Russia and China both under the “authoritarian regime” umbrella even though both states share different practices, cultural norms, and values.

R-sameness is more straightforward. Analogies via R-sameness essentially establish a resemblance in relations between two groups of two or more. Robert elaborates on this by

analogizing *A* and *B*'s relationship to that of *C* and *D* (2005, 704). R-sameness creates this abstract and at times inaccurate mediation between experiences and actions that push actors to study the behaviours and practices of the other group (e.g, *A* would attempt to learn from *C* and *B* could also wish to learn from *D*, and vice versa).

2.2 Historical Analogies

In chapter 2.1, I mentioned the downsides of analogical reasoning: it is non-truth preserving and can lead to incorrect assumptions that would subsequently translate to poor decisions. So why do politicians and scholars continue to utilize historical analogies?

Analogical reasoning is a natural and useful way of thinking that can help one better understand an intricate situation, but it also presents many flaws and downsides that could lead to erroneous and poor choices. In this subchapter, I will demonstrate the usage and benefits of historical analogies in addition to highlighting the downsides of those analogies.

2.2.1 The Pros of Historical Analogies

“Analogy is our best guide in all philosophical investigations; and all discoveries, which were not made by mere accident, have been made by the help of it.”

-Joseph Priestly

The advantages of implementing analogical reasoning in studying previous events to better understand a predicament are manifold. But it is important to note that analogies ultimately are creative arguments, therefore they should only be used as orientation and guidance instead of expecting concrete solutions.

First off, analogies are useful by offering a link between similar past and present events that could yield potential solutions for the involved actors. In a world of everchanging politics, being able to quickly conceptualize an ongoing situation can help speed up decision-making processes. Khong (1992, 21) argues that two of the three tasks historical analogies can fulfill is “defining the situation” and “stake assessment.” Historical analogies are “heuristic

devices” (Kopper & Peragovics 2018, 364) that provide actors with an alternative interpretation of the current situation by juxtaposing the current predicament with a previous event that shares resemblances. For example, by using O-sameness and R-sameness, when one studies Taiwan-China relations, he/she naturally associates Taiwan with Ukraine and China with Russia. Taiwan and Crimea both hold significant strategic and economic value due to their geography; Ukraine used to be a part of the Soviet Union, and the PRC continues to state that Taiwan is an inseparable part of China; Russia is still waging a proxy war against Ukraine and China has professed its willingness to wage war against Taiwan were the latter to continue to shun China to the side and refuse reunification. Hence, many have understandably grouped these different groups together due to the resemblance they share with one another. These are fundamentally different occurrences, but by analogizing one to the other, one can quickly gain a better understanding of the situation.

Secondly, history is a readily available resource that can quickly be accessed to comprehend an uncertain position. Johnson-Laird in *Mental Models* (1983) argues that humans “spontaneously make mental models of the premises and use working memory to handle these models in order to reach a conclusion.” In the case of historical analogies, without succumbing to spontaneity but approaching with logic, the working memory is equivalent to historical events pertinent to an ongoing occurrence, which in Johnson-Laird’s term would be the model. Coming up with foreign policy decisions on the spot without any form of guidance can lead to inefficient or even catastrophic outcomes, and history is the perfect tool to utilize to reduce the chances of erroneous choices. After all, history is the greatest teacher.

In summary, historical analogies are a crucial and important practice that can provide insight into a troubling situation. Analogical reasoning is a multifaceted approach that covers

multiple diagnostic functions (Khong 1992, 22) that provides more versatility and context to understanding the situation. Politicians and scholars' affinity to utilizing analogical reasoning when a state is faced with a novel threat or conundrum is a natural and logical reaction for it helps to narrow down options and conceptualize a phenomenon that can be difficult to comprehend and react to on its own.

2.2.2 The Cons of Historical Analogies

A brief but significant note to make is that many of the existing historical analogies commonly used are Eurocentric and due to this western-bias many analogies would not translate well into the Asia-Pacific context. Every state, region, and continent have cultural and political practices that are unique to itself. Kopper and Peragovics (2018) argue that using analogies with a western bias can lead to "misperceptions"(2018, 361) of the conflict. The use of analogies in international affairs can have more detrimental consequences. The complex and unfamiliar nature of the international system makes it inherently more difficult to properly analogize one occurrence to another that has completely distinct values, norms, and practices in addition to a political system that is likely to also be intrinsically different. This makes it difficult to assess the influence a particular variable or characteristic has on a particular policy (Khong 1992, 46). This is why later on in my thesis, I will dive into specifically Taiwanese discourse on Taiwan's predicament since the data collected from the social, academic, and political spheres of Taiwanese discourse will offer more relatable information on the Taiwan people's current situation that could help narrow down some of the policy options.

“Historical analogy is useful for rough orientation. But it is dangerous when taken too far; each situation is its own thing, thoroughly unique. Indeed, great statesmen are those who exploit unique opportunities, even as they are aware of vague parallels to the past” (Kaplan 2014).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, historical analogies on one hand can offer a more comprehensive understanding of a situation by relating it to a previous event, but on the other hand they have also proven to be at times misleading if not detrimental to decision-making.

Despite the common misconception that history often repeats itself, it in fact does not. Everything that happens now or could happen in the future will have its own uniqueness that fundamentally differs itself from previous events. Historical analogies excel in providing actors with rough guidance and orientation but should not be considered identical to a previous or current situation even though they may share many similarities.

The logical weaknesses of creative arguments are on full display when analogical reasoning is taken too far. Analogies are intensional generalizations that help shape the categories while inductions are extensional generalizations that help fill in the gaps in said categories (Robert 2005, 704). Simply put, an intensional generalization constructs a singular category based on the resemblance shared by different phenomena and the extensional generalization extends those characteristics to all occurrences that share a resemblance. Consequently, technically speaking, a correct use of analogies in the most literal and absolute sense would be, “because Coca Cola tastes like Pepsi Cola, Coca Cola is Pepsi Cola.” Even though they are extremely similar, they are not identical and have their very own tastes. An inefficient and detrimental use of induction would be, “because Coca Cola has this level of sodium, Pepsi Cola also has the same level of sodium,” while in fact Coca Cola has slightly more sodium than Pepsi Cola. Let’s use an example that fits the theme of this thesis better.

“Russia and China both have irredentist goals and are authoritarian regimes, so both states are the same” may fulfill the principle of an analogy in the most literal sense, but it is ultimately an inaccurate statement due to the significant differences between China and Russia. For an induction, a poor example would be, “Russia invaded Crimea and Ukraine with paramilitary forces and mercenaries, therefore China would do the same with Taiwan.” The principle of induction, in short is “what is valid for some, is valid for all” (Robert 2005, 709). China and Taiwan’s relations might share similarities with that of Russia and Ukraine, but going too far with the analogy can greatly affect all parties’ decision-making.

2.2.3 Commonly Used Historical Analogies

For this subchapter, I will analyze some of the more common historical analogies that have been used by scholars or decision-makers to varying degrees of success. The purpose of this is to demonstrate how historical analogies can be both effective and ineffective. These different analogies have all been invoked in the past or present to help understand a situation better and have offered different policy suggestions. Some have backfired; some haven’t.

2.2.3.1 The Munich Analogy

Known as the “uber-analogy” in foreign policy, the Munich analogy references Great Britain and France’s decision to appease Hitler by allowing Nazi Germany to annex the Sudetenland in western Czechoslovakia. Thinking that the Munich Pact would bring forth “peace of our time,” British Prime Minister Chamberlain and French Premier Édouard Daladier essentially green-lit Germany’s expansionist practices that enlarged its sphere of influence.

The Munich analogy is now associated with weak foreign policy choices and is synonymous with appeasement. From the Cuban Missile Crisis to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s use of chemical weapons, the Munich analogy has been used countless of times

(Shachtman 2013), such as US President Harry Truman's military intervention in North Korea after he analogized the North Koreans' aggression to that of Hitler in the 1930s (Khong 1992, 4). Since World War II, many countries, especially the US, have believed that any response which doesn't match the aggressor's move is weak and encourages the aggressor state to continue its hostility. This reluctance to hold negotiations and insistence on reciprocation have led to numerous wars such as the Vietnam War and the Gulf War. Kopper and Peragovics (2018) brought up their concerns of the Munich analogy in regards to China's aggression in the South China Sea. Suggesting that China is analogous to Nazi Germany adds a level of extreme gravity to the situation that most likely rules out other states from engaging in negotiations due to their unwillingness to engage in appeasements (2018, 361).

2.2.3.2 The Hdaybiyyah Peace Analogy

The Hdaybiyyah peace analogy refers to the Prophet Muhammad's successful conquest of Mecca that was initially under Qayash control 2 years after the signing of the Hdaybiyyah Peace Treaty which was supposed to last for 10 years. This treaty celebrates the Prophet's great foresight and signals a major Muslim win.

The Hdaybiyyah Peace analogy was used by Iranian decision-makers on the nuclear deals with western powers. Yahya Kamali (2019) argues that the most important components of this analogy were the "reaction of the opponents" and "consequences" (2019, 216). The reaction of the opponents refers to the Muslims in Muhammad's cohort that oppose the signing of the Hdaybiyyah treaty due to their beliefs that it is an appeasement to the disbelievers. The consequences were the eventual conquest of Mecca by the Prophet Muhammad after he had gathered an army during peace times. Kamali analogizes the opposition in Muhammad's camp to those in Iran who opposed the signing of the nuclear deal; and compares the Hdaybiyyah treaty—which allowed Muhammad to amass an army to

conquer Mecca—to the signing of the nuclear deal that dissolved the PMD(possible military dimensions) and 12 UN Security Council resolutions against Iran(2019, 217).

The Hodaybiyyah peace analogy was a successful and effective analogy properly implemented by the Iranian decision-makers due to the great resemblance the two circumstances shared with each other. By using an analogy that is both well-known and pertinent to its constituents and decision-makers, Iran successfully transformed a potentially damaging treaty into an occurrence that is associated with one of the most important figures in Islam.

2.2.3.3 The Cold War Analogy

The Cold War analogy is a popular one, practiced by scholars from various disciplines, of conceptualizing the current rivalry between the US and China. The similarities are abundant and it isn't far-fetched to naturally group the previous competitors that strived for global hegemon status in a bipolar world with two of the strongest contemporary powers together. The Soviet Union and China are both communist regimes with heavy authoritarian characteristics that consider liberal values to be a major threat to their socio-political system; the US hopes to contain China the same way it did with the USSR; China has the world's largest active military just as the Soviets did up until their collapse, etc. Tanner Greer (2021) acknowledges the logic behind the Cold War analogy but ultimately argues that China's "inherently" non-militaristic vision (excluding the Taiwan question) of a less liberal world order is too great of a deviation for the Cold War analogy to be effective and valid. In Xi Jin Ping's book *The Governance of China: Volume II*, he states that the world is moving into a multipolarity and that "peace and development are the underlying trends of our time"(Xi 2014). This dismisses the notion that the US and China are engaged in an arms race as the US did with the USSR, which was a crucial characteristic of the Cold War. Another inaccurate

facet of this analogy is the Sino-American economic development. If China and the US would want to reach a level of competition that rivals that between the US and the USSR, then there should also be a decline in the “immense bilateral economic relationship” (Blank 2013) that has contributed greatly to the regional and global economy.

Before moving onto contemporary Taiwanese discourse and its related analogies, I would like to present one of Tanner Greer’s quotes that will bridge these analogies with the rest of the thesis:

“Taiwan’s ambiguous position muddies all analogy. Taiwanese democracy propels the communists towards military solutions. Chinese enmity towards the American led-order, combined with America’s historical commitment to Taiwan’s defense, propels Washington to respond. Taiwan is the link between the geopolitical rivalry of today and the military brinkmanship of tomorrow. **Historical analogies that do not put the Taiwan question at the center of their analysis will cloud more than they clarify**” (Tanner Greer 2021).

Chapter 3: Taiwanese Discourse on its own Predicament

This chapter is divided into three subchapters. The first subchapter will present the voices, opinions, and statements of the Taiwanese people on how they view their country's growing partnership with the US and increasingly intense relationship with China. The next subchapter will delve into the Afghanistan analogy that scholars have used to analogize Taiwan to Afghanistan. The last subchapter will critically analyze the frequently used Ukraine analogy that compares China to Russia and Taiwan to Ukraine.

3.1 Collected Data

This subchapter will categorize an assortment of Taiwanese discourse on the Taiwan situation into three groups: the social, political, and academic. The purpose of gathering this data is to show how those directly affected by the tense cross-strait relations view their current dilemma instead of focusing on the discourse developed by those on the other side of the world that aren't directly affected.

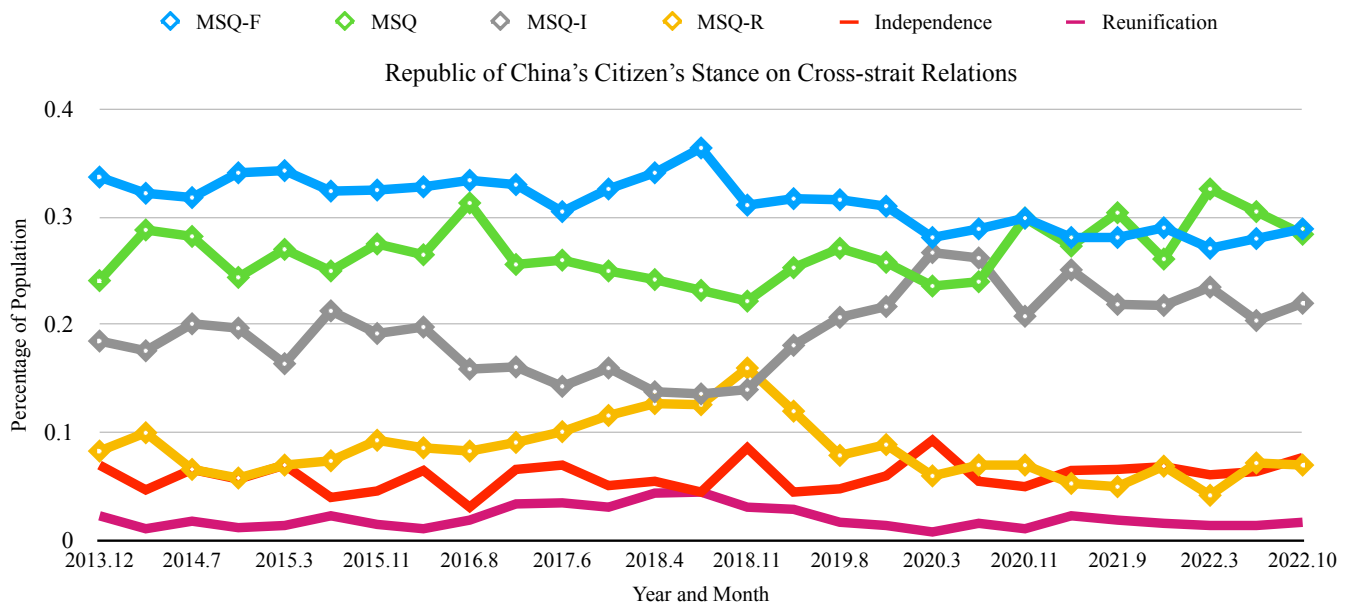
3.1.1 The Social Sphere

The ordinary Taiwan citizen's opinion and stance on his/her country's relationship with China and outlook on the strained relations are often overlooked. For the social aspect of Taiwanese discourse, we will be looking at surveys, media outlets that involve the interviewing of Taiwanese citizens, online social media discussions, etc. Some of the data collected can show how the Taiwanese people have analogized their own situation to other conflicts, such as Crimea and Ukraine. The majority of these excerpts are written and shared in mandarin, so I will be translating them into English to the best of my ability.

3.1.1.1 Civilian Stance on Cross-Strait Relations

The Republic of China's Mainland Affairs Council collects data every 3-6 months on its constituents' stance on their relationship with China. The survey is conducted through

phone calls and the targets are Taiwanese adults over the age of 20. The average samples collected each time is 1096 people. I managed to gather data from the Council's official website¹ and produced a graph that depicts the survey results.



The Y-axis is the percentage of the population; the X-axis is the date in Year-Month format.

-MSQ-F: Desire to maintain the status quo and make decisions on the country's future later on [MaintainStatusQuo-Future]

-MSQ: Desire to always maintain the status quo [MaintainStatusQuo]

-MSQ-I: Desire to currently maintain the status quo and eventually gain independence [MaintainStatusQuo-Independence]

-MSQ-R: Desire to maintain the status quo currently and eventually achieve reunification with China [MaintainStatusQuo-Reunification]

¹ Republic of China's Mainland Affairs Council. October 27, 2023. 民众对当前两岸关系之看法」民意调查 (2022-10-19~2022-10-23).

-Independence: Desire to gain independence as soon as possible

-Reunification: Desire to achieve reunification with China as soon as possible

From the graph we can clearly see a larger portion of the population wishing to maintain the status quo in the meantime. Those who hope for immediate independence are less than 10% of the population in October 2022. The people that strive for immediate reunification with China don't even make up for 2% of the whole population in October 2022.

The interesting aspect of this table is that each fluctuation in citizens' stance directly correlates with some major events that had an effect on the opinions of the Taiwanese people. Some major events that happened on the global scene that could've affected the Taiwanese's stance on their relationship with China during the time period when these surveys were conducted are the Crimea Crisis in February to March 2014, the US withdrawing from Afghanistan in February 2020 (official departure deadline was by May 2021), and the Russian invasion of Ukraine that started in February 2022. Some other important milestones that had an impact on the Taiwanese were the election and reelection of their president Tsai Ing-wen in January 2016 and January 2020, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's lifting of all restrictions on US-Taiwan official exchanges in January 2021, and the reintroduction of the Taiwan Invasion Prevention Act in February 2021.

Some notable results of the survey conducted in March 2014 show a drop in desire for immediate independence, an increase in MSQ-R, and a more substantial growth in MSQ. Russia's annexation of Crimea understandably raised concerns for the Taiwanese people who would've naturally feared for their own country's safety. The fear of believing that China could potentially invade Taiwan or even other smaller islands, as Russia did with Crimea, pushed the people to refrain from provoking the Chinese government with talks of

independence. When faced with uncertainty, the natural response by the people were to maintain the status quo out of national security and safety reasons.

The survey conducted in March 2016 shows how Tsai Ing-wen and the Democratic Progressive Party won their first presidential race. An increase in desire for immediate independence, MSQ-F, and MSQ-I accurately reflect the majority of the population's wishes. In the 2016 election, Tsai Ing-wen handily won with 56.12% of the votes(Wang 2022). The March 2020 survey also exhibit similar results to that of March 2016. The people's desire for immediate independence reached an all-time high of 9.3% in addition to a record-breaking MSQ-I of 26.7%.

Other important fluctuations on the chart are from the August 2016 survey, November 2020 survey, March 2021 survey, and the March 2022 survey. From March to August 2016, I wasn't able to find any events that directly affected Taiwan that could explain the great decline in desire for independence and MSQ-I and a significant incline in MSQ, MSQ-R and desire for reunification. I believe that Turkish President Erdogan's bloody purge that resulted in at least 240 deaths after a failed coup initiated by the Turkish Armed Forces struck fear into the hearts of the Taiwanese people as his brutal response to the coup reminded Taiwan and its constituents what authoritarian leaders are capable of doing when challenged. November 2020 also saw a fairly major decrease in desire for independence and MSQ-I while there was a fairly large increase in MSQ. One plausible explanation for this would be the US's withdrawal of troops and personnel from Afghanistan that ended on August 30th, 2020. As we will discuss later in chapter 3.2, many feared that the US could one day abandon Taiwan and leave the island to fend for itself as it did in Afghanistan. The increase in independence and MSQ-I in the March 2021 survey can be explained by the continuously growing cultivation of

friendship between the US and Taiwan via the lifting of all restrictions of official US-Taiwan exchanges and the reintroduction of the Taiwan Invasion Prevention Act.

Last but definitely not least, the March 2022 survey saw a slight increase in MSQ-I and MSQ reached the highest it had ever been. In February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine and started the largest proxy war that Europe has seen since WWII. The Taiwanese and even many other international actors and scholars couldn't help but analogize Taiwan to Ukraine due to the resemblance they share. In chapter 3.3, I will analyze the Ukraine-Taiwan analogy in detail.

3.1.1.2 Civilian Stance on Ukraine

Same as their government, the Taiwanese people have maintained a united front in support of the Ukrainian struggle. In addition to protesting against Russian encroachment of Ukraine and providing financial aid, Taiwanese people have also offered support by volunteering as fighters or reporters in Ukraine.

3.1.2 The Political Sphere

The discourse in Taiwan from a political standpoint is fairly straightforward. The Democratic Progressive Party has continued to grow closer with the US and western liberal allies while shunning China. From Tsai's speech after her first electoral victory where she promised to reduce "dependence" (Phillips 2016) on Beijing to demanding China to "face reality" (Kuo 2020) of Taiwan's independence, Taiwan has stood its ground and made its point clear to China that the island nation will continue to distance itself from the CCP's plan of reunification. Tsai's four commitments have also officially established Taiwan's position. The four commitments are as follows: "The commitment to a free and democratic constitutional system; the commitment that the ROC (Taiwan) and the PRC should not be subordinate to each other; the commitment to resist annexation or encroachment upon our

sovereignty; and the commitment that the future of the ROC (Taiwan) must be decided in accordance with the will of the Taiwanese people”².

In regards to the Russo-Ukrainian War, the Taiwan government has strongly condemned the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty. Although the DPP has formally dismissed the Ukraine-Taiwan analogies as it considers both states to be “fundamentally different” (Democratic Progressive Party 2022) in terms of geostrategy, geography, and economy, officials of the Taiwanese government have continued to associate the Russo-Ukrainian War with Taiwan’s predicament. At the Bratislava GLOBSEC event, Taiwan’s deputy foreign minister Roy Chun Lee held an interview with Reid Standish of RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty. In this interview, Lee warns the West that China is keeping an extremely close eye on the war in Ukraine as the CCP hopes to use it as a “test case” for its own eventual invasion of Taiwan (Standish 2023). Lee tells Standish that Taiwan can benefit from the conflict in Ukraine by studying the war and begin preparations with the US and other allies. Since the invasion, Taiwan has also donated a copious amount of humanitarian goods, offered training programs to Ukrainians, and allocated 56 million dollars in aid to help finance rebuilding and recovery efforts (Rudik 2023).

In response to China’s statements of Taiwan being an inseparable part of China and the “one-China” principle, Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) released an official rebuttal of those claims by China. In this statement (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of China 2023), MOFA claims that the PRC has never had jurisdiction over Taiwan in its history and its rhetorical and military “intimidation” will only further China’s image as an aggressive and expansionist state, contrary to how China labels itself as a nation that aims for “peace and development.” MOFA’s deputy spokesperson Ou Jiang-an also stated that Taiwan does not

² Government Portal of the Republic of China. https://www.taiwan.gov.tw/content_6.php

accept the “one country, two systems” policy and China’s encroachment has broken international law.

3.1.3 The Academic Sphere

The academic discourse in Taiwan since the Crimea Crisis is teeming with a myriad of different perspectives on US-Taiwan-China relations. There are those who are in favour of Taiwan’s current trajectory, and those who are skeptical. I will not be introducing the Afghanistan-Taiwan and Ukraine-Taiwan analogies in this subchapter for I will extensively analyze them in chapter 3.2 and 3.3.

3.1.3.1 US-Taiwan-China Relations

With heightened intensity in the Asia-Pacific region, it would be impossible to effectively analyze the relationship of any two states without involving the third.

Taiwanese scholar Su Qi describes the US-Taiwan-China relationship as “the great triangle” (Su 2010). In the article, Su argues that Taiwan has developed a well enough political system and economy for it to play a major role in regional stability. Despite Taiwan’s increasing visibility in International politics, Su believes that as the balance of power between China and Taiwan continue favour China, the great triangle involving three states has become bilateral, with US-China relations dictating cross strait relations and US-China relations. In essence, Su argues that Taiwan has devalued itself enough where both the US and China could use the island as a bargaining chip. Another great contribution by Su is the realization that by abandoning the 1992 Consensus and outright rejecting the “one country, two system” policy proposed by China, Taiwan is actively challenging the status quo in lieu of maintaining it, and Taiwan would not have been emboldened to behave as such without the assurance that the US will continue to keep China in check.

Ko Wen-je, mayor of Taipei, has frequently spoken up on Taiwan-US-China relations that have sparked academic debate (Chen 2019). When asked about US-Taiwan-China dynamics, Ko stated what he believes to be the red lines for all three states. The US' redline is Taiwan can't become a military base for China, China's redline is Taiwan can't gain *de jure* independence, and Taiwan's redline is China can't maintain *de facto* control over Taiwan. Similar to Su Qi, Ko also remains slightly skeptical of the US' commitment to protect Taiwan's interest. The point of academic contention, however, was his "robber" metaphor. When asked if Taiwan should continue to build closer relations with the US, he said, and I translate, "a robber goes to rob the bank, and after he gets caught and sent to jail, the judge asks him whether he saw the police right next to the bank. The robber responds with 'I only saw the money, not the police.' So yes, your suggestion [to get closer with the US] is correct, but don't forget about China"(Chen 2019). Lin Cho-shui, former member of the DPP's New Tide Faction and currently a newspaper editor and author, criticized Ko by saying that in the metaphor, China should be the robber as the CCP has continued to threaten Taiwanese sovereignty. He believes that without the US, Taiwan wouldn't have been able to achieve its current level of international recognition and support.

3.2 The Afghanistan Analogy

US-Taiwan relations have been positive and will continue to grow, at least in the near future. The Taiwan Relations Act signed in 1979 has till this day been the bridge that has allowed the US and Taiwan to engage in non-diplomatic exchanges, visits, and talks. But as mentioned in the previous chapter, there still are critics who question the US' commitment to containing China and supporting Taiwan in building their democracy and values. But there also exists many who trust the US and consider them Taiwan's most important ally. On one hand, there are well-known scholars such as Alexander Huang and Jaw Shaw-kong who have

analogized the US withdrawing from Afghanistan to them one day abandoning Taiwan. On the other hand, there also are scholars who have argued that Taiwan and Afghanistan aren't comparable.

US critics' main argument is that the US is unreliable and only cares about its own interests. The famous saying in Taiwanese discourse on the Afghanistan analogy goes as such: "Today Afghanistan, tomorrow Taiwan [今日阿富汗, 明日台湾]." Pro-China politician Jaw Shaw-kong (2021) criticized the US' withdrawal from Afghanistan online, which soon went viral on Taiwanese social media such as Facebook and Weibo. Jaw argues that the US, after spending 2.5 trillion dollars on the war and losing the lives of 2300 American soldiers, scurried away from Afghanistan after it had fulfilled its goals, leaving the people and the Afghani military to fight the Taliban themselves. He continues his criticism of the US' withdrawal by using even more historical analogies, such as analogizing the US leaving Afghanistan to the US leaving Vietnam. He proceeds to attack the DPP's decision to improve relations with the US and even suggests that the DPP has instilled the false belief of "were China to attack, the US would come to our aid" into the minds of the Taiwanese. He goes on to analogize the US' policy towards Afghanistan to its policy towards Taiwan. "They're both 'help train your military for you to protect your country,'" he says, "but the difference is that the US gave Afghanistan money, and we give the US money. Without US troops on the ground, how long do you think we would last [against a Chinese invasion]?" Jaw does not consider Taiwan to be as important as Afghanistan. He concludes his argument by stating that if Taiwan doesn't want to become the second Afghanistan, the government has to make a choice of either maintaining peace with China or preparing to go to war with China.

Although not as extreme and cartoonishly inflammatory as Jaw Shaw-kong, Kuomintang member and Tanjiang University professor Alexander Huang also used the

Afghanistan analogy, albeit in a different way. In an interview with Taiwan's Awakening News Network (2021), Huang didn't analogize Taiwan to the US; instead, he focused on the US' cynicism in its foreign policy decision making and analogized the US' withdrawal from Afghanistan to its likelihood of leaving Taiwan in the dust once the US government either sees no use in Taiwan anymore or the cross-strait relations becomes too hot. He questioned the US' commitment to Taiwan, given "Taiwan as a small country... holds less strategic value than South Korea, Japan, or even the Philippines"(2021). Huang elaborated on this point by casting doubt on the US' true intentions. There are no defense pacts or official diplomatic relations between the US and Taiwan; consequently, there is nothing holding the US back from abandoning Taiwan once it has served its purpose, which could be many things, or just one—the containment of China.

Those who reject the Afghanistan analogy's implementation essentially argue that Taiwan's strategic and geopolitical value trump that of Afghanistan. Voice of America author Chong Chen Fang (2021) elaborated on the importance of Taiwan's geopolitical significance and why—even without the other aspects—that one factor fundamentally differs Taiwan from Afghanistan. For the US, withdrawing from Afghanistan doesn't impact their interests in the Middle East as much as it would were China to invade Taiwan. Unlike Afghanistan, Taiwan is engulfed by the US' biggest geopolitical rival, China, and the US' most important Indo-Pacific allies, Japan, South Korea, and Australia. Being able to contain China and preventing it from asserting itself as the regional hegemon is of paramount importance to US foreign policy. The US' withdrawal from Afghanistan is a strategic and logical choice to preserve precious resources and personnel to better prepare for a goal of much greater importance than maintaining peace in Afghanistan: the containment of China.

3.3 Ukraine and Crimea

The Ukraine or Crimea analogies are possibly two of the most commonly used example of analogical reasoning to better conceptualize the Taiwan question. Zhang Ping (2020) states that Xi had dedicated resources to studying the ins and outs of the Crimean crisis, hoping that Russia's swift victory would provide insight and possible suggestions on what steps to take or not to take. Abigail Young (2022) argues that despite the distinctions between Ukraine and Taiwan, it is still necessary to find the parallels between the two states and "not underestimate these geopolitical similarities." The similarities drawn from Taiwan and Ukraine even warranted an official response from the Chinese government in which it stated that "the Taiwan question and the Ukraine issue are different and not comparable at all" (Mission of the PRC to the EU, 2022). It's not difficult to grasp why people of various disciplines have compared Taiwan to Ukraine as there are similarities that need to be studied and could offer potential policy suggestions. But both states possess fundamental differences that greatly challenge the accuracy of this analogy and the lessons countries can learn from.

Taiwan and Ukraine do share a great resemblance with one another. First off, China and Ukraine both face the threat of aggressive authoritarian regimes with rulers that govern with an iron fist that aim to achieve their irredentist goals. Putin's Russia implements more expansionist policies than Xi's China, but both states have approached Ukraine and Taiwan respectively with the purpose of encroaching their sovereignty. Russia already annexed Crimea—which is still recognized as Ukrainian territory under international law—and is currently still engaging in its proxy war with Ukraine. China—still unprepared to conduct military operations in Taiwan—have adopted more coercive and aggressive strategies such as practicing multiple military drills where they have incurred into Taiwan's Air Defense Identification Zone and fired missiles into the strait. Geographically speaking, both states

border a global power even though there are significant differences that differ one from the other. Ukraine's growing relations with the West and talks of joining NATO are some of the major causes behind the intensification of relations with Russia; Taiwan has allied itself with the US and continue to distance itself from China while strengthening its liberal values and democracy. From a geopolitical point of view, both Taiwan and Ukraine also serve as key components of the West's strategy to contain China and Russia. Were China to invade Taiwan, the majority of the liberal world, especially Taiwan's allies in the Asia-Pacific region—Australia, Japan, South Korea, and of course the US—would show a united front and offer financial, diplomatic, and military equipment support as they have with Ukraine.

But the differences between Taiwan and Ukraine are far greater than the similarities. One of the Taiwan's biggest disadvantages is that, unlike Ukraine, Taiwan does not hold a seat in the UN due to the "one-china" policy. Taiwan's relation with the US also greatly differs than Ukraine's with the US. Since 1979, the US and Taiwan have engaged in non-diplomatic exchanges that have furthered both states' interests. The Taiwan Relations Act has facilitated the cultivation of Taiwan-US relations while also providing ground for the US' strategic ambiguity on cross-strait relations. Ukraine, on the other hand, has only recently begun to strengthen its ties with the US. Russia's invasion of Ukraine can end in many ways and offers space for compromises since Russia's major concerns involve Ukraine's potential NATO membership and pro-EU stance. Talks can happen and deals can be made. China, however, seeks to achieve its reunification goals at all costs, as Xi believes has stated that "resolving the Taiwan question and realizing China's complete reunification is, for the Party, a historic mission and an unshakable commitment" (Xi 2022, 50). China will not cease its intimidation tactics until the Taiwan question has been resolved. While Ukraine is a "largely dysfunctional and extremely volatile democracy" (Holland 2018, 4), Taiwan has seen stable democratic

progression since the 1990s and has a robust economy that would—were a Chinese invasion of Taiwan occur—damage the global economy more than the War in Ukraine has and cause severe supply chain issues. The Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) has around 55% of the global market for contract chip fabrication, far above OPEC’s 40% market share for oil, and produces most of the advanced processors (Miller 2022).

Russia’s annexation of Crimea also doesn’t offer sufficient tactics for China to emulate. After Russia’s swift and decisive victory in Crimea, it started a referendum that resulted in 97% of the population voting to join the Russian Federation (McPhedran & Arutunyan 2014). The validity of the referendum was heavily contested by states and the UN General Assembly. With 100 votes in favour to 11 against and 58 abstentions, the resolution titled “Territorial integrity of Ukraine” called on countries, institutions, and other agencies to not recognize any change of Crimea’s status (UN Press 2014). Despite the outrage and international pressure, Crimea continues to be under de facto Russian control. China wouldn’t even be able to afford referenda in regions such as Tibet, Hong Kong, or Taiwan. As shown above in chapter 3.1, the overwhelming majority of Taiwanese people prefer maintaining the status quo and do not wish for reunification. An attempt of a referendum in Taiwan would almost certainly end in catastrophic political failure as voting results favouring Taiwan’s current status or independence would make it significantly harder for China to gain any form of international support. A military invasion of Taiwan would also be much more costly and difficult for China than Crimea was for Russia. Taiwan is an island nation with great geographical advantages with a capable military that is backed by the US and allies. Even if the US doesn’t personally send troops, China would suffer heavy casualties. According to Richard Bush of the Brookings Institution, the People’s Liberation Army Navy and Air Force have “limited” (Bush 2016, 6) combat experience that could hinder their

military efficiency when facing a Taiwan with US equipment and intelligence services.

Comparatively speaking, the strategic significance Crimea holds for Russia outweighs the West's desire to defend it. Crimea ultimately isn't a core interest for western states (Huang 2014). Taiwan, with its impact on the global economy and established liberal and democratic system, possesses far more geopolitical, financial, and political advantages.

One can't analyze the Ukraine-Taiwan analogy without studying the similarities and differences of Russia and China. The Russian Federation is the most powerful former Soviet Union state that wishes to challenge the status quo, especially with Putin at the helm. Peter Zeihan considers Russia to be a naturally aggressive power and capitalizes on the chaotic system to make bold foreign policy decisions. Zeihan states that aggressive states such as Russia "will challenge their regional status quo. They will invade their neighbours... Win or lose, these countries will be loud" (Zeihan 2014, 161). Russia has frequently adopted expansionist policies and conducted multiple military operations. Ukraine's significance to Russia is unparalleled. Unlike other great powers such as China and the US, Russia has an inferior economic model and capital output on top of harsh lands and an inefficient agrarian industry. Russia's expansionist policies are more because of necessity than natural hostility. Ukraine occupies the most productive section of the Russian wheat belt, [used to] hold valuable strategic ports by the Black Sea and is home to Russia's only warm-water naval base in Sevastopol before the annexation, has the most ethnic Russians outside of Russia, can serve as a buffer since the Ukrainian border is only three hundred miles of forgiving terrain away from Moscow, transports half of Russian's petroleum and natural gas exports, etc (Zeihan 2014, 184). Russia's invasion of Ukraine is as much economic and political as it is irredentist, if not even more.

China is an authoritarian communist regime with an open economy that has seen major economic boom since Deng Xiao Ping's economic reform in the 90s. China has become a major player in the global economy and has strategically invested in many developing countries in addition to introducing the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013. China's leader Xi Jin Ping, a chemistry major in university, is supported by his other fellow technocrats who are committed to fully "implementing the thought on Socialism with Chinese characteristics" (Xi 2022, 1). China has continuously emphasized its policy of "peaceful development" (Wang 2023). Director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs Wang Yi stated that "China has never initiated a war or occupied an inch of foreign land" (2023). While technically true, China is far from a nation of peace. Apart from implementing neocolonial investments (some might call it a win-win development) in other regions such as Kenya and Ethiopia, China tightened political oppression in Hong Kong and threatened regional peace with its frequent military drills and political coercion against Taiwan after multiple US officials visited Taiwan and held talks. Following current Taiwanese sociopolitical trajectories, the chances of a peaceful reunification seem slim; therefore, an invasion of the island seems inevitable if Xi wishes to fulfill his promise of achieving the great rejuvenation of China by 2049. Xi seems to be a man of his word.

All in all, the Taiwan-Ukraine analogy has its merits and certainly makes sense, but the differences amongst all involved parties are too great for China or Taiwan to follow any specific strategies or tactics that Ukraine or Russia have used.

Chapter 4: The Korean Analogy

The Afghanistan and Ukraine analogies, as mentioned above, have scholarly and political value due to the parties involved and the relationships one shares with another. The aim of introducing various analogies is not to look for specific and concrete suggestions but to look for clues, similarities, and tendencies that can help narrow down, or even at times expand upon, options for future foreign policy decisions. Afghanistan provides insight on the US' commitment or lack thereof to offer support for allies in need. Although the US withdrew from Afghanistan, which was a cause of concern for many in Taiwan, after carefully studying the details of the analogy, it can be seen that Taiwan's geopolitical and strategic importance is greater than that of Afghanistan's. The Ukraine-Taiwan analogy helps conceptualize the Russo-Ukrainian War and shows how the liberal order would react when the sovereignty of a potential ally is infringed upon by an authoritarian power. It highlights some of the challenges that both Taiwan and China could face and has already affected China's plans for invasion as the PRC can no longer expect a "swift and decisive" victory. Taiwan can also feel more confident. Yet at the same time, this analogy also presents the fundamental differences between Taiwan-Ukraine and Russia-China that can't be overlooked. So for this chapter, I will analyze another less frequently invoked analogy: the Korean analogy. This analogy in particular is to provide more context for the Taiwan question and offer some insight on how it became to be and the cultural, historical, and political similarities.

The reason I have chosen to use the Korean Peninsula analogy instead of the North-South Korea analogy is because I wish to explore the steps various states took that led to the eventual division and the relationship the Koreans shared with each other before the Korean War in 1953 just as how Taiwan and China were once unified until external forces intervened that ultimately divided the country into the People's Republic of China the Republic of China.

There are many differences between the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan-China but there are also a lot of similarities that could offer some insight on the Taiwan question.

The Korean Peninsula had been a unified region for centuries, known as the Goryeo and Joseon dynasties and the Korean empire before Korea became a formal colony of Japan in 1910, 5 years after a successful Japanese invasion in which they declared Korea to be its protectorate. Taiwan shares a similar history with China. After Ming loyalist and Chinese legendary sailor Zheng Cheng Gong established control in Taiwan in 1662, the Qing dynasty officially annexed Taiwan in 1683, Taiwan became a part of China for over 200 years until the Japanese took over the island after the first Sino-Japanese War in 1895. The Cairo Declaration in 1943 and Potsdam Declaration in 1945 officially gave Taiwan to the Republic of China and the status of the Korean Peninsula was being discussed (Young 2000, 25). Eventually, with the facilitation of the UN, the Republic of Korea (RoK) was officially established on August 15, 1948. North Korea swiftly followed suite and Kim Il-sung established the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on September 9, 1948. The Soviet Union were quick to recognize North Korea as the only legitimate government of the Peninsula.

North Korea, a communist regime formerly backed by the USSR, share similarities with China. Both the PRC and DPRK were supported and influenced by the Soviet Union who wished to establish a sphere of communist influence in the Asia-Pacific region and encourage the proliferation in the Asia-Pacific region to deter the US' growing impact on the region. After years of ideological clashes and rising tensions, on June 25 1950, North Korea, who possessed superior military capabilities over the South Koreans, invaded South Korea. As North Korea sent approximately 40,000 troops to aid the CCP in its civil war against the KMT (Young 2000, 27), China in return also sent troops to fight in the Korean War. South

Korea, on top of its own military, was backed by a sixteen-member coalition of the United Nations under the command of U.S. General Douglas MacArthur (2000, 27). The bloody war ended on July 27, 1953 when a truce was signed by the involving parties. Till this day, however, North and South Korea relations have stayed tense and at times hostile, and despite both states' supposed plan for reunification, it doesn't seem likely in the near future.

In the present day, the possibility of a war between Taiwan and China is brewing, and the Korean Peninsula situation can provide a better understanding of the context and predicament Taiwan is faced with. China and Taiwan share a similar pre-division history where they were unified and experienced the same governing system for centuries. Both China and North Korea, states with the stronger military, are the more aggressive and hostile states that hope to challenge the status quo. Taiwan and South Korea are core regional states for the US and its other western allies. Were China to invade Taiwan, there is a possibility of US sending troops albeit not a real probability.

Looking at Khong's AE model, we can broadly, albeit fairly superficially, try and fill in some of the gaps. The six factors Khong (1992, 97) introduces are the definition of the challenge, assessment of political stakes involved, implicit policy prescriptions, predictions of chance of success, assessment of morality, and warning of dangers. Defining the challenge via the Korean analogy is a straightforward one. The challenge for Taiwan is fending off Chinese aggression successfully, just as what the South Koreans hoped for in the 1950s due to their desire to maintain the nation's sovereignty and "anti-communist sentiments" (Ahn 1980, 1099). The political stakes involved also share great resemblance. In the Korean case, the stakes were the proliferation of communism and expansion of North Korea that directly increases the USSR's influence in East Asia. For Taiwan and the US, the stakes are the containment of the PRC with the help of the US, and failing to do so would result in a vast

increase in regional and global influence for China due to Taiwan's geopolitical significance and strategic value. The implicit policy prescription using the Korean analogy is a more dangerous one. The Korean War was a messy and bloody one. By analogizing the Korean Peninsula to Taiwan-China relations, then we would also be comparing the Korean War to the current Taiwan predicament, which would suggest that a war between Taiwan and China seems inevitable. With the chances of a peaceful reunification declining, war might be the only option for China unless Taiwan can figure out other policies to alleviate Chinese aggression. As mentioned earlier, the Center for Strategic and International Studies simulated a war-game (F. Cancian, Cancian & Heginbotham 2023, 83) where the results were China is "unlikely to succeed" in an invasion of Taiwan if the following four conditions are met: Taiwan fights vigorously; the US must join the conflict and fully implement its military to full capacity; US bases in Japan must be capitalized on for access to aircraft carriers, etc; and lastly, the US must possess and deploy enough air-launched, long-range ASCMs. This shows that the chances of success for Taiwan to maintain its sovereignty are mostly high, given the conditions are met. If not, Taiwan would most likely not survive the war. The dangers that would come with this war are manifold. The losses first of would be heavy, with the US losing dozens of ships and other equipment which would affect the US' ability to operate on the global scene more effectively (2023, 83); Taiwan would be left with a devastated economy and battered infrastructure; and China would lose a large chunk of its navy in addition to thousands of soldiers being captured as prisoners of war. Another potential danger if China fails to successfully occupy the island would be China's nuclear weapons and ICBMs. Although China is committed to the NFU (No First Use) policy (Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation 2023), China might be reconsidering its position (Chan & Huang 2019). John Culver, a retired CIA analyst who served in East Asia as a National Intelligence Officer

from 2015-2018, questions China's commitment to the NFU policy and believes China could be encouraged to threaten the US and Taiwan with nukes "in the event of a conflict over Taiwan" (CSIS 2022, 6) to constrain US conventional intervention.

The brief analysis above shows that were Taiwan to adopt the Korean analogy and prepare for war, given military commitment and support from the US, the results would be bloody but most likely end with Taiwanese sovereignty. The ramifications of that conflict, however, are up in the air. It's up to the Taiwanese government to decide whether this analogy and its subsequent policy suggestions—war—would be the best case scenario. The US must also think carefully about whether its position in the Asia-Pacific region is that important where it must go to war with China to protect Taiwan's sovereignty and consequently its sphere of influence in the region.

Conclusion

This thesis presented various historical analogies that have been used to help scholars and politicians better understand the intense cross-strait relations, the Taiwan question, and the US' influence on said relations and regional security. By using analogical reasoning, states can be informed of potential policy suggestions that have been effective in the past. The Hudabiyyah analogy provided Iran with an effective narrative that helped ease growing opposition within the country to the nuclear deals. The opposite also could happen, as we have seen with the Munich analogy in regards to the Vietnam War. With the ongoing Taiwan predicament, it is difficult to predict exactly what could happen, and with the Russo-Ukrainian War still occurring, Taiwan should closely study the ins and outs of the conflict to gain a better understanding of the war. However, the fundamental differences between Taiwan and Ukraine, China and Russia, and US commitment to Taiwan and Ukraine will unavoidably affect the outcome and results of that study. Taiwan, instead of focusing on one analogy, should look for more analogies that could provide insight on what steps to take next. The Korean analogy presumes that war is inevitable, and Taiwan would have to study how South Korea responded to the crisis and worked with the US to fend off communist aggression. The Korean War ended with South Korea's sovereignty intact, but there are no guarantees for that to be the same for Taiwan.

Taiwan needs to refrain from indulging too much into one particular analogy but instead try to gather information and suggestions from various events and adopt "corrective inferences" (Robert 2005, 713). When analogies and inferences are made, given that history doesn't repeat identical events, situations that are inconsistent with the predictions or suggestions one makes are highly likely. As Khong correctly praises the power of historical analogies for their versatility and ability to conceptualize situations and offer potential policy

choices, he also reminds the users of historical analogies that once analogies become too engrained in the official and public mindset, “analogies step beyond their role as heuristic devices for discovering facts and explanations and assume the roles of explanations and facts themselves” (Khong 1992, 262).

The prudent advice I offer Taiwan is to be cautious and learn from other states’ mistakes. The Taiwan strait, despite Chinese encroachment, is still maintaining the status quo. Taiwan has time to come up with policies that could hopefully avoid conflict at the expense of its sovereignty to some extent; or Taiwan could prepare for a military conflict with China that would very likely escalate into a larger conflict (Mishra 2022). Taiwan’s future will directly affect the balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region; therefore, Taiwan should closely study history and find the best course of action.

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