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ABSTRACT
Since scholars such as Samuel P. Huntington claimed that some cultures such as the Islam and the Confucianism are hostile to democracy, this work attempted to find out why Taiwan became a democracy despite this cultural obstacle. Therefore, this article’s objective was to understand why democratization can thrive in civilizations hostile to democracy. Aiming to accomplish such a task, this research used the explanatory case study as methodology. In this sense, it tried to identify causal relations between some external factors and the democratization in Taiwan from 1991 to 2001. By using Alexander Wendt’s constructivism, this work addressed Taiwan’s corporate identity and interests and investigated the changing in Taiwan’s type identity – from authoritarianism to democracy. In addition, it labeled the problems that Confucianism pose to democracy as structural problems. Similarly, the external factors considered in this study took into consideration China’s Hobbesian environment as well as the United States Lockean anarchy, both concerning Taiwan. To accomplish the goal, it tested the following hypothesis: The more Taiwan become democratic, the more it will benefit from the Lockean culture, and the less it will suffer from the Hobbesian anarchy.

Keywords: Democracy. Confucianism. Constructivism. External factors.


RESUMO
Uma vez que autores como Samuel P. Huntington afirmaram que algumas culturas como o islamismo e o confucionismo são hostis à democracia, este artigo busca analisar por que Taiwan se tornou uma democracia apesar desse obstáculo cultural. Portanto, o objetivo deste estudo foi entender por que a democratização ocorreu em civilizações ditas incompatíveis com a democracia. Para cumprir com esse objetivo, a pesquisa utiliza o estudo de caso explicativo como metodologia.

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Nesse sentido, buscou-se um nexo de causalidade entre fatores externos e a democratização em Taiwan de 1991 a 2001. Ao utilizar o construtivismo de Alexander Wendt como referencial teórico-conceitual, o artigo aborda a identidade e os interesses de Taiwan e investiga como sua identidade-tipo mudou de autoritarismo para democracia. Além disso, este trabalho classifica os problemas que o confucionismo coloca à democracia como problemas estruturais. Da mesma forma, os fatores externos considerados neste estudo foram aqueles relacionados ao ambiente hobbesiano da China e à anarquia lockeana dos Estados Unidos, ambos relacionados a Taiwan. Para cumprir seus objetivos, no artigo testou-se a seguinte hipótese: quanto mais Taiwan se democratizar, mais esse ator se beneficiará da cultura lockeana e menos sofrerá com a anarquia hobbesiana.


1 INTRODUCTION

Democracy has undoubtedly been a driving force in international politics. Accordingly, States’ legitimacy is closely related to the extent they fit into type
identity criteria. These criteria change over time due to historical processes and systemic cultural transformations. During the 1990s, the period under analysis in this work, democracy and capitalism turned into dominant forms of states’ type identities. This world liberal face promises not only peace, since democracies do not go to war with each other, but they also promote humans right, facilitate investment and trade, protect civil liberties, provide tools to fight corruption, boost social agendas, ease the creation of employment and income, foster transparency and so on. Given this context, a high quality in a state’s democracy can enhance its international image to other’s democratic states (WENDT, 1999).

The prestige of democratic regimes in front of many states of the international system is an external factor - a reflection of the so-called Lockean culture, that one mostly based on a prevailing scenario of rivalry amongst its units (WENDT, 1999). Another external factor is the encouragement of democratization by global powers. In this regard, global players such as the United States (U.S.) advocated for democratization in many states, especially in the 1990s. That’s because one of the vectors of US foreign policy is the premise that a most democratic world is, by definition, a safer world (HUNTINGTON, 1996).

This democratic movement, however, did not start in the 1990s. Throughout history it can be observed, as the following illustrations shows, a slow but progressive movement in this direction. From 1974 to 1990, for instance, Huntington (1991; 1996) and Rice (2017) point out that at least 30 countries made transitions to democracy, which doubled the number of democratic regimes in the world:

1 The type identity is a social category in which actors share characteristics. With regard to states, type identities correspond to “forms of states” such as capitalist states, fascist states, democratic states, monarchical states, and so on. States’ type identities are defined in terms of membership rules, and these rules vary both culturally and historically. The characteristics that underlie type identities are at base intrinsic to actors. In this sense, when an actor performs as a democratic state, this actor should not need external assistance in order to maintain it (WENDT, 1999).

2 According to Huntington (1996), democracy is the predominant political regime in the West. Western European countries and the United States, which, for Huntington, are the hard core of Western civilization, are the main contemporary propagators of democracy. Huntington argues that the collapse of the Soviet Union generated in Europe, and especially in the United States, the belief that Western understanding of democracy and human rights would spread across the globe. However, this diffusion would not only occur organically, that is, it should be induced by Western states. Indeed, James Baker, Secretary of State during the Bush administration, declared in April 1990 that “Beyond containment lies democracy”, thus arguing that the new US mission would be the promotion and consolidation of democracy. Clinton, in 1992, campaigned that promoting democracy would be his priority during his rule. Already in office, Clinton recommended a two-thirds increase for the National Endowment for democracy. In addition, his assistant for national security defined Clinton’s central theme of foreign policy as “enlargement of democracy”. As far as European states are concerned, foreign policy for the promotion of human rights and democracy was less apparent, with international economic institutions lending and giving to developing countries being camouflaged.
Figure 1 - Democracies in the World in 1900


Figure 2 - Democracies in the World in 2000

Source: RICE, 2017, p. 11.
According to Huntington (1991), experts on democratization point out several relevant variables that contribute to the process of democratization of a certain country such as, for example, economic development. Despite that, for him, religion tends to be the dominant variable in non-Western civilizations. In this sense, Taiwan in the late 1980s had already achieved economic standards needed to democratization but it was not a democracy yet due to its Confucian civilization. Nevertheless, by any measure, Taiwan was a democracy in 2001 (DIAMOND, 2001), what makes it an emblematic case study.

Thus, what happened to the argument of incompatibility of democracy and Confucianism? Since Confucianism presents structural problems to democratization, why did Taiwan become democratic? In search for answers, and based on a Constructivist approach, this work considers as its starting point the following relational hypothesis to be tested henceforth: The more Taiwan become democratic, the more it will benefit from the Lockean culture, and the less it will suffer from the Hobbesian anarchy.

Beyond this introduction and the final considerations, this article’s proposal is developed through three sections. The first section will discuss some features of Confucianism that pose structural problems to democratization. In this regard, after presenting Huntington’s definition of democracy and democratic values, this work attempts to verify his argument about the incompatibility between Confucianism and democracy. After that, it will present Taiwan’s corporate identity and interest in order to explain why it was interesting to Taiwan to become a democracy despite these structural problems.

The second section analyses the role of external factors in Taiwan’s move toward democratization. Therefore, it develops an inquiry on how Hobbesian and Lockean cultures have influenced Taiwan to change its type identity from an authoritarian regime to a relatively liberal democracy from 1991 to 2001.

The third section presents an empirical case, which is the Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1995-1996. This case shows the Hobbesian and the Lockean cultures in clash during Taiwan’s democratization. Subsequently, the topic follows with an analysis of how these cultures of anarchy changed Taiwan’s type identity. Finally, the final remarks of this article show its results, in which its hypothesis was partially confirmed.

2 UNDERSTANDING TAIWAN’S STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS AND IDENTITY: THE RELATION BETWEEN CONFUCIANISM AND DEMOCRACY

According to Wendt (1999), the ontology of social structures is idealist, which means that it is made primarily by ideas. In this regard,
this works initially assumes that the ideas that permeate the Confucian civilization present obstacles, problems to democratization - so that explains why this research uses the term “structural problems”. To some scholars, Confucianism is a hostile environment to democracy (HUNTINGTON, 1991; 1996). Actually, even scholars who state that democracy and Confucianism are two compatible ideas, like Shin (2012) or Fukuyama (1995), argue that they are not perfectly compatible. In this sense, accountability, societal participation, equality, education, and tolerance are all Confucianist beliefs that do not entirely meet the definition of democracy, nor democratic values, in the way that they are exercised in Confucian civilization.

But what this Confucianist civilization is all about? Huntington (1996) advocates that what he calls “civilization” is just a model or map for social science. In this sense, he argues that every model or map is an abstraction and will be more useful for some objectives than for others. For him, the major contemporary civilizations through which people can understand the world after the end of the Cold War are the Sinic or Confucianist, the Japanese, the Hindu, the Islamic, the Orthodox, the Western, the Latin American and, possibly, the African. In this regard, each one of these civilizations have a different core of values, which may clash with one another. A core value to the Western civilization are democracy and democratic values.

When it comes to do the definition of democracy, one of the most used is from Robert Dahl (2005). Nevertheless, this research will not follow Dahl’s tradition,

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3 Huntington (1996) points out six aspects of civilization aiming at defining it. The first one is to address civilization in the plural, not in the singular. The second aspect is that civilizations are cultural entities. In this matter, both civilization and culture refer to the overall way of life of a people, and a civilization is a culture writ large. The third aspect is that civilization is a “totality”, which means that none of their constituent units can be fully understood without reference to the encompassing civilization. The fourth aspect is that civilizations cease to exist, however, they are also very long-lived. The fifth feature of civilizations is that civilizations are cultural entities, not political ones. The last one concerns the identification of the major civilizations in history. According to him, the experts differ only in the number of the major civilizations and not in their identity.

4 According to Huntington (1996), people need a map capable of both portraying reality and simplifying reality in a way that best serves their purposes. Huntington, then, observes that several maps or paradigms of world politics were advanced at the end of the Cold War, and his map on the clash of civilizations is one of them.

5 Huntington, in his article published in 1993, labeled the Chinese civilization as Confucianist civilization. In his book, however, he changed it to Sinic civilization. This research uses the old term. That is due mainly to the research questions that it addresses. The selection, however, is not arbitrary. In this respect, Huntington (1996) observes that in the 1990s the Taiwanese government declared itself to be “the inheritor of Confucian thought”. Moreover, Jung (1993) argues that Confucianism defines the quintessence of Sinism.

6 Dahl (2005) states that equality between individuals is essential for democracy as it allows for an open confirmation of power and inclusive political participation. In this sense, with public contestation and inclusion as starting points, democracy still requires eight conditions to exist - the so-called minimal procedural. They are: 1) freedom to form and join organizations; 2) freedom of expression; 3) right to vote; 4) eligibility for public office; 5) the right of political leaders to compete for support and votes; 6) alternative sources of information; 7) free and fair elections; and finally, 8) institutions for government policy making depend on votes and other expressions of preference.
instead, it is going to use Huntington’s approach.\textsuperscript{7} The main reason for that is due to Huntington’s affirmation (1991; 1996) that Confucian democracy is a contradiction in terms, since the adjective “Confucian” cannot qualify the noun democracy. A similar position lies in the research question of this work and, then, caution with methodology advises such a decision\textsuperscript{8}. Huntington (1991), when defining democracy, holds that modern democracy has two criteria. First, the extension of the right to vote to at least 50% of male population. Second, a government chose by periodical elections. Huntington uses this definition to measure what he calls the democratic waves. The first country to fit this definition was the United States in 1826, which initiated the first wave. Taiwan is within the third democratic wave (ZHU et al, 2001)\textsuperscript{9}.

However, given its simplicity, this definition alone is not enough for this work’s purpose. Huntington’s understanding of democratic values is, then, auxiliary to this definition. According to Huntington (1991), Confucianism emphasizes the group over the individual, authority over liberty, and responsibilities over rights and these values obstruct the path to democracy. Individuality, liberty, and rule of law are just a few examples of democratic values that matter for democratization and its maintenance. As a matter of fact, Huntington (1996, p. 238) argues that Confucian heritage, “with its emphasis on authority, order, hierarchy, and the supremacy of the collectivity over the individual, creates obstacles to democratization.”. In short, Huntington sees Confucianism as either undemocratic or antidemocratic, in a way that it clashes with democratic values.

Huntington is not the only scholar that do not see a compatibility between democracy and Confucianism. Other scholars, such as Dahl (1989), also think that Confucianism do not fit into the concept of democracy. According to him, Confucianism is a system of guardianship, where only the best-qualified guardians are able to govern. This guardianship model has influenced the economic performance of

\textsuperscript{7} To maintain scientific replicability criteria, since this research choose to test a Huntington’s premise, we will consider as our start point the very same conceptual basis adopted by the author to produce such a premise.

\textsuperscript{8} In fact, even Huntington (1984) considers that Dahl’s definition is not very useful for comparative empirical analysis. For him, Dahl’s definition of democracy implies that democratic political system is completely or almost completely responsible to all its citizens. Thus, as he points out, although such definition may be relevant to normative political theory, it has little applicability in comparative studies.

\textsuperscript{9} According to this typology, the first democratic wave occurred between 1828 and 1926, in the wake of ideas stemming from the French and American revolutions. The second wave comes from the end of World War II until the outbreak of Latin American dictatorial regimes in the 1960s. The third wave began in the 1970s, with the redemocratization of Greece (1974) and Spain (1976), expanding into in the years following Latin America.
countries of the Confucian civilization such as China, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan (YU, 2000). In addition, like Huntington (1996) argues, China is the core state of the Confucian civilization and thus it has the power to attract those countries that are culturally alike. In this context, not only democratization is difficult to achieve, but also, once democratized, a state may not resist Chinese influence. This argument is related to Chinese cultural exceptionalism\textsuperscript{10} advocated by Kissinger (2011).

Chinese cultural exceptionalism could play against democracy in Taiwan. In this way, the performance of China’s system is another feature of the supposed structural problems linked with the democratization in Taiwan. In fact, according to Zhu et al (2001), corruption and low economic growth in Taiwan in the early 2000s lead many Taiwanese to disillusionment with democracy, and thus willing had its political model of guardianship back. Chinese cultural exceptionalism, however, must be relativized. As Huntington (1996) states, in the early twentieth century, Chinese intellectuals claimed that Confucianism was the source of Chinese backwardness. Conversely, in the late twentieth century, Chinese political leaders guaranteed that Confucianism was the source of Chinese progress. Therefore, it seems difficult to predict what political outcomes are likely to come from Confucianism.

If to these authors Confucian values are incompatible with the democratic ones, to Shin (2012) and to Fukuyama (1995) there are some aspects within Confucian civilization favorable to democracy such as the values of accountability, societal participation, equality, education, and tolerance. Shin (2012) argues that Confucianism values societal order and civilian loyalty to the state and, precisely because of it, ruler’s accountability to the people is important.

According to him, in the Confucian tradition, the rulers must take care of people’s welfare, and they only are perceived as legitimate and they do so. This kind of accountability, however, does not meet the definition of democracy nor democratic values used in this work. Shin (2012) himself claims that these principles are not fully related to the definition of democracy as government by the people, instead, these ideas that guide ruler’s and people’s actions meet the definition of democracy as a government for the people.

\textsuperscript{10} Kissinger (2011) states that while American exceptionalism is missionary and thus the United States feels obligated to spread its values to the world, Chinese exceptionalism is cultural. Thus, for him, China does not proselytize; does not claim that its institutions are relevant outside of China. However, contemporary China is heir to the tradition of the Middle Kingdom (Zhōngguó), which taxed other states based on their approximation to Chinese cultural and political forms, which is, for Kissinger, a kind of cultural universality.
Shin (2012) argues that societal participation is central to democratic societies. To Confucianism, it is state’s responsibility to promote public participation through the provision of equal education, and this belief, according to Shin’s interpretation, is a way to promote societal mobilization through instruction. Moreover Shin (2012) argues that Confucians believe that equality of individuals is given by nature. One consequence of this attitude in the political field is the effort to promote universal education for all citizens, regardless their background. According to Shin, like Confucianism, democracy has to develop an informed citizenry through education in order to maintain the principle of democratic citizenship.

Along the same line of thinking, Fukuyama (1995) consider two others points of compatibility between Confucianism and democracy, education and tolerance. Fukuyama holds that education is not a formal requirement of democracy, however, he claims that people cannot know about and therefore participate in the democratic debate if they have not a high level of literacy. Besides, in this view, education can lead Confucianist civilization toward democracy because it tends to make people wealthier and more concerned with noneconomic issues such as recognition and political participation. When it comes to tolerance, Fukuyama states that when compared to Islam and Christianity, for example, Confucianism is arguably more pacific.

The central question, after considering all these authors’ ideas, is now to understand what are the limits of these structural problems. Huntington (1984) points out four points that facilitate democracy, namely, wealth and equality; social structure; external environment; and cultural context. Domestic culture matters, nevertheless, there are at least three limits to what is regarded as cultural obstacles. First, cultures’ relation to the political system can be misinterpreted; second, they are complex bodies with a number of elements that can favor any political regime; third, cultures change, they are not static. Cultural context, like economic development, cannot cause or impede democracy alone.

Confucian civilization does not seem to be totally incompatible with democracy. Moreover, although important, culture does not explain democratization. Nevertheless, even after having a relatively liberal democracy, Taiwanese people still complain that Confucianism is an obstacle to a solid democracy. Based on that, it possible to assume

11 Democratic and social movements in Taiwan perceive Confucianism as a source of authoritarianism, and thus irreconcilable with their principles. In this sense, a study carried out by Fetzer and Soper presents interviews conducted in Taiwan, and it shows that defenders of aboriginal rights, press freedom, women’s rights strongly oppose Confucianist values in Taiwanese society. To them, values such as social harmony, filial piety, and a stress on a communal ethos are often used to legitimate authoritarian regimes (FETZER and SOPER, 2010).
that a large portion of Confucianist values are not in consonance with democracy. However, if that is true, how to explain why Taiwan was willing to overcome these structural problems in the first place? Why was Taiwan not attracted to China, the core of Confucian civilization? The next topic will attempt to shed light on these questions.

2.2 Taiwan’s corporate identity and its interests

Taiwan’s corporate identity is state-like\textsuperscript{12}. According to Wendt (1999), the personal or corporate identity is constituted by self-organizing and homeostatic structures that distinguish the “Self” from the “Other”\textsuperscript{13}. In this sense, belonging to the Confucian civilization, at the broadest level, is an important part of Taiwan’s identity. This feature of Taiwan’s identity establishes structural problems for the implementation of democracy. Another important feature of Taiwan’s identity is its history as a state – or as a part of one state – regarded as a process of its construction.

In this regard, in a nutshell, Taiwan’s mainstream history, concerning this article’s objectives, starts after China defeat in the Sino-Japanese War (1874-95). As a result of this conflict, the Treaty of Shimonoseki forced China to cede Taiwan\textsuperscript{14} to Japan (KO, 2004). Taiwan returned to China at the end of World War II, however, in 1949 Chiang Kai-shek transferred the Nationalist party (Kuomintang-KMT) to Taiwan as a consequence of a civil war between nationalists and communists in China (KO, 2004).

According to Tang (2011), due to its anti-communist stance during the Cold War, the U.S. regarded Taiwan as an important ally. Thanks to this alliance, as Tang argues, the U.S. government had only recognized the government of Taiwan as the sole legitimate government

\textsuperscript{12} Consequently, it fulfills all the requirements highlighted by Wendt (1999) with respect to the features of a state, which are: to have an institutional-legal order; an organization claiming a monopoly on the legitimate use of organized violence; an organization with sovereignty; a society; and territory. Moreover, despite the controversies concerning Taiwan political status, it has a de facto independence (KUNTIĆ, 2015). This means that although Taiwan does not possess de jure sovereignty recognized by all states of the international system, it does exercise some level of sovereignty. In sum, Taiwan has autonomy and enjoys a de facto sovereignty, and it characterizes its corporate identity as a state.

\textsuperscript{13} For an up-to-date discussion of the role of otherness in International Relations, focusing primarily on the so-called radical otherness between “I” and “Other,” see the recent contribution of Nordin and Smith (2019). By constructing a typology of four othernesses, they explore sensitive issues such as domination and assimilation, considering Chinese and Western thoughts as epistemological references.

\textsuperscript{14} Ko (2004) argues that Japan invested heavily in Taiwan’s infrastructure and educational system and, as a result, this helped Taiwan to develop its economy during the second half of the twentieth century.
of all of China and had maintained diplomatic relations with it until 1979. However, Tang stress that in January 1979, the U.S. transferred diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing, and it accorded with the one-China policy\textsuperscript{15}, which states that Taiwan is part of China.

In 1979 the U.S. Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) that raises six main policy points and, among them, there is the statement that “the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means.” (NAVARRO, 2016, p. 4). The TRA recognizes Taiwan as an important (albeit unofficial) American defense partner in Asia, and it articulates a formal defense commitment to Taiwan (TKACIK, 2007). Navarro (2016, p. 4) highlights that the TRA not only indirectly commits the United States to a defense of Taiwan if Beijing uses military force but it also recognizes “three warfare” tactics like the tourist boycotts and trade embargoes as weapons that constitute “other than peaceful means,” that may justify U.S. intervention.

To the U.S., this special partnership with Taiwan as its virtual ally is important for many reasons, and Tkacik (2007) raises the geostrategic, political and economic ones. In the geostrategic side, Tkacik (2007, p. 9) contends that Taiwan occupies 13,000 square miles of the strategic real estate in what General Douglas MacArthur once called America’s “littoral defense line in the western Pacific”, which is a key tenet of America’s security strategy in the Western Pacific. In the economic and political sides, Taiwan had, in the period analyzed here, a bigger population than Australia, a larger Gross Domestic Product (GDP) than Indonesia, and an advanced technology base second only to Japan’s. Moreover, Taiwan was America’s eighth largest trading partner and sixth largest agricultural customer. As a defense and intelligence partner of the U.S., Taiwan helped the U.S. against the Sino–Soviet alliance.

These characteristics of Taiwan’s identity matters for the United States. Similarly, there are other features of Taiwan’s identity from the Chinese perspective. In this sense, Tang (2011) points out that China regards Taiwan as a renegade province, which is ethnically Han\textsuperscript{16} and by the late 19th century was administered as a normal province. Therefore, in China’s view,  

\textsuperscript{15} One China policy refers to both Taiwan and mainland China’s understanding that both territories constitute the same country, however, for Taiwan, the Chinese Communist Party is illegitimate and, for China, Taiwan’s government is the result of rebellious dissent and is, therefore, illegitimate (KISSINGER, 2011).

\textsuperscript{16} The Han Chinese is the largest ethnic group in China. They expanded from their original base in the Yellow River valley, gradually drawing neighboring societies into various stages of approximation of Chinese patterns – which is the so-called Chinese cultural exceptionalism (KISSINGER, 2011).
by ethnic and linguistic criteria, Taiwan belongs to China. To Wendt (1999), identity helps to shape states’ interests, and interests refer to what actors want. In this respect, an actor cannot know what it wants until it knows who it is, therefore, interests designate motivations that help explain behavior. Given the features of Taiwan’s corporate identity studied here, this research can explore its interests.

There are, according to Wendt (1999), two kinds of interests, objective and subjective. Objective interests are related to the reproduction of an identity, without their fulfillment, the identity can cease to exist. The subjective interests, on the other hand, refers to beliefs that actors actually have about how to meet their identity needs. Thus, concerning states objectives interests, Wendt claims that all states share the following: physical survival, defense of its autonomy, economic well-being, and collective self-esteem. According to Zhu (2005), China represents a threat to Taiwan’s objective interests.

Although the perception of threat to objectives interests lies in the field of subjective interests, as Wendt (1999) stresses, this perception is grounded in concrete basis. In this regard, “there is an enduring collective memory of how Taiwanese have suffered subordination and victimization by external forces, especially from Beijing, and along with this memory goes a widely shared desire for self-determination” (ZHU, 2005, p. 52). Therefore, the answer to the question of why did Taiwan want to become a democracy is linked to the defense of its objective interests. The change of its type identity from an authoritarian regime to a democracy, as will be argued latter in this work, is a subjective interest that aims to safeguard its physical survival, autonomy, economic well-being, and collective self-esteem. The next section will further develop external factors that contributed to this change in Taiwan’s type identity, focusing, mainly, on the anarchical culture of China and U.S. - both in relation to Taiwan.

3 THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL FACTORS IN TAIWAN’S MOVE TOWARD DEMOCRACY: A STUDY ON THE CHINA’S AND UNITED STATES’ INFLUENCE

Domestic culture, though important, is not the only element that matters when it comes to democratization. Huntington (1984) claims that are four variables that scholars need to take into consideration to fully understand democratization, and they are: 1) wealth and equality; 2) social structure; 3) external environment, and 4) cultural context. Naturally, the explanatory power of each one of these variables varies from case to case. Thus, a set of ideas concerning the external environment and economic development, for instance, could additionally provide sufficient analytical elements to
explain democracy in Taiwan to the detriment of structural problems related to Confucian civilization in not explaining it at all. In other words, and translating Huntington’s (1991; 1996) thought to methodological language, the relation between Confucianism and democracy cannot be that the first is taken as an independent variable and the second is a dependent variable, since Confucianism does not produce liberal democracies alone. In this way, this section will focus on the external factors and will do so by using a Wendtian framework as theoretical road map17.

According to Wendt (1999), structure affects agents in a constitutive way and due to this agent-structure relation, the structure may have causal effects on agents. Therefore, the international system, which is embedded in a culture of anarchy, not only construct agents such as states but can also cause their behavior. Similarly, due to the fact that a constitutive relationship is always relational, states’ ideas about other states and about the system construct anarchy - anarchy is what states make of it. States have their own properties, and Wendt categorizes these properties as identities and interests. On the one hand, taken together these identities and interests are the ground for constructing the cultures of the international system, which can be Hobbesian, Lockean or Kantian like. On the other hand, these cultures of anarchy can influence states’ properties, and this is the systemic or holistic feature of Wendt’s theory.

17Huntington (1984; 1991) also provides a systemic explanation for democratization. However, Taiwan’s democratization is not totally covered by Huntington’s theoretical framework. According to Huntington (1984), the external environment has a great weight in explaining democratization. In fact, all aspects of the third wave of democracy have systemic features like: (1) The lack of legitimacy of authoritarian regimes; (2) the unprecedented global economic growth of the 1960s; (3) the striking shift in the doctrine and activities of the Catholic Church manifested in the Second Vatican Council of 1963-1965; (4) the policies of external actors like the U.S., the European Community and the Soviet Union; and (5) the snowballing (HUNTINGTON, 1991). Some of these factors that caused the third wave of democracy are antecedent variables, nonetheless, some of these systemic facilitators for democratization has little to do with Taiwan’s democratization. For instance, Huntington (1996) states that Christian leaders promoted movement toward democracy in Taiwan, however, he acknowledges that this influence was very limited. Moreover, other limited systemic third wave explanation for democratization in Taiwan is the snowballing - the demonstration effect of transitions earlier in the third wave in stimulating and providing models for subsequent efforts at democratization. As Huntington (1991) points out, if a country lack favorable internal conditions to democracy, like the cultural context, for example, snowballing is unlikely to bring about democratization. Besides, it is just possible to argue in favor of a snowballing effect in Asia after Taiwan’s and South Korea’s democratization.

In this way, Huntington (1991) argue that Confucian or Confucian-influenced societies have been inhospitable to democracy. In his words “in East Asia only two countries, Japan, and the Philippines had sustained experience with the democratic government prior to 1990. In both cases, democracy was the product of an American presence.” (HUNTINGTON, 1991, p. 24). Given this context, snowballing in East Asia is quite restricted for understanding Taiwan’s democratization.
In this sense, this section attempts to explain how the cultures of anarchy changed Taiwan’s properties, that is, its identity and interests. Thus, it will address the two cultures of the international system that matters the most when dealing with the process of democratization in Taiwan, that is, the Hobbesian and the Lockean cultures. These cultures, in a relational process with Taiwan, were associated with China and the United States, respectively.

3.1.1 The Hobbesian Culture: the relationship between China and Taiwan

The relationship between China and Taiwan, according to Huntington’s concept of civilization, should be smooth. Huntington (1996) contends that in the post-Cold War world, the most important distinctions among peoples are cultural, and not ideological, political, or economic. For him, people define themselves in terms of ancestry, religion, language, history, values, customs, and institutions. In addition, Huntington claims that people identify with cultural groups such as, at the broadest level, civilizations. In this sense, people use politics not just to advance their interests but also to define their identity. Once people have defined their identity, they can pursue their interests, and people’s identity is related to the other. In his words “we know who we are only when we know who we are not and often only when we know whom we are against” (p. 21).

Conversely, this shared Chineseness – to borrow a term from Huntington – did not ameliorate the political and economic agendas any further. On the contrary, in the economic side, as Huntington (1996) alerts, Taiwan’s success is increasingly dependent on China, and not on the U.S., its former larger trading partner. The relation between the two Chinas in the political side is even worse. Huntington points out that in 1995, the relationship between China and Taiwan declined due to a push for diplomatic recognition and admission to international organizations performed by the Taiwanese government. The situation got worse with Taiwan’s attempt to become a democracy in 1995-1996.

After a visit to the United States in 1995, the former Taiwanese president Lee Teng-hui demanded improvements in Taiwan’s democracy. Taiwanese government and society attended his demand. In December 1995 Taiwan held legislative elections. In March 1996, Taiwan held presidential elections for the first time in its history. China’s response was rapid and tough, in this way, Chinese government tested missiles in waters close to the major Taiwanese ports. In addition, it engaged in military exercises near Taiwanese-controlled offshore islands (HUNTINGTON, 1996).
Given this context, Huntington (1996, p. 173) raises two questions concerning Taiwan’s future as a democracy. Firstly, “for the present, can Taiwan remain democratic without becoming formally independent?” And, secondly, “in the future could Taiwan be democratic without remaining actually independent?” These two questions link democracy and independence, as a direct causal relation. In fact, for Tang (2011), in the political narrative, democracy and independence go hand in hand. Tang, in his study on how the U.S newspaper The New York Times addresses the Taiwan issue, it realized that the rhetoric of Taiwan’s independence is intertwined with the rhetoric of democracy and freedom. In this sense, not only scholars but also media and the public opinion make a correlation between democracy and independence in Taiwan’s case.

As Huntington (1996) claims, Taiwan’s democratization and, eventually, the possibility of it bring independence to this country represents a risk to China’s territorial integrity. Moreover, Gupta (2005), when comparing China’s policies toward Taiwan and the South China Sea, contends that, in China’s perspective, Chinese dispute over Taiwan is legitimized by reference to moral principles of anti-colonialism and anti-hegemonism. In this sense, for China, “the reunification of Taiwan is the culmination of the process of anti-imperialist, anti-colonial struggle launched by the CCP in the last century” (GUPTA, 2005, p. 249).

Therefore, taking into consideration China’s view on Taiwan question, Huntington’s arguments on civilization could work. Indeed, ideological differences between China and Taiwan seem to matter less to China than their cultural proximity. Taiwan symbolizes to China an important component of its identity. Furthermore, its reunification with Taiwan could be regarded as the overcoming of its century of humiliation (KISSINGER, 2011). However, reunification with Taiwan also means the achievement of concrete goals, like geostrategic or nationalist ones. And, in order to achieve such goals, China follows a pragmatic economic policy aiming at a deep economic integration with Taiwan, but it also pursues this task through the military front (GUPTA, 2005). Such an approach does not seem to fit Huntington’s ideas on civilization, where cultural proximity leads to cooperation and harmony.

From the Chinese perspective, the threats, as well as the conflicts directed to Taiwan, could be explained by what Huntington (1996) calls as a torn country. Huntington (1996) defines as torn countries those attempting to affiliate with another civilization. According to him, at least three requirements must be met for a torn country to redefine its civilizational identity. The first concerns the political and economic elite of the country, which has to be generally supportive of this move. The second involves the domestic sphere, thus the public has to be at least willing to acquiesce in the redefinition of identity. The last one is related to the host civilization, in which its dominant elements have to be willing to embrace the convert.
For him, torn countries are those willing to identify with another civilization, in Taiwan’s case, with Western civilization. In this regard, the more Taiwan gets cultural fragmented, the more it represents a threat to China, and this could explain the clashes between both. But for what reason is Taiwan getting closer to the Western civilization in the first place? This question the Huntingtonian theoretical framework cannot properly answer since, according to him, unlike empires that rise and fall or governments that come and go, civilizations remain, they are able to survive economic, political and even ideological upheavals.

In face of this scenario in which Huntington’s theory is insufficient to explain why Taiwan is moving toward the Western civilization or, in other words, why Taiwan became a democracy, this research needs to approach the cultures of anarchy. This work understands that the relationship between China and Taiwan during the period under analysis here - from 1991 to 2001 - was predominantly of a Hobbesian culture. A country within this culture does not recognize the right of the Self to exist as an autonomous being. As a consequence, it will not willingly limit its violence toward the Self (WENDT, 1999).

In this sense, in China’s interpretation of the “one China policy”, it rejects any interpretation that suggests anything less than Beijing’s complete sovereignty over Taiwan (TKACIK, 2007). Thus, China does not recognize Taiwan as an autonomous being. To Wendt (1999), in the logic of the Hobbesian culture, states are likely to try to destroy or conquer those states that they perceive as enemies, and they also tend to consider and orient their policies toward the worst-case scenario. This outcome suggests that war is always likely to happen. Such a conflict did not happen in the analyzed period, as will be argued in the next section, due to the special relationship between Taiwan and the U.S., that is to say, in Wendtian language, that China limited its violence toward Taiwan because it was constrained by other forces.

Nevertheless, peace between China and Taiwan is far from being a reality. Threats are constants, especially when Taiwan attempts to improve its democracy or seeks diplomatic recognition by countries or international organizations. In this sense, regarding a major event concerning threats coming from China to Taiwan during its democratization, this study pointed out the cross-strait crisis in 1995-1996. According to Navarro (2016), this was one of the most delicate and dangerous time of Taiwan’s recent history.

In this regard, Taiwan saw live fire exercise by Beijing juxtaposed with American sea power protecting democracy in Taiwan. To Navarro, the defense of democracy in Taiwan is ambivalent, in this respect, Taiwan does not wish to provoke Beijing - because it represents a threat to its corporate identity - and, at the same time, Taiwan has even less desire to bend to China’s authoritarian will. Due to its importance, the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1995-1996 and its Hobbesian and Lockean features will be further analyzed in the section four.
3.1.2 The Lockean Culture: the relationship between the United States and Taiwan

Wendt (1999) argues that the Lockean culture has as its core an environment of rivalry. In this sense, states are constituted by representations about Self and Other with respect to violence. Nevertheless, unlike Hobbesian anarchy, rivals do not try to conquer or dominate each other since they recognize each other’s sovereignty. In the logic of Lockean culture, warfare can be simultaneously accepted and constrained, although wars in this anarchy do not intend to kill states. Besides, this logic states in this system have a relatively stable membership or low death rate over time. States in this culture also tend to balance power, and neutrality or non-alignment becomes a recognized status. To Wendt, the Lockean anarchy resembles Waltz’s neorealism, especially the self-help policy.

Wendt (1999) argues that in Lockean culture, type identities have a key role. In this regard, the corporate identity as a state may seem insufficient to exercise statehood in the sense that it may lack “legitimacy”. In this culture, legitimate states, therefore, need to conform to type identity criteria. To Wendt, democracy and capitalism are progressively becoming dominant forms of states’ type identities. However, against this global trend, the force of this democratic movement suffers ups and downs in Asia. For instance, as Tkacik (2007) argues, the stronger China gets the more states perceive authoritarianism as an alternative to America’s declining democracy.

In this line, Huntington (1996) argues that the growing skepticism about democracy in Asia is relational with culture, especially in Confucian civilization, which regards itself as superior to Western civilization. For him, Confucian countries perceive the U.S. as a fading power beset by political stagnation, economic inefficiency, and social chaos, and they attribute these misfortunes to democracy. Conversely, Huntington claims that, in spite of these structural problems to democratization, the West has generated the belief that an ongoing global democratic revolution spreading human rights and Western forms of political democracy should prevail after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Having this belief in mind, many Westerners promoted the policy of spreading democracy through the world.

To Huntington (1996) the U.S. was the most prominent of these Western promoters of democracy in the 1990s. In this view, for instance, the Bush administration endorsed that “‘beyond containment lies democracy’ and that for the post-Cold War world ‘President Bush has defined our new mission to be the promotion and consolidation of democracy.’” (HUNTINGTON, 1996, p. 193).
Therefore, given this context of a widespread movement toward democracy as well as democracy being a core value to the U.S., Wendtian approach suggests that would be preferable to Taiwan to conform its type identity as a democracy due to its relationship with the United States.

In fact, according to Tkacik (2007), the belief that the U.S. would protect democracy in Taiwan so strong that Taiwan is regard throughout East Asia—including Beijing—as the thermometer of America’s commitment to democratic Asia against the pressures of undemocratic China. In this sense, to Taiwan, since democracy could enhance its international image to the U.S. and to the Western world, it was reasonable to Taiwan to change its type identity in order to maintain its corporate identity. In addition to this current democratic and capitalist feature of the Lockean culture, there is also a tendency to balance power and to be guided by a self-help policy. In that regard, due to the Nixon–Kissinger deal to play an “enemy-of-my-enemy-is-my-friend” China off the Soviet Union, Taiwan lost recognition as a nation internationally (Navarro, 2016).

Lasater (1993) points out that mainly because of the U.S. Cold War agenda, Washington attached far greater value to strategic relations with mainland China, which could serve as a counterweight to the Soviet Union, than with Taiwan. As a result, during the 1970s and much of the 1980s the importance of Taiwan to U.S. interests declined. In this perspective, Taiwan became almost an embarrassment to some in the United States. Nonetheless, if Taiwan was for some an embarrassment, for many it was a “bargaining chip”. In this respect, Navarro (2016) contends that the White House has periodically been using Taiwan in a game of amoral realpolitik and “real economik” to woo and placate China, and the “three communiqués” are good examples of this position.

Therefore, the U.S. policies toward Taiwan is pragmatic-oriented, as it is common in the Lockean culture. In this sense, many scholars took into account the U.S. interests in Asia and developed guiding principles concerning the U.S. relation with Taiwan. Navarro (2016) is one of them, and he raises three points that the U.S. must never do. First, he claims that American leaders should never refer to Taiwan as a “nation” or “country”. However, they should recognize it as a “democracy” and “political entity,” thereby signaling Taiwan’s de facto, although not de jure, independence. Secondly, according to him, American leaders should never acknowledge the “One China, Two Systems”.

19Thian-Hok (1999) advocates that the three communiqués of 1972, 1979, and 1982 together have contributed to the increasing international isolation of Taiwan.

20“One China, Two Systems” refers to the measure taken by China at the time of Hong Kong’s reintegration into its territory, allowing two systems, the Communist (People’s Republic of China) and the democratic (Hong Kong) centralized in one China (the People’s Republic of China) (Kissinger, 2011).
policy, and they should avoid referring to the “One China” policy. Finally, both Congress and the White House must stop publicly acknowledging the need to appease China in the consideration of any arms sales to Taiwan, thus respecting the TRA, which grants Taiwan a special military partnership with the United States.

Similarly, Kelly (2004) points out four core principles regarding Taiwan status. First, the U.S. has to remain committed to China policy based on the three Joint Communiques and the Taiwan Relations Act. Second, the U.S. must not support independence for Taiwan or unilateral moves that would change the status quo. In his words: “For Beijing, this means no use of force or threat to use force against Taiwan. For Taipei, it means exercising prudence in managing all aspects of cross-Strait relations. For both sides, it means no statements or actions that would unilaterally alter Taiwan’s status” (KELLY, 2004, p. 64). Third, the U.S. must continue to sell defensive military equipment to Taiwan in accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act. Finally, the U.S. must maintain its capacity to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion against Taiwan.

Another scholar who sets principles that should guide American policy toward Taiwan is Tkacik (2007). According to him, since the global expansion of democracy is a pillar of American foreign policy in Asia to the U.S., the United States should be committed to three courses of action in this regard. First, the U.S. should counter Beijing’s efforts to isolate Taiwan by strengthening U.S.–Taiwan trade ties and by encouraging other democracies to include Taiwan to join their efforts in international agendas such as health, transport, nonproliferation, counterterrorism, and humanitarian relief efforts. Second, the U.S. should be committed to the survival of Taiwan as a democracy regardless of China’s territorial claims. Finally, the U.S. should bolster Taiwan’s offensive military capacities, not only its defensive system.

Together with self-help system and balance of power, another important feature of the Lockean culture is the mutual recognition of sovereignty. In this sense, as explored in earlier this article, the U.S. does not recognize Taiwan as a nation since 1979. However, as Thian-Hok (1999) contends, the TRA grants Taiwan unofficial but friendly and close relations with the United States.
Moreover, Thian-Hok affirms that the U.S. acknowledges China’s position that there is only one China and that Taiwan is part of China, nevertheless, U.S. does not recognize China’s claim on Taiwan yet. According to him, the distinction between acknowledgment and recognition lies in the TRA and the three communiqués documents.

Finally, this Lockean culture involving Taiwan and the U.S is important from the Taiwanese perspective because, as Navarro (2016) argues, the U.S. can help Taiwan to integrate as many international organizations as possible, which ameliorates Taiwan’s international status. Furthermore, as initiated in the previous topic, because of the relationship between the U.S. and Taiwan and Taiwan’s democratization, The United States intervened in Taiwan Strait crisis in 1995-1996. In this regard, Tang (2011) points out that U.S. role as a guardian of democracy not only implies responsibility but also capacity. The next section will explore the Lockean and Hobbesian cultures of anarchy in this triangular relationship U.S.-China –Taiwan a little further.


According to the definition of democracy used in this article, Taiwan was not a democracy in 1996 yet. Although democratically elected, Lee Teng-hui belonged to the ruling party of Taiwan at that time (KMT), that is to say that transition of power did not occur in 1996 elections (KO, 2004). Even though, to hold presidential elections is an important step of democratization. Consequently, since China does not recognize Taiwan as an autonomous being, a feature of the Hobbesian culture, it tried to stop Taiwan’s democratization. That is because, narratively, democracy and independence go hand in hand (TANG, 2011). Conversely, due to the self-help system and pragmatic reasons, the U.S. made the necessary efforts to protect Taiwan, thus operating in a Lockean logic. These Hobbesian and Lockean effects toward Taiwan can be seen in the Taiwan Strait crisis in 1995-1996.

21As explored in chapter two, modern democracy has two criteria. First, the extension of the right to vote to at least 50% of male population. Second, a government chose by periodical elections (HUNTINGTON, 1991).
Whiting (2001), in his study of China’s use of force from 1950 to 1996, shows that the tension in Taiwan Strait in 1995-1996 follows some of the patterns of others Chinese conflicts, however, it is distinguished from these conflicts in many ways. Concerning Chinese military patterns, Whiting (2001) examined military doctrine manifest in historical writings and those of Mao Zedong that emphasize seizing the initiative. He also studied verbal warnings and patterns of deployment by People’s Liberation Army (PLA), and these armed forces, in each case, indicated the intent to support deterrence and coercive diplomacy. Whiting also assessed, though through limited evidence as himself acknowledges, the level of deliberate risk-taking and risk management by the Chinese government.

The tensions in Taiwan Strait began in May 1995. On that occasion, Lee Teng-hui, former president of Taiwan, contrary to Washington’s assurances to Beijing, received a visa to visit Cornell University. In June, at this university, Lee gave a speech emphasizing the international status of Taiwan, which initiated a wave of rhetorical attacks from Beijing, followed by missile exercises north and south of Taiwan. At the end of July, China intensified the threats. In this regard, the PLA fired missiles 80 miles northeast of Taiwan in a 10-nautical mile circular area near the air-and sea-lanes between Japan and Taiwan. China had two main objectives with this aggression: First, to warn Washington against further support for Lee; second, to deter Lee from continuing his perceived moves toward Taiwan independence (WHITING, 2001).

In November 1995, Chinese government warned about another round of exercises prior to and coinciding with Taiwan’s presidential election. In this regard, after one month of deployments, Beijing scheduled missile exercises for March 8 – 15 during Taiwan’s three-week campaign period. At that time, these deployments included elements from all three PLA fleets, an estimated 300 planes, and 150,000 troops. The target areas were one 32 miles from the southwest coast and the other 22 miles from the northeast coast, and each one of these areas contained a major port and a naval base. In Chinese announcement, these military actions would be “exercises”, which is different from the 1995 “tests” (WHITING, 2001).

The response from Washington came on March 8, 1996. The U.S. government announced a deployment of the USS Independence aircraft carrier battle group just a few hundred miles from Taiwan. This aircraft carrier contained two destroyers, a cruiser, and a frigate. On March 9, China replied to this announcement by reporting that a second air, land, and naval exercise in a 17,000-square-kilometer area off southern Fujian
and near the midline in the Taiwan Strait would happen from March 12 to 20. In response, on March 11, Washington ordered a second carrier battle group headed by the USS Nimitz, two destroyers, a cruiser, a frigate, and a submarine from the Arabian Sea to join the Independence off Taiwan. This U.S. action did not stop PLA joint-force exercises, which, on March 12, began as scheduled (WHITING, 2001).

On March 15, New China News Agency announced a third set of exercises from March 18 to 25. These exercises would end two days after Taiwan’s election and they would cover 6,000 square kilometers around Haitan Island off the Fujian coast, where amphibious boats, helicopters, and parachute forces would combine with the land, air, and naval forces to practice seizure of this island. Politically, China did not achieve some of its goals with these military exercises. In this regard, a majority of 54 percent democratically elected Lee. On the other hand, China reached one important goal, which was to avoid Taiwan from declaring independence. In this matter, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the Taiwanese party that had Taiwan’s independence as its main political project at the time, was defeated with only 21 percent of the vote (WHITING, 2001).

Taiwan Strait crisis of 1995-1996 differs from the patterns of Chinese use of force in at least three ways. First, the initial exercises of 1995 were not preemptive, what differs from the pattern of China’s use of force. By contrast, they responded to the granting of a U.S. visa to Lee and Lee’s provocative remarks at Cornell University. Second, the later exercises attempted coercive diplomacy on Taiwan voters through threatening the use of force, however, China did not specify the precise condition or circumstances that would bring it about. Finally, the PLA remained limited to live-fire exercises that did not engage Taiwan or U.S. forces. This absence of actual combat by the PLA differentiates these tensions in the Taiwan Strait from the previous conflicts like, for example, the one in Korea (1950), or in Taiwan Strait (1962), or the attack on Vietnam (1979).

Nevertheless, PLA’s military exercises did affect Washington. In this sense, Washington prompted the largest deployment of force toward Taiwan since 1958. In addition, this crisis triggered diplomatic communications that ultimately led to an exchange of summit visits in 1997 and 1998. This U.S. response occurred even with a very careful risk management from China. In mid-1995, China explicit scheduled missile firings and the warned about its exercises. Moreover, missiles fired did not come close to Taiwan. Furthermore, Beijing took several steps to inform Washington.
that no attack on Taiwan was planned, which did not happen in all of the previous cases. The authoritative high-level communication was undertaken with the objective of minimizing misunderstanding between Washington and Beijing.

As Whiting (2001) points out, Taiwan is a valuable economic asset. In this regard, destroying Taiwan for a subsequent reunification would be a Pyrrhic victory. For this reason, China may have limited its use of force toward Taiwan. Another explanation for the limitation of China’s force, however, has to do with the U.S. Whiting argues that a Chinese pattern is deterrence and seizing of the initiative in the direct or indirect confrontation with the U.S. In this sense, China avoids military conflict with the U.S. due to the asymmetry of power of these two countries. Therefore, although China does not recognize Taiwan as an autonomous being, it limits, not willingly, its violence toward Taiwan as the Taiwan Strait crisis has shown.

This Chinese self-restriction in using its force occurs mainly because of the Lockean relationship between U.S. and Taiwan, as addressed in the previous topic. Having an unofficial but close ally capable of protecting its corporate identity is not only imperative to Taiwan; the U.S. also have many interests in the region, since the U.S. is regarded both as a promoter and defender22 of democracy (HUNTINGTON, 1996). In this sense, Tkacik (2007) claims that a political union of Taiwan with China would be contrary to U.S. interests. According to him, what serves to the U.S. interests concerning Taiwan’s status is keep it as de facto, although not de jure independent state.

This self-restriction in the use of force, however, was not what China wanted. After Lee’s speech emphasizing the international status of Taiwan in 1995, China responded with military threats. Thus, there was a direct relation between democracy-independence-Chinese perception of threat to its sovereignty in this case. This Chinese perception of threat was responded with an increase in the military tensions by the Chinese government in November 1995 to March 1996. In this period, the U.S. responded militarily too, both to protect Taiwan’s democratization as well as its interests in the region, as predicted by the Lockean logic. In sum, the external factors concerning the Hobbesian and Lockean cultures had a great influence in Taiwan’s democratization. They helped Taiwan to minimize its structural problems to democratization. The next topic, therefore, will address this issue by putting in evidence these elements that contributed to the change of Taiwan’s type identity.

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22Wendt (1999) regards this U.S. interest in protecting democracies abroad as a role identity.
4.1 The turn point in Taiwan’s changing type identity

Taiwan’s type identity changed through the years from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one. According to Ko (2004), Taiwan, in a decade and a half, peacefully moved from the rule of martial law in 1987 to become a full-fledged democracy. Diamond (2001), when analyzing Taiwan’s democracy, wrote that after the election of the DPP in 2000 Taiwan was a democracy by any measure. For instance, he presents Freedom House data and sees that it rates Taiwan a 1 on political rights and a 2 on civil liberties\(^{23}\), which gives an average score of 1.5 that is sufficient to freedom classify Taiwan as a liberal democracy.

Indeed, Taiwan’s democratization was fast. In this regard, in 1991 the Taiwanese people elected for the first time the representatives to the National Assembly. In 1992, Taiwanese people elected the members of the Legislative Yuan for the first time, which provoked the split of KMT. Taiwanese people elected the Provincial Governor for the first time in 1994, and, in this same year, they elected the Mayors of Taipei and Kaohsiung for the first time since 1964 and 1977 respectively. In 1996, this democratic movement reached the head of the executive power and Taiwanese people elected their president. Finally, in 2000, the first democratic transition of power in China’s 5,000-year history took place in Taiwan (KO, 2004).

The changes in the prestige of democracy help to explain this rapid Taiwan’s democratization. The regime types of forms of states, which are forms of membership of the international system, varies both culturally and historically, and democracy is becoming a dominant model of state’s type identity (WENDT, 1999). In this line, Fukuyama (1992) have argued that liberal democracy and a market-oriented economy was the last form of government of humankind. Thian-Hok (1999) contends that the democratization and “Taiwanization” is a force that could help Taiwan in determining its future in spite of China’s military and political pressure. Moreover, a more intense and democratic participation of Taiwan in the international system can improve its status (NAVARRO, 2016). For Tang (2011), when it comes to Taiwan, discourses concerning democracy go hand in hand with discourses about independence.

This rapid transition was motivated by other external factors like the Hobbesian and Lockean cultures. Tkacik (2007) claims that Taiwan’s independence means war according to the Chinese perspective. Perhaps because of this, many in Taiwan prefer the status quo of a de facto independence

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\(^{23}\)Both scales ranging from 1, most free, to 7, least free. (DIAMOND, 2001)
than a de jure independence (KELLY, 2004). As was explored in previous sections, Taiwan’s subjective interests aiming at maintaining its corporate identity regards democracy as a way to safeguard its existing autonomy. In this sense, the U.S. provides Taiwan military protection both as a virtual ally and a defender of democracy in the world (TKACIK, 2007).

To Ko (2004), Taiwan democratized in spite of U.S. efforts. According to him, the U.S. helped in Taiwan’s democratization only in providing military assistance and economic aid, all the other causes of democracy in Taiwan was given by internal elements. Nonetheless, even Ko states that: “Taiwan’s decade of crisis brought upon by U.S. betrayal ended up forcing the KMT to push for more democratic reform to both appease the masses and regain international favor.” (p. 148). In this view, the KMT push for democratization was encouraged by the U.S. acknowledgment of the right of mainland China over Taiwan to the detriment of Taiwan itself. This U.S. betrayal could be interpreted as a self-help policy, which is quite common in the Lockean anarchy.

Moreover, Ko (2004) also acknowledges that, though not as strong as it could be, the U.S. did some efforts to the implementation democracy in Taiwan. In this regard, for him, the U.S. Congress constantly asked for democracy in Taiwan during the 1970s and 1980s, and this demand culminated in the call that the U.S. Congress on the KMT to lift martial law in 1986. Taiwan’s democracy, however, has to have intrinsic characteristics to Taiwan in order to be regarded as type identity. In this respect, Ko’s ideas are very relevant. As a matter of fact, Taiwan’s democratization did not occur in accordance with the U.S. agenda of transition to democracy24.

24 Therefore, in this sense, Taiwan implemented local elections first and slowly moved toward national elections. Contrary to this course of action is U.S. foreign policy of encouraging democratization endorses the need to implement national elections first. Furthermore, Taiwan’s economic development arose out of thirty years of economic protectionism, which is just the opposite of the current U.S. foreign policy that universally pushes for short-term economic liberalization. In addition, authoritarianism led Taiwan to economic stability, which confronts the U.S. belief that democracy is the best system to produce wealth. Finally, KMT promoted democracy to benefit its own interests as a party. In this sense, it needed to appease internal masses that was struggling for rights and it also needed to gain international favor in order to not be replaced by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) (KO, 2004).
Although Taiwan has changed its type identity by becoming a democracy in order to keep its autonomy, structural problems in Taiwan’s democracy were not extinguished. For instance, Diamond (2001) raises five key problems of Taiwan’s democracy. One of these problems is that “democracy and democratic values remain to be consolidated at the level of mass public opinion.” (p. 4). In this sense, Zhu (2005, p. 46) points out that Taiwan is “one of the few new democracies in East Asia where more people were skeptical about democracy than believed in its superiority”. This low level of popular support for democracy in Taiwan is related to the belief that the rule of a group of intellectual elites can problems such as corruption, unemployment, low economic growth and social disorder.

To conclude, skepticism about democracy in Taiwan increased in the late of 2001 because it has not necessarily altered Taiwan’s international status in any fundamental way (ZHU, 2005). Therefore, despite the internal elements that favor Taiwan’s democratization, the external factors were as much as important or even more important to that democratization. In this sense, they influenced Taiwan in changing its type identity from authoritarianism to democracy. Moreover, they still help in keeping democracy alive since democracy in Taiwan is still regarded as a fragile model of government.

5 FINAL REMARKS

This article attempted to answer the following question: Why did Taiwan become a democracy despite the cultural obstacles to implementing it in a Confucian civilization? Searching for answers, this research started from the hypothesis that the more Taiwan become democratic, the more it will benefit from the Lockean culture, and the less it will suffer from the Hobbesian anarchy. In other words, this study initially assumed that Taiwan’s democratization would minimize its conflicts with China mainly because democracy would bring to Taiwan both international legitimacy from the international system, especially Western countries, and military protection, notably from the United States.

The hypothesis was partially confirmed. On the one hand, inferences have shown that Taiwan’s democracy really brought benefits to it from the Lockean anarchy. In this sense, Taiwan’s democracy strengthened the already existing Taiwan Relations Act, which delineates key aspects of the U.S. relations with Taiwan such as
de facto diplomatic relations, the U.S. aid in modernizing Taiwan’s military defense, the U.S. interests in a peaceful resolution of Taiwan question (WHITING, 2001).

This commitment with an almost outdated act is due to the fact that the U.S. is not only a promoter of democracy around the world but it also is known as a defender of democratic regimes (NAVARRO, 2016). Democracy and capitalism are the dominant states’ type identities after the Cold War. Moreover, the Lockean culture presupposes that states will orient themselves toward a self-help system, thus, because of a pragmatic rationale of defending its interests in Asia, the U.S. protects Taiwan.

On the other hand, the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1995-1996 has demonstrated China’s will to use force in order to accomplish its political goals in Asia. Therefore, China approaches Taiwan following similar military patterns that it used in other conflicts such as the one in Korea (1950), or in Taiwan Strait (1962), or the attack on Vietnam (1979). These patterns regard the intent to support deterrence and to use coercive diplomacy. However, when it comes to preemptive attacks or an extensive mobilization of the People’s Liberation Army, China uses different military tactics like risk-taking and risk management. In summary, even with the U.S. military protection, China uses force against democratic movements in Taiwan (WHITING, 2001). This may occur because the narratives about democracy and independence are closely related (TANG, 2011).

As an explanatory case study this work sought the causal relationship between external factors and Taiwan’s democratization. Therefore, it attempted to find external elements interacting with Taiwan’s corporate identity and interests that were responsible to influence a move from authoritarianism regime to a relatively liberal democracy from 1991 to 2001. Those external factors were changing Taiwan’s type identity within this period, thus minimizing its structural problems concerning democratization. Taiwan’s objective interests, which are those related to the reproduction of its identity, had a great influence in Taiwan’s democratization. In this regard, Taiwan has become democratic aiming at reproducing its autonomy, economic well-being, collective self-esteem, and at guaranteeing its physical survival, in other words, Taiwan aimed at defending its corporate identity.
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