

An Exchange on “Diversionsary Dragons, or ‘Talking Tough in Taipei’”

Jonathan Sullivan, Yitan Li,
Patrick James, and A. Cooper Drury

In “Diversionsary Dragons, or ‘Talking Tough in Taipei’” (*Journal of East Asian Studies* 9, 3: 369–398), Yitan Li, Patrick James, and A. Cooper Drury presented a newly created data set to show that Chen Shui-bian used independence rhetoric and confrontation with the mainland as a diversionary tactic in the face of domestic political difficulties. In the present exchange, Jonathan Sullivan challenges the authors’ understanding of how the Democratic Progressive Party used the Taiwan independence issue—and the authors’ interpretation of independence—and raises questions about the coding of press coverage as a means of identifying underlying preferences. The authors respond, concluding that the future use of such diversionary tactics is by no means foreclosed. **KEYWORDS:** Taiwan independence, diversionary theory of war, cross-strait relations, Chinese politics, international conflict

Understanding and Measuring “Taiwan Independence” in Presidential Discourse

Jonathan Sullivan

“DIVERSIONARY DRAGONS, OR ‘TALKING TOUGH IN TAIPEI’: CROSS-STRAIT Relations in the New Millennium” (Li, James, and Drury 2009) is one of a number of recent studies that attempt to explain the discursive behavior of former Republic of China (ROC) president Chen Shui-bian (Lin 2005; Ross 2006; Sullivan and Lowe 2010). The significance of these attempts to theorize Chen’s seemingly erratic discourse extends beyond historical interest.

The taut strategic conditions in the Taiwan Strait render the public assertions of any ROC president a matter of substantive and theoretical importance. Under former president Li Denghui and Chen alike, the ROC president was the most volatile actor in cross-strait relations. In large part,

this perceived volatility was due to interpreting rhetoric emanating from the Presidential Palace as an indicator of Taiwan's underlying policy positions and intentions. In lieu of more formal channels of communication, it might seem natural to do so. This necessitates careful consideration about how to analyze the ROC president's public pronouncements.

The purpose of this reply is to contribute to scholarly debate on how best to understand high-level political rhetoric in Taiwan by highlighting two conceptual and methodological issues raised by Li, James, and Drury's article.

Drawing on a well-established tradition in international relations (IR) that conceives state leaders as operating simultaneously at a domestic and international level (Putnam 1988), the authors employ "diversionary theory" to explain Chen's behavior in the run-up to his reelection campaign in 2004. Diversionary theory suggests that when facing severe political constraints on the domestic level, national leaders may seek to divert the attention of domestic voters by engaging in adventurous behaviors abroad. They may, for instance, seek to instigate wars or less intense types of conflict. In the case of Taiwan, the authors argue that Chen Shui-bian used the analogous tactic of emphasizing "Taiwan independence as a diversion from domestic problems"—by implication, a failing economy (Li, James, and Drury 2009, 370).

Conceiving Chen as a strategic actor playing a two-level game is a reasonable assumption, and the authors report empirical support for their thesis. However, I argue that problematic conceptual and methodological choices cast doubt on the validity of these findings. I briefly address two points that are relevant to the study of presidential rhetoric in Taiwan generally—that is, not restricted to analyses of former president Chen Shui-bian. First, I argue that the finding that Chen used diversionary tactics is a result of misunderstanding "Taiwan independence." While Li, James, and Drury's finding is consistent with the "reckless adventurer" narrative common to international media coverage (Sullivan and Lowe 2010, 619), a more nuanced understanding of political discourse in Taiwan leads to a different interpretation of Chen's behavior. Second, the authors' reliance on English-language newspaper reports raises questions about the appropriate methods and data used to derive estimates of Taiwanese political actors' political preferences.

Coming to Grips with Taiwan Independence

Li, James, and Drury do not formally define what they mean by "Taiwan independence," and the resulting ambiguity leads their model into troubled

waters. For instance, the authors hypothesize that “the lower the president’s approval rating the more likely he is to promote Taiwan independence,” and “the more the president promotes Taiwan independence the higher the presidential approval” (Li, James, and Drury 2009, 376). These two hypotheses assume that a sufficiently large or influential segment of the electorate is in favor of Taiwan independence. Otherwise, a rational actor, which they assume Chen to be, would avoid the issue in favor of a more moderate position closer to the median voter. We know from longitudinal opinion polls that a substantial majority of Taiwanese are unequivocally against Taiwan independence and that this preference is stable over time.¹ Apart from a small minority of die-hard supporters, the vast majority of Taiwanese prefer some variation of the status quo and are highly pragmatic (Wang and Liu 2004). Given this scenario, why would an incumbent president draw attention to a policy position for which there is minimal public support?

I cannot imagine that the authors would overlook such a fundamental problem in their model, so the issue is more likely a definitional one. Indeed, we can clearly see that their understanding of independence is one that is at odds with much of the Taiwan studies literature. Consider one example that they use to illustrate their coding. They note that in 2003 Chen Shui-bian averred in an interview that “the *Republic of China* is a sovereign state. This is the clear and obvious status of our country. The ROC effectively exercises jurisdiction over the islands of Taiwan, Penghu, Jinmen and Mazu—a fact no one can deny” (Li, James, and Drury 2009, 378; my italics). The authors interpret this as “a clear statement saying from the highest level of the DPP government that *Taiwan is a sovereign state*” (Li, James, and Drury 2009, 378; my italics). Accordingly, this statement is classified as an indication of “pro-independence” sentiment of the “highest intensity” (Li, James and Drury 2009, 378). Clearly, however, “the ROC is a sovereign state” is not equivalent to “Taiwan is a sovereign state.”

Indeed, the majority of Taiwan specialists appear to agree with Shelley Rigger (2001, 104) that support for a sovereign Taiwan state “has become so marginalized that overt promotion of independence within the political arena has all but disappeared.” Whether a result of China’s explicit equation of independence with war or a simple preference for the status quo, the marginalization of public support for independence has effectively rendered the issue “electoral poison” (Fell 2005, 122). As Edward Friedman (2006, 76) observes, “de jure independence is going nowhere.”

If we accept the view that claiming the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the ROC are separate sovereign entities also constitutes

"independence," Li, James, and Drury's interpretation makes more sense, even though it is out of sync with the majority of work on Taiwan.

In the mid-1990s, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) moved from the pursuit of a potential Republic of Taiwan to Taiwanese self-determination *within the status quo framework of the ROC*.² The DPP position was similar to Li Denghui's statement that "the ROC has been a sovereign state since it was founded in 1912 [and] *consequently there is no need to declare independence*."³ This "repackaging of independence" made the DPP more credible at the polls (Fell 2005, 98) and freed the party to pursue its localization program once in power without escalating tensions in the Taiwan Strait to the point of military conflict.⁴ As Chien-min Chao (2003, 141) observes, the DPP effectively redefined independence by stressing "preservation of the status quo over reconstruction of a new entity," a position that came to be shared by both major parties (Dittmer 2005, 86).

However, even if we accept the argument that claiming ROC sovereignty is the equivalent of "independence," this is a view that has been espoused by Taipei (with no ill consequences) since as early as 1993. Indeed, 1993 was the year that the ROC began claiming exclusive sovereignty over the islands of Taiwan, Penghu, Jinmen, and Mazu (Sheng 2001, 17). By the time of Chen's reelection, the view of the ROC as an independent sovereign entity had been the central feature of an "overarching consensus" in Taiwanese politics for several years (Schubert 2004). Far from an adventurous "diversionary tactic" then, the question of ROC sovereignty was a mainstream political position apparently taken for granted by parties and voters alike.

Rather than the sovereign status of the ROC, the major thrust of political competition under Chen Shui-bian was the emphasis of Taiwan identity (Clark 2004; Dittmer 2005; Lynch 2004).⁵ This claim is supported by robust findings based on empirical analyses of 2,236 speeches made by Chen between 2000 and 2006 (Sullivan and Lowe 2010) and analysis of Chen's election and reelection campaign advertising (Sullivan 2009b). This leads me to think that Li, James, and Drury have made the error of conflating "Taiwan independence" (or ROC sovereignty) with expressions of Taiwanese identity, which Chen did indeed emphasize heavily during his reelection campaign.

As president of the ROC, Chen was characterized by his "insistence on a specific Taiwanese national identity" (Schubert 2004, 548). Within the domestic context, Taiwan identity has an element of ethnic distinction, but it also forms the basis of attempts to concretize Taiwan's ideational distinctiveness from China—based on the community of diverse ethnic

groups that live in Taiwan and a historical and cultural specificity that makes it quite distinct from the PRC. The degree of separation is maintained by Taiwan's experience as a democracy and by PRC hostility, particularly its refusal to renounce the use of force and its aggressive efforts to limit Taiwan's activities in the international realm. Chen's project went further than merely emphasizing differences with the PRC. As Daniel Lynch (2004, 514) observed, Chen oversaw an attempt to "imagine a completely new and genuinely autonomous Taiwan," noting that "Taiwan already has territory, a government and a people: the challenge remaining is to construct a strong collective identity." By 2004, a majority of Taiwanese were claiming Taiwan-centered identities (Wang and Liu 2004), but this did not translate into a preference for independence (Wu 2004). I interpret this as a strong indication that identity and independence should be treated as distinct concepts. Jean-Pierre Cabestan (2005, 34), for instance, argues convincingly that "Taiwanese nationalism" was fed by the competing identities of domestic subethnic groups rather than a desire to separate from the Chinese nation.

With a more nuanced understanding of Taiwanese politics, Chen's behavior prior to his reelection campaign does not appear "diversionary" at all, but rather a straightforward case of spatial politics. Simply put, the DPP sought to differentiate itself from the Kuomintang/People First Party (KMT/PFP) by adopting a stronger position on Taiwan identity; a position that enjoyed public support and on which the DPP enjoyed natural advantages. More accurately, this is a case of valence politics, since there was "consensus among all major parties on stressing Taiwanese identity and love for Taiwan" (Fell 2005, 142).⁶ To exemplify this point, recall the statement by Chen Shui-bian that Li, James, and Drury use to exemplify a "highest intensity pro-independence" position. As a presidential candidate in 2008, current president Ma Ying-jeou ran several advertisements with almost identical formulations.⁷ Such statements, in addition to evocations of Taiwan identity themes, appeared frequently in Ma's campaign, but I doubt too many observers would claim that Ma is "pro-independence."

Estimating the Positions of Political Actors in Taiwan

My second point is a methodological one. Li, James, and Drury attempt an interesting and important innovation—that is, presenting quantitative estimates of the position of Taiwanese political actors on an independence/unification scale. This has clear parallels with ideal point estimation in other contexts, which typically locates the positions of politicians and

parties on a (socioeconomic) left-right continuum (for a summary of this large literature, see Lowe et al. 2011). Political scientists attempt to estimate preferences in numerous ways—for example, by analyzing parliamentary roll calls and by asking experts to locate politicians on a continuum. However, the most common method is to analyze political texts such as election manifestos, speeches, and debates. Although many analyses of Taiwanese politics refer to the political preferences of major politicians and parties, quantitative estimates such as those Li, James, and Drury attempt to generate would be a useful resource for comparing political preferences over time. Moreover, the increasing availability of appropriate electronic data and automated coding methods make this process more reliable and less time consuming.

However, Li, James, and Drury’s use of English-language newspaper reports as their primary data source is not the optimal choice, again casting some doubt on the reliability of their findings. The structure of newspaper articles, which generally report the *actions and interactions* of political actors, is better suited to analyzing conflict than estimating either salience or preferences. For this reason, event data analysis, which provides measures of the type and intensity of actor interactions, is one of the few techniques for which newspaper articles are generally used (Veen and Sullivan 2009). Conversely, estimating actor preferences usually relies on the analysis of texts (or speeches) created by the actors themselves.

Although Li, James, and Drury argue that Central News Agency reports are not biased, what they mean is that there is no valence bias—that is, the CNA does not favor one or other party in its reporting. Accepting this argument, their sample nevertheless suffers from two forms of selection bias. First, in terms of sampling, they use a keyword search to locate articles with such terms as “independence,” and “unification” and analyze *only these articles*. Second, news reports suffer from the bias of newsworthiness—that is, newspapers report only those events that are deemed important or provocative (Woolley 2000; Myers and Caniglia 2004). This would not be an insurmountable problem if the authors were interested in the level of media coverage given to Chen’s activities, but it is a problem when we want to infer Chen’s preferences. For instance, in eight years Chen Shui-bian made over 3,000 speeches, the vast majority of which did not touch on sovereignty issues (Sullivan and Lowe 2010). The information in these texts is discounted by both restricting the analysis to what reporters and editors deemed worthy of reporting and by further restricting the sample to articles that included the terms *unification and independence*.

In terms of the availability of primary data, much of it in electronic format, there has never been a more fruitful time to analyze Taiwanese politics. Government and other national institutions in Taiwan have successfully adopted measures to increase transparency (Lee, Tan, and Trimi 2005), and researchers have easy access to numerous types of primary data. Relevant to the current discussion is the record of presidential speeches made available at the presidential website⁸—an appropriate and abundant source of data for analyzing presidential discourse and estimating presidential preferences. Furthermore, since it is relatively straightforward to render these primary data in machine-readable format, researchers can take advantage of computer-assisted content analysis tools such as Wordscores or Wordfish, which are able to generate quantitative positional estimates for the author of a text (Laver, Benoit, and Garry 2003; Lowe 2008; Slapin and Proksch 2008). Such methods, in combination with the excellent sources of electronic data now available, represent an underutilized tool for analysts of Taiwanese politics.

Ultimately, however, these methods will only produce valid and reliable results if we apply appropriate conceptual and operational definitions. In the case of Taiwan, distinguishing between Taiwan identity and Taiwan independence is a minimum requirement. Indeed, had Li, James, and Drury argued that Chen emphasized *Taiwan identity* during his reelection campaign in order to deflect attention from a sagging economy and brutal attacks on his governance by the opposition, I would strongly agree with them. In fact, empirical analyses of Chen's TV and newspaper advertising during this campaign led me to exactly this conclusion (Sullivan 2009a, 685). However, it must be acknowledged that the Taiwan identity rhetoric that saturated this campaign was a result of the dynamics of domestic political competition and was for domestic consumption—it was not a “diversionary tactic.” On this point, it is worth noting that Chen's opponents, Lian Zhan and Song Chuyu, also campaigned heavily on Taiwanese identity themes (Sullivan 2009b, 314–316). Chen's strategy of making his reelection about Taiwan identity allowed him to control the campaign agenda and neutralized KMT/PFP attacks on the economy, governance issues, and his leadership credentials. This was tactically astute and evidently effective, but it was also a case of “normal” politics rather than a case for diversionary theory.

The proclamations of the ROC president are an important signal of the preferences of the preeminent actor in cross-strait policymaking on the ROC side. Despite improvements in relations under Ma Ying-jeou, it is likely that all ROC presidents will face similarly constrained strategic conditions at the international and domestic levels for the foreseeable fu-

ture. It is essential, therefore, that scholarly analyses accurately reflect the nuances of political competition that drive political behaviors in Taiwan. First, it is necessary to acknowledge that domestic constraints, particularly public opinion and national elections, have a major effect on political behavior in Taiwan—as they do in democracies around the world. Second, it is essential to avoid conflating ROC sovereignty with Taiwan independence and to separate both from expressions of Taiwanese identity. The ambiguity of “Taiwan independence” is no reason to leave it undefined, which can only further propagate confusion. If there are multiple or conflicting understandings of what constitutes independence, they must be acknowledged and used to inform our data-generation methods. It is important to acknowledge these two points if scholarly analyses are to provide analytical clarity on this complex issue and step above the stereotyping and solecism that beleaguer international media coverage.

Political Duplicity: A Reply to Jonathan Sullivan

Yitan Li, Patrick James, and A. Cooper Drury

JONATHAN SULLIVAN’S REPLY TO OUR ARTICLE “DIVERSIONARY DRAGONS, OR ‘Talking Tough in Taipei’” provides some very insightful and constructive comments. We are pleased that he credits us with being the first to engage in “quantitative estimates” regarding presidential rhetoric on Taiwan independence.

Sullivan’s critique raises two issues. First, our finding that Chen Shui-bian used diversionary tactics is asserted to be the result of “a misunderstanding of Taiwan independence.” Second, our reliance on English-language newspaper reports purportedly raises questions about “appropriate methods and data used to derive estimates of Taiwanese political actors’ political preferences.”

On “Taiwan Independence”

Sullivan correctly points out that we do not formally define Taiwan independence. We purposefully did not do so because a single definition would not capture the range of possible meanings *independence* has for the Taiwanese public or political parties. First, we completely agree with him that only a handful of die-hard Taiwanese prefer “independence ASAP.”⁹ The fact that only a small group wants immediate and complete

independence does not mean that the rest of the population prefers unification. Instead, the vast majority of Taiwanese prefer a policy that falls somewhere between independence on one side of the status quo and unification on the other. This makes defining *independence* difficult and unnecessary, because both independence and unification are assessed as a matter of degree; they are not concepts with unambiguous meanings. Independence and unification are two ends of the same continuum. With the exception of a few extreme cases, most people's preference lies somewhere in between these two polar points.

However, political elites do campaign on their respective party platforms regarding independence and unification. Sticking to core party platforms galvanizes voters and catches their attention, especially when election day is nowhere near. Candidates are likely to move to the median voter position as the actual election draws closer (Downs 1957).

The second reason a single definition is problematic is connected to the preferences of political parties. Political elites in both the Pan-Blue and Pan-Green coalitions have a strategic interest in keeping their respective definitions of independence (and unification, for that matter) ambiguous. If politicians do not put forward a specific and clear definition of independence, then they can claim publicly to prefer one policy without being pinned down to exactly what that means in more substantive terms. For example, a candidate could make a rather extreme statement about "imminent independence" to bolster support from his or her party; but by not defining what those words mean, the candidate can later move toward the status quo. Thus, an ambiguous definition allows elites to use extreme positions as strategic diversions.

Sullivan further argues that our understanding of independence is "at odds with much of the Taiwan studies literature." We respectfully disagree. Our understanding of the reality of independence is in line with Shelley Rigger's (2001) analysis that the declaration of an independent sovereign state "has become . . . marginalized," just as the other end of the continuum—the declaration of an immediate unification—is also unlikely (Clark 2007).

Sullivan misunderstands our example of President Chen Shui-bian's claim in an interview that the Republic of China was a "sovereign state." This example simply shows how we consistently and systematically applied our coding rules. Our rules stipulate that (1) a higher-level political official's public statement regarding independence and unification carries more weight than a lower-level official's statement (e.g., presidential candidates carry more weight than mayoral candidates); and (2) an explicit statement regarding independence and unification carries more weight

than an implicit one. In this case, President Chen, the highest-level official in Taiwan, made an explicit remark about Taiwan's independent status. We coded this remark as a pro-independence statement with the highest level of intensity. This particular coding and our conceptualization of the coding scheme do not negate the fact that "de jure independence is going nowhere" (Friedman 2006), as cited by Sullivan. It only makes a systematic and a priori distinction between a president's explicit remarks as compared to less explicit remarks made by other officials.

Sullivan's argument about the creation of a new and unique Taiwanese identity gets to the core of the issue we set out to address. We are in agreement with Sullivan that a new Taiwanese identity is being created. However, we interpret differently what the political elites can do with this new identity.

In recent years, in spite of party politics, cooperation and integration between mainland China and Taiwan have continued. The recent signing of the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) is evidence for continued integration. However, as Cal Clark (2007, 71) rightly points out, there has been a "lack of 'spillover' from economic integration and social communications into the realms of national security and identity" in the Taiwan Strait. While economic integration continues, there does not seem to be a shift in the security issues.

We agree with Sullivan that such a lack of spillover is due primarily to the recent creation or recreation of a new Taiwanese national identity. Hans Stockton (2007) argues that actor identity construction will have subsequent effect on the construction of state interests. Melissa Brown (2004, 2–13) argues that it is a misunderstanding to view "ethnic and national identities" as based on "common ancestry and/or common culture and therefore that identity is grounded in antiquity." Instead, she argues that "identity is formed and solidified on the basis of common social experience, including economic and political experience" and "identities must be negotiated; they are not simply a matter of choice, because identity formation in individuals and groups derives from their interaction with the social and cultural context in which they live" (also see Keyes 1981; Bentley 1987; Williams 1989; Harrell 1995; Brown 1996). As a result, when common social experiences change, identities change too. Changes of social experiences in Taiwan over the past several decades have altered Taiwan's social and national identity.

One of the primary political and social identities emerging in Taiwan is the island's gradual process of democratization. The Taiwanese people see their identity based in large part on being democrats. President Chen consciously and proactively promoted this new Taiwanese identity with policies such as adding *Taiwan* to the passport jacket, changing

China Post to *Taiwan Post*, and promoting local dialects instead of mandarin Chinese in schools.

Sullivan is right in saying that the “Taiwan-centered identifiers” may not “translate into a preference for independence.” Furthermore, he argues that Taiwan independence and Taiwan identity are two separate issues. We assert that Taiwan independence or unification and Taiwan identity are inexorably intertwined. It is precisely the interconnectedness of the two issues that gives Taiwan’s political elites an opportunity and incentive to use the Taiwan independence or unification issue strategically. For example, if a president comments on independence, he necessarily evokes feelings of Taiwanese identity, for how one can be independent without an identity?

The behaviors of Taiwan’s elites reflect a political duplicity (*kou shi xin fei*), where the elites belie their true intentions by deceptive words—an all-too-common tactic of politicians. The ability to make relatively strong statements that do not necessarily signal their true policy preference permits leaders to engage in diversionary behavior. Any Taiwanese leader, Green or Blue, can divert the public’s attention away from other issues by rattling the independence or unification sword, whether that leader has any intention of changing the status quo or not.

President Chen, for example, is perfectly aware that a formal and immediate declaration of independence is unlikely to materialize.¹⁰ However, making strong statements on independence will “twist the lion’s tail” and galvanize voter support, especially among those who question a leader’s resolve regarding issues of national security. This strategy gives Taiwan’s political elites the opportunity to use their positions on independence or unification to divert attention away from domestic political problems.

More important, there simply is not a better way to test elites’ diversionary behaviors. The ideal way would be to directly ask involved elites whether they have engaged in such actions. However, it is virtually certain that they would not admit their political duplicity. The alternative would be to establish some empirical linkage between elite behaviors and actions. And that is what we are trying to do in “Diversionary Dragons.”

Methodological Issues: Coding Political Rhetoric

The second issue Sullivan raises concerns the source of our data. He suggests that a content analysis of the president’s speeches would be a more appropriate measure of the president’s actual preference on Taiwan independence. We agree; however, we are not interested in the actual prefer-

ences of the president or his opposition. Instead, we are interested in his rhetoric within a system of variables that includes domestic political and economic conditions. Analyzing the difference between what the president said in speeches and as part of a campaign platform and what was said to the media would be interesting, but our goal is to assess the public rhetoric rather than the actual preferences of the president.

Sullivan, in a related argument, suggests that using the Central News Agency (CNA) meant that only "newsworthy" information about the president had been accessed, and so we may not have picked up all of the data available. Two points are worth noting here. First, one would expect that comments by the president about independence or even "sovereignty" would likely be published. News media tend to pick up eye-catching or controversial news. Second, we are interested in those comments that are picked up by the news media and thus transferred to the public. To put it differently, Taiwanese elites may choose to use news media as a communication channel to express their rhetoric. More important is that the general public may not be interested in entire speeches or policy statements made by political elites. Rather, news media are often a reliable and common source of information for the general public. Such transmission of presidential comments would be the best channel through which the president could engage in diversionary theory. We thus hold that use of the CNA content analysis data is appropriate.

As a means to tap into elites' behaviors and preferences, rhetoric is both valuable and as slippery as many a politician. We believe that our analysis shows the value of using official statements that are transmitted to the public via the news media. The rhetoric we use provides information about the behavior of the elites because those speeches are, in effect, actions by the elites that are shown to the public. Sullivan is correct, however, that our data do not tap the actual preferences of the elites. This is the slippery part of rhetoric data. This exchange demonstrates not only that one must select carefully which type of rhetoric to code, but also that perhaps multiple types of rhetoric would provide optimal understanding. Rhetoric data on both the preferences and behaviors of elites would permit both a complete analysis of their actions and a comparison of their preferences and behaviors.

To sum up, we have addressed Sullivan's constructive critique of our article and provided further explanation and clarification. Our central point is that Taiwanese politicians' political duplicity has allowed them to engage in diversionary behaviors with the potential to reap political benefits. Nothing suggests that the future will limit this behavior. More hostile diversionary tactics are too risky to consider, leaving the elites

fewer options to divert the public's attention. In fact, the future may make independence an even bigger issue. Consolidation of a Taiwanese identity that is separate from the PRC should make independence/unification an even more attractive issue for politicians to use for diversion. Because identity and independence are so closely (and perhaps reciprocally) connected, the issue is a perfect saber for either the president or opponents to rattle.

The complexity and ambiguity of cross-strait relations and political elites' duplicity are strong reasons for elites to engage in diversionary behaviors. In the context of cross-strait studies, as long as the Taiwan issue remains unsolved, the likelihood of Taiwanese elites using the island's relationship with mainland China for political and strategic purposes will remain.

Jonathan Sullivan is Research Councils UK (RCUK) Fellow for China, Globalization and Civil Society at the University of Nottingham. His work covers various aspects of political competition and communication in China and Taiwan and has appeared in the *China Quarterly*, *Journal of Contemporary China*, *Pacific Review*, and other journals. He is currently preparing a book on elections in Taiwan.

Yitan Li is assistant professor of political science at Seattle University. His research focuses on international relations, foreign policy analysis, international conflict and security, international political economy, comparative politics, and Chinese and East Asian politics. He has published recently in *Asian Affairs*, *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, *International Studies Perspectives*, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, and *Political Research Quarterly*.

Patrick James is professor of international relations and director of the Center for International Studies at the University of Southern California. He is the author or editor of eighteen books and more than 100 other academic publications. James was honored as the Distinguished Scholar in Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Migration by the International Studies Association at its annual meeting in 2010.

A. Cooper Drury is associate professor of political science at the University of Missouri and editor in chief of *Foreign Policy Analysis*. His research and teaching focus broadly on foreign policy and international political economy. He has published extensively on the use and consequences of economic sanctions.

Notes

1. See www.mac.gov.tw/public/Attachment/911812484886.gif (accessed April 26, 2010).

2. "Resolution on Taiwan's Future," www.taiwandc.org/nws-9920.htm (accessed April 26, 2010).

3. Extracted from Li's "state to state" interview with Deutsche Welle in 1999 (my italics).

4. The DPP's "discovery" of ROC sovereignty was a significant development, because the main thrust of its earlier position was the pursuit of independence *from the ROC* (Corcuff 2004, 50).

5. I operationalize Taiwan identity elsewhere as "signifiers of a distinct collective identity based on common points of identification, references to a distinctive and predominantly hostile 'other,' and endorsements of or duties to the identifying collectivity" (Sullivan and Lowe 2010, 629).

6. For instance, in the 2004 presidential campaign, in addition to their ample advertising on Taiwan identity (Sullivan 2009a), Lian Zhan and Song Chuyu provided one of the most dramatic and memorable images of the campaign. On the stump at separate locations, both candidates (and their wives) prostrated themselves and kissed the ground to symbolize their love for Taiwan.

7. For instance, an ad published in *Apple Daily* on March 14 states that "the ROC is a sovereign, independent country" (*Zhonghua Minguo shi ge zhuquan duli de guojia*).

8. See www.president.gov.tw.

9. Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), "Independence or Unification," available at www.mac.gov.tw/public/Attachment/05211052927 (accessed September 13, 2010). The point of the rhetoric is to demonstrate toughness, even aggressiveness, toward mainland China. So the fact that substantive poll numbers are not high for Taiwan independence does not negate the idea that a president might engage in intense rhetoric, using that terminology to enhance his reputation as someone who can "handle" the mainland.

10. This is evidenced by President Chen's failed attempts on the referendums.

References

- Bentley, G. Carter. 1987. "Ethnicity and Practice." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 29: 24–25.
- Brown, Melissa J. 1996. *Negotiating Ethnicities in China and Taiwan*. Berkeley: Institute for East Asian Studies, University of California.
- . 2004. *Is Taiwan Chinese? The Impact of Culture, Power, and Migration on Changing Identities*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cabestan, Jean-Pierre. 2005. "Specificities and Limits of Taiwanese Nationalism." *China Perspectives* 62: 32–43.
- Chao, Chien-min. 2003. "One Step Forward, One Step Backward: Chen Shui-bian's Mainland Policy." *Journal of Contemporary China* 12, 34: 125–143.
- Clark, Cal. 2004. "The Paradox of the National Identity Issue in Chen Shui-bian's 2004 Presidential Campaign: Base Constituencies vs. the Moderate Middle." *Issues and Studies* 41, 1: 53–86.
- . 2007. "Economic Integration Between China and Taiwan: No Spillover into the Identity and Security Realms." In *Identity and Changes in East Asian Conflicts: The Cases of China, Taiwan, and the Koreas*, ed. Shale Horowitz, Uk Heo, and Alexander C. Tan. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Corcuff, Stéphane. 2004. "The Supporters of Unification and the Taiwanisation Movement." *China Perspectives* 53: 49–66.
- Dittmer, Lowell. 2005. "Taiwan's Aim-Inhibited Quest for Identity and the China Factor." *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 40, 1–2: 475–483.
- Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper-Collins.
- Fell, Dafydd. 2005. *Party Politics in Taiwan: Party Change and the Democratic Evolution of Taiwan, 1991–2004*. London: Routledge.
- Friedman, Edward. 2006. "Taiwan's Independence Plot." *Issues and Studies* 42, 4: 67–95.
- Harrell, Stevan. 1995. *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Keyes, Charles F. 1981. "The Dialectics of Ethnic Change." In *Ethnic Change*, ed. C. F. Keyes. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Laver, Michael, Kenneth Benoit, and John Garry. 2003. "Extracting Policy Positions from Political Texts Using Words as Data." *American Political Science Review* 97, 2: 311–331.
- Lee, Sang, Xin Tan, and Silvana Trimi. 2005. "Current Practices of Leading E-Government Countries." *Communications of the ACM* 48, 10: 99–104.
- Li, Yitan, Patrick James, and Cooper Drury. 2009. "Diversionary Dragons, or 'Talking Tough in Taipei': Cross-Strait Relations in the New Millennium." *Journal of East Asian Studies* 9, 3: 369–398.
- Lin, Jih-wen. 2005. "Uncovering the Informal Dimensions of Taiwan's Cross-Strait Policy-Making." Paper presented at the Thirty-fourth Sino-American Conference, University of Virginia.
- Lowe, Will. 2008. "Understanding Wordscores." *Political Analysis* 16, 4: 356–371.
- Lowe, Will, et al. 2011. "Scaling Policy Preferences from Coded Political Texts." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 36, 1: 117–145.
- Lynch, Daniel. 2004. "Taiwan's Self-Conscious Nation-Building Project." *Asian Survey* 44, 4: 513–533.
- Myers, Daniel, and Beth Schaefer Caniglia. 2004. "All the Rioting That's Fit to Print: Selection Effects in National Newspaper Coverage of Civil Disorders, 1968–1969." *American Sociological Review* 69, 4: 519–543.
- Putnam, Robert. 1988. "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games." *International Organization* 42, 3: 427–460.
- Rigger, Shelley. 2001. "Maintaining the Status Quo: What It Means and Why Taiwanese Prefer It." *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14, 2: 102–114.
- Ross, Robert. 2006. "Explaining Taiwan's Revisionist Diplomacy." *Journal of Contemporary China* 15, 48: 443–458.
- Schubert, Gunther. 2004. "Taiwan's Political Parties and National Identity: The Rise of an Overarching Consensus." *Asian Survey* 44, 4: 534–554.
- Sheng, Lijun. 2001. *China and Taiwan: Cross-Strait Relations Under Chen Shui-bian*. New York: Zed Books.
- Slapin, Jonathan, and Sven-Oliver Proksch. 2008. "A Scaling Model for Estimating Time Series Policy Positions from Texts." *American Journal of Political Science* 52, 3: 705–722.

- Stockton, Hans. 2007. "Taiwan: Political and National Security of Becoming 'Taiwanese.'" In *Identity and Changes in East Asian Conflicts: The Cases of China, Taiwan, and the Koreas*, ed. Shale Horowitz, Uk Heo, and Alexander C. Tan. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sullivan, Jonathan. 2009a. "Campaign Advertising in Taiwanese Presidential Elections." *Journal of Contemporary China* 18, 61: 675–688.
- . 2009b. "Defending Negativity? Evidence from Campaigns in Taiwan." *East Asia* 26, 4: 305–320.
- Sullivan, Jonathan, and Will Lowe. 2010. "Chen Shui-Bian: On Independence." *China Quarterly* 203: 619–638.
- Veen, Tim, and Jonathan Sullivan. 2009. "News Sources and Decision-Making in the EU Council." *Government and Opposition* 44, 4: 471–475.
- Wang, T. Y., and I. C. Liu. 2004. "Contending Identities in Taiwan: Implications for Cross-Strait Relations." *Asian Survey* 44, 4: 568–590.
- Williams, Brackette. 1989. "A Class Act: Anthropology and the Race to Nation Across Ethnic Terrain." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18: 401–444.
- Woolley, John. 2000. "Using Media-Based Data in Studies of Politics." *American Journal of Political Science* 44, 1: 156–173.
- Wu, Yu Shan. 2004. "Taiwanese Nationalism and Its Implications: Testing the Worst Case Scenario." *Asian Survey* 44, 4: 614–625.