

# CHAPTER 5

## Background of Questionnaire

This chapter will introduce the background of the questionnaire in the survey that was conducted on foreigners in Taipei. The aim of the questionnaire was to find whether any defining characteristics regarding foreigners can be discerned that are correlated with their support of one of six postures regarding the sovereignty of Taiwan. Respondents were asked many questions, their birthplace, age, marital status, income and education as well as various socioeconomic indicators.

Hoping to solicit more clues on additional clues about socialization we also asked questions about their travel experiences, including the frequency of times they've visited mainland China and the number of countries they've traveled, and how long they plan to stay in Taiwan. They were also asked their level of Chinese proficiency and either business or personal connections to China, to not only explore additional facets of socialization but also to see how linguistic or people contacts facilitate of one political inclination or other. The most important question — the last question — lists the following answer choices, related to the cross-strait question: (1) unification with China now; (2) independence from China now; (3) status quo now, unification with China later; (4) status quo now, independence with China later; (5) status quo now, decide later; and (6) status quo forever. In my study, we have cross-tabbed the last question regarding cross-strait relations with the aforementioned variables to decipher the relative correlations.

## 5.1 Discussion of Questionnaire

In Question 1, respondents are asked their origin. The purpose here is to assess whether people of different countries might inherit any political inclinations from their homelands. Thus we will be contrasting the political inclinations of people from different countries, in having different nationalisms which are but an aspect of their physical boundaries. Firstly, it has been propounded that within the of national territorial boundaries of the nation that their unique cultures, languages, myths, and ethnicities help to promote a sense of belonging based on the shared traditions. For instance, for Anthony D. Smith, the American experience reveals that these uniqueness have provided for the basis of a 'plural concept of a nation'. Smith finds the "historic dominance of its white Puritan Anglo Saxon culture and language, coupled with its messianic myths of origin and foundation have provided a firm ethnic base for its subsequent experiment in cultural pluralism." He shows that through the legal codes, English language and culture, "the United States has succeeded in welding together successive waves and generations of immigrants since the end of the nineteenth century."<sup>103</sup>

Indeed, for Susan J. Henders political institutions, are a significant factor in shaping one's notions that help shapes one's notion of being a distinct people of a distinct nation. Namely, "[t]he negotiation of laws establishing electoral systems; representative institutions; and the boundaries, rights, and duties of citizens, for instance, requires decisions about the boundaries, membership, and values of the polis and demos"<sup>104</sup> But Smith also points out that in addition to the civic model, the ethnic model also merits attention in role in the formation of nationhood. Namely, he notes "But it is through the either the ethnic model, where the nation is conceived of as a popular community of descent and vernacular culture seeking political autonomy in historical homeland, the nationalist drive is to mobilize the people and fuse the popular ethnic community with a territorial political community."<sup>105</sup>

Croucher has also pointed out that "By far, the most common distinction that has surfaced in the literature on nationalism is that between civic nations and ethnic nations. *Civic* is the term used to refer to national communities that are purportedly rooted in or

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<sup>103</sup> Smith, 107.

<sup>104</sup> Henders, 7.

<sup>105</sup> Smith, 111.

based upon a shared commitment to a set of political principles and institutions. *Ethnic* nations are those said to be based upon shared ancestry and cultural community. The United States, France, and Canada are frequently cited examples of the former, and Germany, Japan, and countries throughout Eastern Europe of the latter.”<sup>106</sup> Hence by showing that members of different countries either agree or differ on the cross-strait relationship may reveal real ideational difference that individuals from different countries might harbor on international politics.

In the context of one’s origins as a determining factor it might be helpful to disaggregate the data regionally, and then by levels of economic development, as well as their levels of political freedom. Here rather than trying to characterize countries, the goal is to compare the countries and assess whether countries with similar political or economic circumstances promote the emigration of citizens to Taiwan who harbor political inclinations in a certain way. Do countries like the US and Canada, who share a border that’s almost 9,000 km. long, and have similar languages spoken, practice similar customs, have achieved a high standard of economic development and constantly exchange in ideas with interstate trade and people-to-people exchange, harbor similar sentiments because of their geographic proximity or perhaps something else? Are members of the EU more aligned with one another, less developed, as well as modern technologies in communications and transportation, have facilitated Europe’s countries further into a cohesive entity. Does the amount of freedom accorded by the governments engender differences on the politics of their host country?

Aside from Question 1, Questions 2, 3, 4, and 24 dealing with age, gender, education levels respectively, are asking about the respondent’s intrinsic personal characteristics related to a respondent’s life experiences that have accrued during their lifetime. There are probably an uncountable number of reasons why people choose to come to Taiwan. Some might be seeking adventures and on their way in traveling the world; others might look at working in Taiwan a great opportunity, unlike the opportunities they have in their homeland. Taiwan tends to attract a younger population, many of whom are unskilled workers, teachers and other language consultants as well as students, most of whom are learning Chinese. The foreign population is also

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<sup>106</sup> Croucher, 87.

educationally segmented, with government requirements of an undergraduate degree to work in skilled professions like teaching. According to Adam Ferguson,

“the separation of professions, while it seems to promise improvement in skill, and is actually the cause why the productions of every art become more perfect as commerce advances; yet in its termination, and ultimate effects, serves, in some measure, to break the bonds of society, to substitute form in place of ingenuity, and to withdraw individuals from the common scene of occupation, on which the sentiments of the heart, and the mind, are most happily employed.”<sup>107</sup>

The author fears that a divided society would inherently contain deep inequalities in the distribution of offices and wealth. The struggle for wealth as a result inevitably creates class tensions; the lower classes trying to escape from onslaught of poverty and crime. He fears that such a society would be susceptible to becoming into a despotic government.<sup>108</sup> According to Bowen, “Ferguson is seeking to strike a balance between the need for a reasonably strong state and an equally well-organized vigorous civil society. For him this is the best possible defense against the danger of sliding into despotic government.”<sup>109</sup> Moreover, especially as it relates to skilled versus non-skilled workers are also significantly segmented by gender. For instance, according to Council of Labor Affairs statistics, out of the 336,864 workers here from Southeast Asia, 128,606 (38.2%) were males and 208,258 (61.8%) were female. “Over the last twenty-five years years the economies of the so-called advanced industrial countries have undergone massive restructuring and change, changes which not only tore the heart out of the traditional centers of labour-intensive and extractive industries in Western economies but irrevocably decimated the traditional labor movement. We have witnessed the continuing rise of women’s paid employment and a continuing decline in full-time male jobs leading many to talk of the ‘feminisation of the labor force.’”<sup>110</sup>

Yet for workers from Thailand, 78,466 (83.2%) male and 15,776 (16.7%) female out of 94,242. In contrast the corresponding figures for Indonesian workers were 7,953 (10.2%) male and 69,484 (89.7%) female out of a total of 77,437 total. The significant

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<sup>107</sup> Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society 1767* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), 128.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> Bowen, 160.

<sup>110</sup> A. Reskin, and I. Padavic, I. *Women and Men at Work* (Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press, 2002), 57.

predominance of females also holds true for Vietnamese with 13,406 (18.5%), 59,176 (81.5%) and 72,582, respectively. Also, among foreigners from western countries here, there is a predominance of males. Undoubtedly, the diaspora in Taiwan reveals patterns that seem to lack rationality. However, by highlighting and scrutinizing the variables of age, gender, education, and religion it is hoped that the extent of the interrelationship between government institutions and Taiwan's foreign labor market demand and political inclinations will be illuminated.

Questions 5-24 aim at highlighting different mechanisms involved with socializing foreigners into Taiwanese culture and the dual identities developed from their total experiences abroad. Firstly, the questions 6a and 6b aims to look at how social connections based on marriage may affect one's political inclinations. Since Taiwan seems to draw a younger crowd, it might be unsurprising to find few people married foreigners. Among those who are married, though, have chose Taiwanese spouses and thus for these foreigners, their opportunity to enmesh heartily in Taiwanese society might be a lot greater. The implications of these transnational pairings on the foreigners' political inclinations will be analyzed.

Question 7 and 8 are useful in assessing the socioeconomic status. To a degree, it helps to describe the amount of human capital they have amassed before coming to Taiwan, but perhaps more accurately, it helps describe their socioeconomic status that they experience in Taiwanese society. As will be described later, the occupations, incomes, thereby also influencing their lifestyles, is highly dependent on what country they're from. Thus it is contended that the main linkages between country of origin and these aspects of socioeconomic status are significantly tied to Taiwanese legal institutions and the international labor market.

Moreover, by asking 9, "From whom do you receive financial support?", an attempt is made to further define the scope of these linkages, whether from private entities, friends or family members, the Taiwanese government (like scholarships), from the government of their homeland, other sources or having no financial support received, provides insights about the extent that they are connected to Taiwan and/or abroad by way of their financial dependencies.

In questions 10, 11, and 15 I'm trying to get at foreigners' sense of mobility, its effects on financial linkages, the extent that they've developed a "cosmopolitan" outlook and how these factors relate to political inclinations.

For some foreigners, Taiwan may have been the only country they've traveled, and for others, Taiwan is but a mere destination to stop over for a few months on an extended journey. And throughout their journeys, like their stay in Taiwan, they continue socializing into whatever country they've been living. Which is why they are asked in question 10 respondents are asked "How many countries have you stayed in for one month or more" to reflect those the extent to which he or she had experiences that allowed them a meaningful glimpse into what it's like to actually live in another country. It is contended that the more countries one visited and stayed there for one month or more, promotes the development of a cosmopolitan outlook and thus a global understanding of issues.

But what exactly is 'cosmopolitanism'? The critiques on the theory do a fine job of defining what the concept is about, centering on how it might influence political action and one's sense of political efficacy, but in substantive terms, they fail to describe its contents. Namely, those who have had intensive experiences abroad are people who are likely to have developed global outlooks. If that's the case, then what is the content of these worldviews as it pertains to the cross-strait situation?

With questions 12, 13, 14, and 16 this study also analyzes the impact of foreigner's connections with China on their political inclinations regarding the cross-Strait situation. Certainly the allure of China is multifaceted in an economic and cultural sense but also because of its proximity to Taiwan and perhaps even to the cross-Strait situation itself. By asking about both the number of times they've visited China, and what was the total time they've stayed there, and whether or not they have family or business connections, the extent of their experiences and connectedness to the mainland may be examined. In similar spirit with the analysis on cosmopolitanism, this section will attempt to discern a unique characteristic regarding cross-Strait relations about those with significant connections to mainland and those who do not. By asking what country they plan to move to next, China's allure can further be examined to see if it is a top choice among the respondents.

In questions 17, 20, and 21, the foreigners the questions focus on language abilities and language instruction. Knowing what languages the foreigner speaks from best to worst we can give us a better indication of the scope of their socialization. Certainly the ability to communicate is an integral in the socialization process, whether that be from the gleaning of headlines in a newspaper, reading things up on the internet or just talking with friends. In Taiwan, and elsewhere with diasporic communities, language skills acts as a glue to hold these communities together. As will be illustrated, many foreigners here are often integrated into a social network that implicitly determines their ability to participate in opportunities on the basis of language abilities. This is but a mere aspect of political and economic systems of power that pervade in an individual's interaction with the state.

Language skills and language acquisition are often cited as important factors in the socialization process. Interviews: about 10 will be conducted. Interviewees will be selected on how their inclinations demonstrate key points evinced by the survey data.

## **5.2 Summary**

In this chapter we introduced the background of the questionnaire used in the survey that was conducted on foreigners in Taipei. we laid out my the independent variables that will be used in the study, which will be highlighted thematically in the proceeding chapters, and the motivations behind selecting the variables. Largely speaking, it might be useful to organize the variables into three broad categories, categories that we will use in the next chapters discussing the results of the study: political inclinations in terms of 'national origin, that of 'socioeconomic status', that of 'Taiwan, China and other Global Connections' and that of 'Social Relations in Taiwan'.