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Postgraduate student

Studies & Research

- ❖ BA International and European Studies
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- ❖ MSc Asian Politics [candidate]
(School of Oriental and African Studies)
- ❖ Researcher at the Centre of Euro-Atlantic
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(International Relations Institute)

Interests

- ❖ International Relations and Politics
- ❖ The region of Northeast Asia (Korea, Japan) and specifically Taiwan
- Use of political science/political economy concepts and frameworks to analyze and compare the regional countries

What about now?

❖ Research for my dissertation:

-> USA-Taiwan alliance

-> Elite interviews

Why that region?

❖ Test cases for political science and international relations theories and frameworks.

- Because of their continuous transformation they provide excellent case studies for understanding the relationship between economic growth, social change, and political power
- Important strategic location->a nuclear armed North Korea, US-Japan alliance, Cross-Strait relations and USA-Taiwan special alliance

Why Taiwan?

- Until late 80s the study of Taiwanese politics -> marginal topic in the field of East Asian studies and almost totally ignored by Western political science
- Now one of the most researched topics in the fields of East Asian politics (political democratization, identity politics and contested international status)
- Cross-Strait relations a focal point in East Asian international relations and central to regional and global security (increasing military imbalance and paradoxical growth in economic ties, the only armed conflict which may result in the U.S. direct confrontation with China)

The problem

- ❖ TW has become a contested state since it lost its UN seat in 1971
- ❖ It has limited de jure recognition and substantial de facto recognition
- ❖ Chinese efforts to curtail TW's possibilities to become a normal member of the international community
- ❖ This affects its external relations:
 - Limited formal diplomatic allies (23)
 - Marginal participation in IOs due to position of its veto state, China
 - Isolation not as severe as other contested states, thanks to its extensive functional ties with key states based on its eco clout

Efforts to escape

- ❖ An “innovative” web of semi-official or pseudo-diplomatic representation to replace conventional diplomatic ties (As of 2010, TW ran 89 representative offices/trade missions in 57 states which do not recognize TW [MOFA data, 2010])
- ❖ Membership in 32 IGOs and 22 quasi memberships
- ❖ Establishment of substantial business and commercial offices in more than 120 other countries
- ❖ 2185 NGOs in Taiwan have kept up regular participation in international NGOs’ events and other international conferences and activities in social, economic, cultural areas

Ma Ying-jeou “Flexible Diplomacy”

- ❖ 2008: declaration of a “diplomatic truce” with PRC, meaning an end to a chequebook contest for recognition
- ❖ 2009: TW’s annual bid to rejoin UN dropped for the first time in 17 years and policy goal shifted to participate in UN specialized agencies

- ❖ A wide-ranging strategy of increasing its “soft power” to stand on the international level:
 - development of globally famous brands
 - boosting its presence not only in the high-tech sector but also in arts, food and fashion
 - promotion of tourism
 - Taiwan Academies: promotion of Taiwanese culture and the learning of the language abroad

❖ Hope to achieve some breakthrough in the other dimensions of international participation:

-informal relations with other states

-some form of participation in UN-affiliated agencies

-participation in more inter-governmental organizations

-expansion and consolidation of its substantial participation in non-governmental organizations

Black Sea-Taiwan

- ❖ At an influential crossroad between East and West->useful region for Taiwan to expand its soft power
- ❖ Affiliation between the ICBSS and Taiwan Academy

Thank you for your attention!