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The Operational Code of Shen Chui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou: A New Approach in the Analysis of Cross-strait Relations

Keywords: *Operational Code Analysis, Foreign Policy Analysis, Asia, cross-Strait Relations, Political Leadership*

Abstract

The relations between the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of China have improved to an unknown level since Ma Ying-jeou has won the presidential elections in 2008. Beside some profound evidence, no research has been done so far that focused on the personality of either Ma Ying-jeou or his predecessor Chen Shui-bian and how they influenced the cross-Strait relations. This paper wants to close this academic gap and aims to explain to which extent the improvements can be contributed to a distinguished view of the world between Ma Ying-jeou and his predecessor Chen Shui-bian. For this reason, an operational code analysis was done to assess a particular portion of an individuals’ personality. The results immediately suggest evidence that Ma Ying-jeou’s operational code suited better to the current situation across the Strait. He was friendlier towards the nature of the international system, more cooperative and risk averse. This is represented in his cross-Strait policy that contributed to the improved conditions across the Taiwan Strait.

Introduction

'Over the past three years, since May 2008 when Ma Ying-jeou and his Nationalist Party (KMT) took power in Taiwan, cross-Strait relations have been improving, and the relationship has been relatively peaceful and stable.' (Shulong, 2011: Online)

Since Ma Ying-jeou (*Mǎ Yīngjiū*) has taken over the presidential office from his predecessor Chen Shui-bian (*Chén Shuǐbiǎn*), the cross-Strait relations between the Republic of China (RoC) (*Zhōnghuá Mínguó*) and the People's Republic of China (PRC) (*Zhōnghuá Rénmín Gònghéguó*) improved to a new level in the long-standing history of both countries, which was and still is characterized by rivalry, legitimacy questions and an always poised threat of a military attack on the island by the PRC.¹ However, as both sides managed to live beside each other and attracted certain advantages of a more cooperative relationship, economic issues were the first to bring both sides of the Taiwan Strait together. Between 2000 and 2011 exports from the RoC to the PRC increased from 4.5\$ Mio. to 80\$ Mio. (cf. Taiwan-Stat, 2013a). At the same time, the imports from the Mainland increased by nearly 700% from 6.3\$ Mio. to 43.5\$ Mio. (cf. Taiwan-Stat, 2013b).

Despite the improved economic relations, the Chen Shui-bian era had emphasized on numerous occasions his willingness to move towards an independent Taiwan, truly testing the stability and patience of the cross-Strait triangle (Taiwan, China, and the United States). This move produced a lot of tensions between both sides of the Strait. Tensions that not began to ease until Ma Ying-jeou came into power. Since then, cross-Strait talks have resumed, negotiations on several issues were achieved and the economic relations were accompanied by increased political and cultural relations. Some dates illustrate this development: In June 2008 the first formal talks between the PRC and the RoC were held since the suspension of the dialogue in 1999 (cf. BBC, 2013). Two years later, in June 2010, a free trade pact and in August 2012 an investment protection deal was signed (ibid). However, one of the major thrusts for the improvement of the cross-Strait relations came soon after Ma's inauguration with the opening of the three direct links (*sān tōng*) of postal, transportation and trade (cf. Lee, 2013). Especially the establishment of direct flights between the Island and the Mainland had provided a massive boost for the Taiwanese Tourism sector and can be seen as a major achievement in cross-Strait relations in recent years (cf. Shulong, 2011).

Two further quotes reflect the achieved improvements:

'Ma took office as Taiwan's president in 2008 and adopted a policy of engagement with Beijing, leading to warming cross-strait ties and the signing of 18 non-political agreements and a series of exchanges.' (Chung, 2013)

'It is a mark of how the relationship between Taiwan and China has strengthened over the past few years that even the former head of Taiwan's opposition party – which historically has been hostile to the mainland and in favour of Taiwanese independence – recently visited Beijing to meet officials and academics.' (Mishkin, 2013)

However, this closer relationship with the Mainland produced some severe criticism for Ma Ying-jeou, who's approval rates felt on an all-time low of 13% in November 2012 (cf. Economist, 2012).² Neither was Ma able to improve the living conditions of the ordinary people, nor did he found a solution for the stagnated salaries or the increasing number of families that have to live below the poverty line (ibid).

1 This paper refers to China as the People's Republic of China, and Taiwan as the Republic of China. These terms are used for a varied enjoyable reading experience and are without any political notion.

2 Recent polls suggest a slightly higher value of 18% (Hsu, Stacey and Chang, Richard (2014): Separate polls put Ma's approval rate under 18 percent. Online: <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2014/05/14/2003590295>).

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'Critics say false promises of economic revival, flip-flop policies and concerns about his administration's cozy relations with China have contributed to public distrust. [...] Ma has taken pride in the development of cross-strait relations [...]. However, concerns about Taiwan's over-dependence on China remain despite Ma's assurances that his administration has no plans for political talks with Beijing.' (Mo, 2013: Online)

Although Ma's domestic policy decisions were never lucky at all, he clearly was more successful in his foreign policy, especially with its cross-Strait Relations. Thus, this paper wants to put him at the focus of interest and aims to look beyond the black-and-white analysis of liberalism and realism. Unlike classical approaches of international relations, the Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) focuses on political actors and their behaviour and aims to explain the behaviour of a state as a result of decisions made by human beings (Breuning, 2007; Hudson, 2007). Therefore, to understand a certain decision, one has to understand the person who made them and the process in which the decision was made. An actors' perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and goals will shape not only the goal he or she wants to achieve but also the composition of his or her advisory body, the way information are gathered and evaluated, and hereafter the decision-making process at all.

To be straightforward, the validity of the results depends on other factors likewise. Two factors are outstanding and are worth mentioning right in the beginning. The first concerns party preferences. The Democratic Progress Party (DPP) (*Mínzhǔ Jìnbù Dǎng*) was and still is the advocate of an independent Taiwan, that does not accept the "1992 Consensus" (*Jiǔ-Èr Gòngshì*). A consensus that proclaims that there is only one China (*yī gè Zhōngguó zhèngcè*) but both sides can interpret this in their own interest (cf. 1992-Consensus, 2011). The PRC numerously emphasized the 1992 Consensus as the basis of cross-Strait relations. Ma Ying-jeou's Kuomintang (KMT) (*Zhōngguó Guómíndǎng*) on the other side advocates the 1992 Consensus and uses it as the foundation for their cross-Strait policies. Unlike Chen and the DPP, Ma and the KMT has never steered the country towards independence. They were rather eager to fix the tensions of the Chen legislative period.

The second factor is the changing behaviour of the PRC in cross-Strait relations, especially in times of elections. During Taiwan's first democratic elections in 1996, the PRC conducted a missile test to, the PRC conducted a missile test to intimidate Taiwanese to vote for Lee Teng-hui (*Lǐ Dēnghuī*) (KMT); in 2000, the PRC warned the Taiwanese that a vote for Chen Shui-bian (DPP) would considered as a decision for war; and in 2004, the PRC already stopped any direct intimidations (cf. Tang, 2006: 556-557). Thus, to fully understand the complex situation in the Taiwan Strait in general, and the influence of personality in particular, numerous factors have to be included. This runs in line with the three-level analysis of FPA (Hudson, 2007). Nonetheless, in the limited margin space of time, this paper primarily focuses on the actor-level.

Beside these two factors, the president due to his constitutional powers is a central figure within the political system of Taiwan. Thus, his personality in general, and his beliefs and perceptions in specific, is a decisive factor in the decision-making process. To approach the personality of an actor, two central concepts have emerged within the field of FPA: One aims to assess a leadership style according to a thin set of traits (Hermann, 2002). Another focuses on a particular personality characteristic and aims to explain the behaviour of an actor by assessing his or her worldview. Every human being has a certain perception about the nature of world. This so-called operational code shapes the way information are gathered, decision are made and how the individual will behave in and under certain circumstances and thus, how his country will behave.

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As several authors draw a close link between the improved cross-Strait relations and the person Ma Ying-jeou, there is profound evidence to believe that his personality is somehow different from Chen Shui-bian. The focus of this paper is now a particular portion of an individuals' personality, namely his or her worldview and how a difference between them can explain the improved conditions of the Taiwan Strait. Thus, the central question is:

Is there a difference between the Operational Code of Chen Shui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou, that can explain the improved cross-Strait relations?

To answer this question, the operational code of both actors will be assessed. For this reason, speeches and interviews were collected, analysed and coded according to the operational code scheme. In a second step, the collected documents were examined by the use of particular keywords. This should provide further insights and aims to explain how both actors reflect a probable difference of the operational code in the use of particular political terms. Although, “yes or no” questions are of rather disputed value in academia, it is worth posing the question in such a fashion, because the paper certainly enters unknown territory as no research is done yet that compares both presidents by a substantiated analysis of their personality. Current research focuses either on the transition from Chen Shui-bian to Ma Ying-jeou (Gelsing, 2012; Saunders and Kastner, 2009), cross-Strait relations under Chen (Chang and Holt, 2009; Chao, 2004; Wang, 2002) or cross-Strait relations in general (Lee, 2013). Thus, the reader should understand the findings of this paper as first, a starting point for further research; and second, as an attempt to apply and therefore, to test alternative method.

To approach the topic with detail, the paper is divided into four chapters that provide a brief introduction into the Foreign Policy Analysis (Chapter 2), presents the research framework (Chapter 3), discuss the findings of the operational code analysis (Chapter 4) and answers the research question in a concluding chapter (Chapter 5).

Foreign Policy Analysis – an alternative approach in international relations

The central concern of international relations studies is the question of how to secure peace in an anarchical international system. Answers to this question differ from the pure aggregation of as much power as possible (*realism*) to getting involved into international trade, international organizations and promotion of democracy as much as possible (*liberalism*) to the more complex approach of community building and creation of a shared culture throughout the international system (*constructivism*). Despite all differences, what each of the three theories have in common is the focus on entities be it the state, international organizations, multinational companies, or transnational communities, rather than individuals and their behaviour and decisions. To put it in a nutshell: ‘*anarchy is what states make of it*’ (Wendt, 1992: 395). Now, if one would replace the term “*state*” in Wendt’s phrase by “*man*” or “*humans*” one has the point of departure for the Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), which is encapsulated by Hudson: ‘*All that occurs between nations and across nations is grounded in human decision-makers acting singly or in groups*’ (Hudson, 2007: 2). Therefore, ‘*to explain and predict the behavior of the human collectivities comprising nation-states, IR theory requires a theory of human political choice*’ (Hudson and Vore, 1995: 210).

The international relations as seen through FPA-lenses neglect the idea of the nation-state as a unitary actor (Breuning, 2007; Hudson and Vore, 1995; Hudson, 2005 and 2007; Walker, 2011). Concepts like the “national interest” are regarded as a product of various players (ibid). Thus, what is to be explained are processes and results of human decision-making. This can

be single decisions, constellation of decisions in a particular situation, stages of decision-making and so forth. What is not examined are accidents, mistakes or decisions that have no direct link with the international system. The explanans in foreign policy analysis are ‘*those factors that influence foreign policy decision-making and foreign policy decision-makers*’ (Hudson, 2007: 5). As there are usually too many factors that influence the decision-making process, this resulted in one of the most common critiques toward the FPA. It is ‘*impossible of tracing all influences on a given decision, or even on decision-making in the abstract*’ (Hudson, 2007: 5). However, this critique sounds more like a killer argument, because to which extent an analysis has appropriate information at one’s disposal is a matter to all theories. Furthermore, most of the critiques are just put forward by sceptics who simply do not or do not want to understand the approach.

Having mentioned the explanandum and explanans of the foreign policy analysis, it is important to focus on its central characteristics. Foreign Policy analysis is: (cf. Hudson, 2007: 6)

- *Multifactorial*: meaning that no single variable can explain a particular behaviour. Interactions of several factors are needed.
- *Multi-level analysis*: meaning that one has to look on all three levels for an explanation (the system, the state and the individual).
- *Multi- and Interdisciplinary*: meaning that a sufficient explanation is only possible if one uses several disciplines (e.g. political psychology).
- *Integrative*: meaning that if distinguished disciplines are used one has to search for a common denominator.
- *Actor-centred*: meaning that the focuses of FPA are human beings and their decisions.
- *Actor-specific*: meaning that every human is unique.

Here one finds another source of critique: the foreign policy analysis is a complex, time- and resource-consuming approach. Not only does the scientist have to apply a broad set of factors to describe a particular behaviour, he or she also has to look on all three levels to provide a sufficient explanation. This leads to the problem, that most of the studies are concerned with a particular situation rather than trying to explain the foreign policy behaviour of certain legislative periods over time, a problem that cannot be solved by this paper either. However, during years of research and the development of tools like belief systems, leadership traits and operational codes and with the help of computer-based programs it becomes more easier to first, consider a broad set of influencing factors and second, provide data to explain the foreign policy behaviour over a longer period.

A last but nonetheless highly important issue concerning the FPA is the question, whether or not leaders matter. Therein, lays the most potential source of critique. Academia is missing a clear answer to this question (Herman and Hagan, 1998; Jervis, 2013 Nye, 2013). A slightly idealistic but worth to mention answer was posted by Breuning:

‘It is ultimately leaders who make foreign policy decisions. They are the ones committing their country and its resources to certain foreign policy behaviors. [...] Understanding decision makers and decision making is the key to understanding foreign policy behavior and the eventual outcomes of events.’ (Breuning, 2007: 164f.)

Decisions have to be made. They cannot be postponed arbitrary. So, who are those to make them? Decision-makers are human beings and it would be too narrowly considered if one argues that they do not influence any decision-making because of greater systematic constraints. Therefore, from an FPA point of view leaders matter but they are not free to do

what they want. However, *'they build expectations, plan strategies, and urge actions on their government that conform with their judgements about what is possible and likely to maintain them in the positions'* (Herman and Hagan, 1998: 126). Whether a leader matters or not depends on several factors that can be largely categorized into three broad categories: (Breuning, 2007; Hudson, 2007)

- *State conditions*: conditions a leader has to face when in office that limit his or her space of decision-making; some can be changed (international treaties) some cannot (geography) (e.g. resources, geography, regime type, size, demographics, political system, military and economic capabilities; international memberships)
- *Personality*: (habitual) conditions that restrain a leader, because of his or her socialization; the more habitual a characteristic attitude is the harder it is to change (e.g. interest in FP, use of analogies, diplomatic training, education and socialisation, advisory body, leadership style)
- *Circumstances*: in which situation has a decision to be made; which other circumstances influences this situation (e.g. crisis situation, information, group interactions, party-influence, public approval)

These three categories also reflect why it is so hard to bring all important influencing factors into the analysis. However, it is not necessary to bring all relevant factors together but as much as possible and needed for an appropriate explanation. Whatsoever, the best way to deal with question of do leaders matter is to focus on the three categories that can be described as the two-level game (Putnam, 1988) of international politics extended by the personality of an individual, because *'the impact a leader can have depends not only on the constraints and opportunities presented by the environment but also on that leader's interest and involvement in foreign policy'* (Breuning, 2007: 31). Therefore, whether or not leaders matter depends on one hand on domestic and international constraints, because leaders consider not only whether an option is effective but also how this option will be received by the domestic audience (ibid: 116). On the other hand, one has to ask does the leader want to matters in foreign policy. It is likely to expect leaders who are not really interested in international relations or foreign policy to be a lame duck on such issues, having others to make foreign policy decisions that in the end only have to be blessed by the national leader if necessary.

Another important constraint on the extent to which a single person (or a group of person) can shape the international behaviour of his or her country is the political system. It is no coincidence that nearly all foreign policy analyses are concerned with countries where (semi-) presidentialism is installed, foremost the United States of America. In presidential systems the executive is separated from the legislative branch. Therefore, the president has substantial leeway in organizing the executive to suit his decision-making style (cf. Breuning, 2007: 94). He or she is usually the supreme commander-in-chief and has the responsibility to direct and dispose the military. In a parliamentarian system, on the other side, the prime minister owes his position to the legislative (ibid). The extent, to which a prime-minister can enjoy the same amount of power and leeway that a president has, depends largely on the composition of the parliament and who owns the majority of seats there. However, there would be many more things to say at this point. Important is that the possibility to influence foreign policy decisions by an individual depends on several constraints that are state conditions (some of them cannot be changed, like resources), the personality of an individual and the circumstances in which a decision has to be made.

Having presented the main characteristics of the foreign policy analysis approach to the study of international relations, as well as its constraints and critiques the next section is going to present the research framework.

Research Framework

Beside several other methods to make a foreign policy analysis work this paper focuses on individual decision-making and a particular portion of an individual's personality, their view of the world. But how can one get access to the personality of actors? As it is nearly impossible to have actors

'submit to a series of clinical interviews', because neither they 'would have time for, or tolerate, such procedures, they would be wary that the results, if made public, might prove politically damaging to them' (Herman, 2002: 1),

other modes to bring an individual closer to the analysis are needed. A profound method to vanquish the gap between the researcher and his or her object of research is to *'assess the psychological characteristics of individuals from a distance without having direct access to them'* (Schafer and Walker, 2006: 26). This so-called *assessment-at-a-distance* is most commonly done by examining what an actor has said.

Four important restraints have to be mentioned at this point: *speechwriter effect, lying, location and time, language*. The first restraint refers to the so-called speechwriter effect. Speeches are usually not written by political leaders but by one of his or her staff members. However, two arguments are easing this restraint. First, before a president pronounces a speech he or she will have a look on it and scratches or rewrite those words, phrases and paragraphs that do not fit his or her conviction. This is even more the case the more important a speech is and the more interested an actor is in the field where the speech is to be held. Second, in his 2009 study *When Public Statements Reveal Private Beliefs: Assessing Operational Code at a Distance*, Renshon compared the operational code of John F. Kennedy based upon public statements with one that was based on private utterances. He found no significant differences (cf. Renshon, 2009: 650). However, relying on public material might still be a problem, because no one can take it for granted that what one is saying is what one is thinking. Thus, further studies are needed to underpin the results of Renshon's study. The second restraint is not to gainsay that easily. Actors can and politicians do lie; and sometimes for good reason, e.g. in cases concerning national security. There is no way to guess whether someone is lying or not by solely assessing what one is saying. If one has lied or not becomes only obvious in the aftermath. Closely connected to this problem is the third restraint, because it is also methodologically unfounded. So far, no research has been done on the influence of the audiences and the place where the speeches or interviews have taken place. It would be interesting to know if an actor tells different things in a different way to a different kind of audiences. The fourth and last restraint will directly influence this paper and concerns the language in which the documents to be analysed were written. In the case of this paper, to analyse public utterances it is a decisive advantage to be capable of reading the Mandarin originals. So, the language in which the documents were published is important. The translation of speeches and interviews into English is done in a way to attract the English-speaking audience. Therefore, the wording is decisive. Certain words will lose their original meaning when translated into English. As important as this restraint is, it will not question the validity of the approach nor the results, but it is a necessary to mention limitation.

Nonetheless, content analysis is an appropriate and sophisticated approach within the foreign policy analysis. Speeches and interviews are usually open for free access and today – thanks to technical inventions – well archived. Thus, depending on the person of interest a large set of data can be collected. Over time two important sets of analysis have been evolved and proofed to be useful for such a content analysis: the leadership trait analysis developed by Margaret Herman focuses on the establishment of an individual profile that can explain the behaviour of a certain actor at a particular time. The other set of analysis focuses on the worldview of an actor – his *operational code*.

Operational Code Analysis

The term operational code was invented by Nathan Leites in his ground laying works *The Operational Code of the Politbureau* (1951) and *A Study of Bolshevism* (1953) (cf. Renshon, 2008: 824 f.). More than a decade later, Alexander George further developed the theory in his memorandum *The 'Operational Code': A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making* (George, 1969). In this memo, he criticized Leites for neither defining his central concerns in an appropriate matter nor developing a universal claim for his approach, even though many regarded Leites' studies as a new genre in the field of elite studies (cf. George, 1969: 1). Beside further critique towards the early works of Nathan Leites, the most decisive innovation of George's memorandum was the introduction of the *philosophical and instrumental beliefs system* (Table 1). Philosophical beliefs are 'general assumptions regarding the fundamental nature of politics, conflict and the individual' (Renshon, 2008: 824 f.) and instrumental beliefs are 'more specific beliefs concerning the methods leaders should use to attain the ends they desire' (ibid).

Philosophical Beliefs

P-1: What is the essential nature of political life? Is it the political universe essentially one of harmony or conflict? What is the fundamental character of one's political opponents?

P-2: What are the prospects for the eventual realization of one's fundamental political values and aspirations? Can one be optimistic, or must one be pessimistic on this score; and in what respects the one and/or the other?

P-3: Is the political future predictable? In what sense and to what extent?

How much control or mastery can one have over historical development?

P-4: What is one's role in moving and shaping history in the desired direction?

P-5: What is the role of chance in human affairs and in historical development?

Instrumental Beliefs

I-1: What is the best approach for selecting goals or objectives for political action?

I-2: How are the goals of action pursued most effectively?

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I-3: How are the risks of political action calculated, controlled, and accepted?

I-4: What is the best timing of action to advance one's interest?

I-5: What is the utility and role of different means for advancing one's interests?

Table 1: Philosophical and Instrumental Beliefs System

Unlike the early works of Leites, George defined the operational code in new words:

'It really refers to a general belief system about the nature of history and politics; it is not a set of recipes or repertoires for political action that an elite applies mechanically in its decision-making.' (George, 1967: V)

In his view the *'>operational code< is a particularly significant portion of the actor's entire set of beliefs about political life'* (George, 1969: 11). A similar but more modern definition of the operational code is given by Renshon:

'Operational codes are a particular subset of an individual's beliefs - those focused on the political universe. These beliefs structure and order reality for decision makers and help them to sort the signals in their environment from the noise. They exert a tremendous influence on how leaders interpret information, perceive the social environment, and make decisions. As such, they have a prima facie claim to relevance in political leadership and decision making' (Renshon, 2008: 821).

An important issue that not only occurs in the memo of George, but is central within the field of foreign policy analysis is the problem of *bounded rationality*. The essence of this problem is summarized by George:

'... (1) The political actor's information about situations with which he must deal is usually incomplete; (2) his knowledge of ends-means relationships is generally inadequate to predict reliably the consequences of choosing one or another course of action; and (3) it is often difficult for him to formulate a single criterion by means of which to choose which alternative course of action is >best<.' (George, 1967: 12)

Political actors like all human beings have to structure and simplify their environment. Schemes, as George later has emphasized, are of special importance in this process of making the world easier for oneself (cf. George, 1979: 95). Schemes are generalized views, opinions and perceptions about the world that provide the basis for the operational code analysis. Therefore, the term operational code can be defined as ones view of the world or just ones worldview. Every human being has certain beliefs concerning the world and these beliefs are at the centre of this and every other study related to the operational code analysis. However, beliefs are not written in stone. Attitudes and behaviours are no fixed points that cannot change under certain circumstances. *Belief change* is one of the most formative questions and challenges to attend by scholars (cf. Renshon, 2008: 821 ff.). Although a number of studies have dealt with the question of belief change academia is far away to explain why, when and how belief change occurs (ibid). Generally speaking, academic research on this issue is divided into two groups: those who are examining the *influence of extraordinary situations*, represented by scholars like George Walker, Mark Schafer, or Michael Young; and scientists like Johana and Akan Malici who are focusing on the *durability* of an actors' belief system. In their 2005 published essay on the operational code of Fidel Castro and Kim Il-Sung, Malici and Malici investigated the role of learning.

In their 1998 published essay, Walker, Schafer and Young presented a new scoring-system to measure the ten beliefs invented by George. They put this scoring scheme to the proof with an assessment of the operational code of Jimmy Carter. Since then, all publications on the operational code of an actor referred to those values as reference levels. To cast a glance on

the actual research it is noticeable that only a few scholars devote themselves to this approach. Operational codes were conducted about Bill Clinton (Chruchlow and Schafer, 2000), George Bush (Renshon, 2008), and the already mentioned Fidel Castro and Kim Il-Sung (Malici and Malici, 2005).

With these remarks in mind, the paper will present and explain the hypotheses that shall help to answer the research question.

Hypotheses

The objective of this paper is to explain the improved cross-Strait relations between Taiwan and China by assessing and comparing the operational code of Chen Shui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou. Within the presidential system of Taiwan the president occupies a strong position. According to the [^] (*Zhōnghuá Mínguó Xiànfǎ*) (Article 35) he or she is the Chief of Staff and ‘shall represent the Republic of China in foreign relations’ (Constitution, 2013). The president is the supreme commander (Article 36) and has the power to conclude treaties, to declare war and peace (Article 38) and under certain circumstances, the president has the power to declare martial law even without permission of the legislative Yuan (Article 39) (ibid). Thus, there is valid ground to belief that the president is a key figure within the political system and his or her attitudes, perceptions, objectives and goals shape the political decision-making process. Regarding foreign affairs, there is further profound evidence that Ma Ying-jeou's foreign policy approach suited the interest of the triangle (USA, China and Taiwan) more than the conflict-prone and independency-seeking foreign policy of Chen Shui-bian.

Therefore, the argument of this paper now is that Ma Ying-jeou is a better partner for both Beijing and Washington, because he is friendlier oriented towards the nature of the political universe (P-1), more optimistic (P-2), more cooperative (I-1), and more risk averse (I-3) in his decision-making, which contributed to the improved cross-Strait relations. These four values were selected as being more important, which is in line with many authors, who describe them as “master beliefs” (George, 1979; Chrichlow and Schafer, 2000; Malici and Malici, 2005; Renshon, 2008). Therefore, the argument is reflected in the first hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: *Ma Ying-jeou's operational codes for P1, P2, I1, and I3 will differ from the operational codes of Chen Shui-bian.*

‘The surprise election of Chen Shui-bian to the presidency of the Republic of China on Taiwan on March 18 threatened a major crisis for the island, the PRC, and the United States when each could least afford it.’ (Sicherhmann, 2000)

In his 2000 inauguration speech, Chen Shui-bian declared that his government would stick to the *five noes and one if* (*sì bù, yī méiyǒu*) of no declaration of independence, no rectification of the national name, no constitutional review that would manifest Lee Teng-hui’s “state-to-state” description, no status-quo referendum, and no abolition of the National Unification council nor the guidelines, as long (the one *if*) as the People’s Republic of China shows no sign of intention to use war against Taiwan (ibid). However, two years after these relaxing remarks, in August 2002, Chen noted that there is one nation on each side of the Taiwan Strait and in November 2003, he insisted on a national referendum (cf. Chao, 2004: 688). Not only were these moves an enhancement of Lee Teng-hui’s already provoking “state-to-state” remarks but deepened the already existing tensions across the Strait.

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Furthermore, Chen Shui-bian presented himself as an unpredictable actor who concerted the decision-making body according to his beliefs and perceptions (cf. Chen, 2007: 232 f.).

'After the DPP came to power in 2000, the decision-making power remained concentrated in the presidency, but relative strength of these institutions was adjusted to fit President Chen's decision-making style.' (Chen, 2007: 211)

This decision-making style often led to moves that surprised not only Beijing, Washington or the DPP but also the general population in Taiwan. In his well-researched article about Chen Shui-bian's national security policy, the already quoted Chen Mumin, noted several situations where these surprises occurred. One was already mentioned by the paper and concerned the decision to hold a plebiscite about Taiwan's future, a decision that clearly contradicts the five noes (ibid: 226). Another surprise occurred in May 2003. After a protest by several anti-nuclear groups in front of the Presidential Office, Chen announced the holding of a referendum on a WHO bid (ibid: 227.) This move occurred suddenly and Chen neither consulted the government nor DPP members ahead of his announcement. As a consequence a series of debates evolved between the DPP and the opposition. These are only two of several situations where Chen surprised his party and the people of Taiwan. Whatsoever, in his advocacy it is important to emphasize that Chen was on the horns of a dilemma.

'It is no secret that the party's loyalist die-hard advocates of independence on the left have been put in pressure on the President lest he steer too far towards the center and deviate too much from the party's sacrosanct mission of striving for independence.' (Chao, 2004: 690)

Here, is the factor party preference at work. Although a political leader holds supreme constitutional power certain party wings can exercise a large degree of influence. To avoid disturbances within the party or the government and thus, to secure his or her position, a leader has to be first aware of such different party wings interest, and second, he or she has to manage those interests in a satisfying way. Again, to which extent a leader will do so, depends on his or her personality and the position a leader holds within a party. Is the president also the head of the ruling party, does the party holds the majority of seats in the congress or is there a situation of cohabitation, how are his public approval rates (a massive factor for leadership power; the higher the approval rate of a political leader the higher is his or her public support and thus, the higher is his or her leeway for political decisions).

However, Chen Shui-bian lacked any foreign-policy experiences and was further constrained by his and the party's refusing of the 1992 Consensus (cf. Gelsing, 2012: 259; Shiquan, 2012: 218).

'The DPP rejects the 1992 consensus, arguing that it is KMT property and to accept it would mean plagiarizing the KMT. [...] Taiwan and the mainland are both areas of one China, with territory and sovereignty remaining intact.' (Shiquan, 2012: 218)

This influenced the cross-Strait relations because the People's Republic of China mentioned several times that *'there are no taboos in cross-Strait dialogue as long as Taiwan would stick to the 1992 consensus of >One China<'* (cf. Tang, 2006: 556). Another issue that always provoke tensions between the Taiwan Strait are arms sales, especially provided by the United States. Nonetheless, these arms sales do not reflect the reality of an overall military budget decrease. Even though Chen promised a higher military budget in accordance to the results of the 2006 military doctrine of *"effective deterrence, resolute defence"*, the budget decreased since 1996 (cf. Gelsing, 2012: 255). Thus, Chen Shui-bian's engagement in a high-risk provocation game with Beijing, especially during his second term, was accompanied by a reduced defence budget.

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Improving the military budget by 3% of the national GDP was one of the promises made by Ma Ying-jeou during his election campaign (ibid: 256). His election in 2008 by more than 15% (cf. CEC-Taiwan, 2013) was something of a landmark victory and raised the hope of many that not only the overall situation of the population would improve but also that the tensions between the Taiwan Strait would ease and improve to be more constructive. But Ma's election was rather a choice by the public against Chen and the DPP, than a pro-KMT vote (cf. DeLisle, 2008). However, Ma 'was a welcome contrast to his fiery and pro-independence predecessor' (Economist, 2012).

Reading public statements and statements made by Ma Ying-jeou it becomes obvious that instead to discuss the political status of Taiwan, the status-quo is accepted as the foundation to consolidate the achievements of the past and extend them where it is possible. His most common argument against a political debate about the official status of the Republic of China is that it is already a sovereign state and it does not have to state independence twice. Thus, a Chen Shui-bian like strive for independence was never expectable from Ma. For him, it is more important to focus on the economic and cultural relationship between China and Taiwan. For this reason, Ma Ying-jeou accepted the 1992 Consensus as the foundation for the cross-Strait relationship. According to this consensus there is only one China but both sides of the Strait are allowed to define this "one China" in their own favour. Although the 1992 Consensus is a somehow spongy concept, it contributed to the improved cross-Strait relations, because it settles the political status debate and provides a common denominator for both sides on which the relationship can build upon. There is no time here to discuss the 1992 Consensus in deeper detail, which is definitely important but not in the interest of this paper.

Beside the 1992 Consensus the *three noes* (*sàn bù*) mentioned by Ma Ying-jeou in his inauguration speech set the basis for the Taiwan-China relations that exist today.

'Under the principle of 'no unification, no independence and no use of force,' as Taiwan's mainstream public opinion holds it, and under the framework of the ROC Constitution, we will maintain the status quo in the Taiwan Strait.' (Ma, 2008)

This is the distinguishing feature between Ma Ying-jeou and Chen Shui-bian. Unlike Chen, Ma right from the start referred to the status-quo and applied a more pragmatic, less conflictual and less provoking foreign- and cross-Strait policy. Moreover, it sometimes seems like there is no such thing as tensions at all in the Taiwan-Strait. The three noes and the 1992 Consensus are two pillars of Ma's *flexible diplomacy* approach (cf. Wang, n.y.: 1). This approach is an astonishing realization of Taiwan's and China's role in the world, as Ma urgently stopped the race for diplomatic relations with other countries (ibid). This so-called chequebook diplomacy has produced numerous struggles between China and Taiwan in the past, although it is nothing more than an unnecessary spending of important resources by Taiwan. Ma also tried to counteract the Chen initiated consideration of Taiwan as an unstable player in East Asia (ibid). This whole approach means nothing less than a *diplomatic truce* with China and aims to extend the international leeway for Taiwan. Of course, Ma's *flexible diplomacy* produced some severe criticism. As Gelsing has mentioned it, '*Ma's friendliness towards Beijing has come at the expense of Taipei's relations with Washington*' (Gelsing, 2012: 261). But critique occurred not only abroad. Ma has to face serious criticism from domestic actors who consist not only of the DPP-opposition but also of KMT politicians and the public in general.

However, the described differences within the approaches to foreign- and cross-Strait policy by Chen Shui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou provide the basis for the posted hypothesis above. This hypothesis shall further be reinforced by an analysis of particular keywords.

Hypothesis 2: *Ma Ying-jeou and Chen Shui-bian differ in their use of particular keywords.*

Five termini were chosen as the focus of interest: *People's Republic of China, Mainland China, Republic of China, Taiwan, "1992 Consensus"*. It can be expected that Chen Shui-bian referred to China more as the People's Republic of China as he regarded both sides of the Strait as sovereign entities. Furthermore, it is likely that he referred more to Taiwan than the Republic of China when he spoke of his own country. Evidence for this comes not only from the DPP party-line but also from Chen's personality. Unlike Ma, Chen was a native Taiwanese and regarded Taiwan as the only legitimate name of the Formosan Island. This is reflected by the argument of Chang and Holt (2009) who have proved that Chen moved *Taiwan* and *Taiwanese* into the centre of his speeches and interviews (cf. Chang and Holt, 2009: 301). They called this process "*Taiwan-Era*", an era that began already under the Lee Teng-hui administration and was further enhanced by the democratization process that finally ended with the first change of power precipitated by the population (ibid). As the paper will soon present the *Taiwanese identity* not only played a key role in the razor-thin re-election of Chen in 2004 but increased over the last two decades and established itself as a central political issue that will shape future developments and decisions (cf. Matsuda, 2004: Online).

Compared to Chen, three things are likely to distinguish Ma Ying-jeou from him: *First*, he refers more to the political neutral terms of Mainland China and Republic of China. According to his background and interpretation of the 1992 Consensus he is able to respond to the People's Republic of China as the Mainland (China) and represents the Republic of China, founded by his KMT, as the sole legitimate successor of ancient China. By doing so he "denies" the existence of a sovereign state across the Taiwan Strait and emphasizes the sovereignty and legitimacy of his own country. This is a somehow smart approach as it might satisfy both sides and their domestic audiences the most, even though it is just an agreement of formal recognition without any legal obligations. *Second*, as the KMT attracted Taiwan as 'a temporary locale in KMT's ultimate goal of reclaiming the mainland' (Chang and Holt, 2009: 301), a rhetorical move to *Taiwan* as the central form of representation is unlikely (ibid: 302). Although, times have changed and Ma was eager to present himself as a Taiwanese to support his cross-Strait rapprochement, he rather not used Taiwan as the official name of the Ilha Formosa. *Third*, and this is just a consequences of the explanations above, Ma was prone to use more the term "1992 Consensus" as the DPP denied such an agreement.

Data

The full set of data consists of 33 speeches and 21 interviews.³ For Chen Shui-bian 16 speeches and 13 interviews were collected. About the same amount was collected for Ma Ying-jeou, namely 17 speeches and 8 interviews. The criteria for the selection of the documents were according to Renshon a minimum of 1500 words for each of the speeches (cf. Renshon, 2009: 655). Interviews were selected differently. According to Hermann, only interviews with a minimum of 50 answers and 100 words per answers should be used for the evaluation (cf. Hermann, 2002: 3). However, this is a number that is hard to achieve. Therefore, at first the paper collected all interviews that could be found for both actors. Due to insufficient data for Chen Shui-bian all interviews were chosen, even those with 9 answers, if all of them were above 100 words. For Ma Ying-jeou only those interviews with at least 15

³ A full list is available on request.

answers, 10 of them with more than 100 words were selected. The total amount of collected documents is much higher than it was to expect in the beginning. Useful sources were the homepages of the Office of the President (Zhōnghuá Mínguó Zǒngtǒngfǔ) (<http://english.president.gov.tw>), the government page of the Republic of China (<http://www.taiwan.gov.tw>), the homepage of the diplomatic mission of the Republic of China (<http://www.roc-taiwan.org/>) and several newspapers like the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Taipei Times, Spiegel, and the Financial Times. After the useful data was collected each of the documents were coded according to the operational code scheme with the program *Profiler Plus* provided by Social Science Automation (<http://socialscience.net/partners/AcademicUsers.aspx>). Further statistics were elaborated with the open source program *R* (<http://www.r-project.org/>).

Discussion of Findings

At first, the operational code for both actors was computed (Table 2). Instead of discussing each score singly, the paper will proceed straight to the first hypothesis. To recall the hypothesis, the argument is, that the operational code of Ma Ying-jeou differs significantly from the operational code of Chen Shui-bian in a way, that Ma is more friendly oriented, more optimistic, more cooperative, and more risk averse than Chen. This would be the case if his scores for P-1, P-2, I-1, and I-3 will differ significantly from the scores of Chen.

Chen Shui-bian (n=29)	Trait	Ma Ying-jeou (n=25)	P-Level ⁴ ([two-tailed] difference between Chen and Ma)
0,35	P1	0,54	<0,01
0,20	P2	0,36	<0,01
0,12	P3	0,17	>0,05
0,24	P4	0,28	<0,05
0,97	P5	0,95	>0,05
0,61	I1	0,66	>0,05
0,26	I2	0,36	<0,01
0,32	I3	0,26	>0,05
0,39	I4a	0,34	>0,05
0,46	I4b	0,59	<0,01
0,14	I5a	0,26	<0,01
0,08	I5b	0,06	>0,05
0,58	I5c	0,52	>0,05
0,09	I5d	0,10	>0,05
0,02	I5e	0,01	>0,05
0,09	I5f	0,06	>0,05

Table 2: The Operational Code of Chen Shui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou

Thus, the hypothesis reads as follows:

H0: There is no significant difference in the scores for P-1, P-2, I-1, and I-3.

H1: There is a significant difference.

According to Walker, Schafer, and Young (1998), these four traits are defined as follows:

⁴ Values were computed using a two-tailed T. Test (standard normal distribution) or a two-tailed Mann-Whitney U-Test (for non standard normal distribution). If the values for the single traits were standard normal distributed or not was computed via the Shapiro-Test.

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- P-1: ‘The key assumption here is that beliefs about how others approach and pursue their goals in the political universe define the nature of politics, political conflict, and the image of the opponent for the leader’ (Walker, Schafer, and Young, 1998: 178). The scores ranging from -1.0 (hostile) to +1.0 (friendly).
- P-2: ‘We assume that the more optimistic the leader's diagnosis for realizing one's political values the less negative and more positive the net intensity of attributions to others in the political universe’ (ibid). The scores ranging from -1.0 (pessimistic) to +1.0 (optimistic).
- I-1: ‘The leader's net attribution of positive (cooperative) and negative (conflictual) valences to the self indicates he answer to the first instrumental question. [...] the more cooperative the leader's strategic approach to political goals, the higher the net *frequency* of cooperative attributions to the self’ (emphasis in the text; ibid: 179). The scores ranging from -1.0 (conflict) to +1.0 (cooperation).
- I-3: ‘The diversity in the types of acts attributed to the self across several categories indicates the answer to the third instrumental question [...]. If a leader's self-attributions are more predictable and mainly in cooperative categories, then the leader is relatively acceptant regarding the risk of submission to an opponent’ (ibid: 180 f.). The score for I-3 ranges from 0.0 (risk averse) to 1.0 (risk acceptance).

The last column of Table 2 presents the computed significant-level (p-score) for each of the sixteen traits.⁵ Focusing on the bold lines, a statistical significant difference between the scores for Chen Shui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou could only be proven for two of the four traits. Therefore, H₀ has to be refused only for P-1 and P-2. However, this should not lead to the believe that although a significant difference for I-1 and I-3 cannot be proven statistical, these scores have no validity for the paper's argument. As the paper will present soon, Ma Ying-jeou scored better on all of the four traits in terms of the papers' argument.

Ma's view of the nature of the political universe (P-1) is much friendlier than that of Chen Shui-bian. While Chen attracted the political universe as somehow friendly, Ma is much more convinced on the definitely friendly nature of it. Furthermore, Ma is much more optimistic about the realization of political values (P-2), than Chen. For these two traits a significant difference can be statistically proven with a 0.01 probability of error. This means that H₁ can be chosen with a significance level of less than 0.01%, the most solid level in statistics. In other words, if a significance level would be higher than 0.01 or 0.05 (standard significance level) a difference could be explained by chance and H₀ had to be chosen. Again, even if H₀ has to be chosen this should not led to the perception that there is no difference at all. Whatsoever, these two values (P-1 and P-2) supports the argument of the paper and presents Ma Ying-jeou as a more “harmonious and cooperative” choice. As it is stated above, the way a leader regards the nature of the political universe and the realization of one's political values is important for his or her approach to the international system. Ma is much more positive on both scores, scores that influenced his decisions and behaviour.

Although no statistical significance could have been proven for I-1 and I-3 to explain the differences by chance would be too narrowly considered. Ma's favoured direction of strategy (I-1) and risk aversion (I-3) is slightly more cooperative respectively more risk averse than Chen Shui-bian. In absolute figures this differences marginally consists of six points. What is important is the direction in which the difference redounds. Both scored high on I-1 and

⁵ For reasons of simplifications the significance is given in terms of levels (0.1, 0.05, 0.01) than in full numbers.

present themselves as advocates of a definitely cooperative strategy. This is understandable if one considers the overall situation of Taiwan, nested in a minefield of international politics. However, both scored low on I-3 presenting themselves as risk avoiders, Ma's score moves even more towards a low acceptance of risk.⁶ The low score for Chen is somehow surprising as he was never calm on provoking actions. In April 2001 he met with the Dalai Lama (cf. BBC, 2013). Only one year later he has made his famous “One Country on Each Side” (*yī biān yī guó*) proposal (ibid). In February 2006 he scraped the National Unification Council (*Guójiā Tǒngyī Wěiyuánhuì*) and in July 2007, he attempted for the first time to join the United Nations under the name Taiwan (ibid). Beside the debate about Taiwan's status before the Olympic Games in 2008 no risky moves were made by Ma Ying-jeou that provoked Chen-like tensions.

To sum up the first hypothesis, although a significant difference could be statistically proven only for P-1 and P-2 this should not neglect the influence of an, even just slightly, higher respectively better score on I-1 and I-3. The operational code of Ma Ying-jeou is friendlier, more convinced of the realization of political values, more cooperative and more risk averse than that of Chen Shui-bian. Even without statistically support for all of the four traits there is profound evidence to believe that Ma's personality, shaped by his view of the world is a major factor for the improved cross-Strait relations.

This evaluation shall further be enhanced by the second hypothesis. Ma Ying-jeou's less confrontational and more cooperative operational code is reflected in his use of the five particular keywords in his speeches and interviews. The five keywords are again: People's Republic of China, Mainland (China), Republic of China, Taiwan, and 1992 Consensus.

H0: There is no difference in the use of the five keywords.

H1: There is a difference.

As it is difficult to work with statistical measurements here, the paper applied a quantitative content analysis, counting the appearance of each of the keywords in every document and summarized them for comparison. Table 3 provides the outcomes.

Chen Shui-bian	Keyword	Ma Ying-jeou
54	People's Republic of China	0
43	Mainland (China)	492
59	Republic of China	79
1774	Taiwan	1040
9	1992 Consensus	43

Table 2: Comparison of the five Keywords

Four important facts can be extracted from the numbers in Table 3: First, as expected, Chen Shui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou differ with the exception of “Republic of China”, in their quantitative use of the five particular keywords. Thus, H0 can be refused and H1 applied. Second, although it was expectable that Ma will refer more to Mainland (China) than People's Republic of China in public statements, that he did not referred to it at all is something surprising. Certainly, this can be explained by his political background. The KMT was the founding party of the Republic of China. After the civil war they withdrew from the Mainland

⁶ The actual problem here is the discussion about numbers and their evaluation. By now, there is now common sense on the interpretation of margins that are not statistically significant. Therefore, the evaluation of them is hanging in the realm of subjectivity and it is up to the author to integrate them due to his knowledge of the field. To persuade the reader, the arguments have to be presented profoundly, comprehensible and consistently with the subject.

to Taiwan but regarded their time on the island as temporary limited until they were strong enough to reclaim the Mainland. As time has passed, a recapturing never happened. Nonetheless, the KMT was never tired of proclaiming that the Republic of China was the only legitimate representative of China. This only began to ease after the lifting of martial law and the start of the democratization process in 1987. On the other side, it is understandable that Ma never referred to the People's Republic of China, because this would indicate that there are two sovereign entities across the Strait, a view that is more the property of the DPP than that of the KMT. Therefore, he rather used the political neutral term “Mainland (China)” when he referred to the other side of the Strait.

This behaviour is safeguarded by the 1992 Consensus which is the third fact that can be extracted from Table 3. Ma referred more often to it in public utterances than Chen did. The political background and socialization of both actors provide again the ground for an explanation. The 1992 Consensus provided the right foundation for the KMT to proclaim their independent status, without offending the People's Republic of China. The fourth factor is of particular importance because it refers to the already mentioned “Taiwan identity”. In his speeches, Ma Ying-jeou used less the term *Taiwan* than Chen Shui-bian did. This sounds trivial but is of immense importance, because names are symbols of identities and identities shape the society of a country. *Names, particularly in politics, are not labels used at random or for convenience. They are symbols carefully chosen to define identities*’ (Chang, 2009: 304).

Chen is a Taiwanese native, who grew up in a poor family and graduated at the Taiwan National University (Guóli Tái wān Dà xué) (cf. Chen, 2013). Ma on the other side was born in Hong Kong (Xiānggǎng) (cf. Biography Ma, 2013). His father and mother were long-term KMT members and unlike Chen, he graduated in the United States (ibid). Furthermore, Ma holds a U.S. Green Card for which he had to face severe criticism concerning his incomplete loyalty to Taiwan (cf. DeLisle, 2008). Therefore, the socialization of both actors played a significant role in their perception of the political status of Taiwan. This perception was further shaped by party politics. The DPP regarded the Republic of China as a heritage of the past that had to be re-established as a sovereign state by proclaiming independence from the Mainland under the true name of the island, Taiwan. On the other side, as it was explained above, the KMT saw the Republic of China as an independent entity that removed from the Mainland in the aftermath of the civil war. This difference explains the distinct use of the words People's Republic of China, Mainland (China), Republic of China, and Taiwan.

However, nationalism or the “Taiwanese identity” arose to an unknown degree during the last two decades, as a consequent trend of the democratization movement and as a reaction to the Chinese behaviour towards Taiwan.

‘In other words, over the past decade or so, the people of Taiwan increasingly have focused on their own identity, which is indicated by more people speaking Taiwanese and focusing on the island's own history and self-government.’ (Day and Yao, 2004)

When Ma was elected in 2008, 43.7% of the population viewed themselves as Taiwanese, an increase by 2.6% compared to 2004 (cf. Central Election Centre, 2013a). In June 2013 this figure somehow exploded by increasing another 13.8% to 57.5% in total (ibid). This development will play a vital role for future politics and the leeway leaders will have in their decision-making. Interestingly, in the same period of time, those who declared themselves to maintain the status quo and decide either at a later date or move towards independence declined, while the advocates for an indefinitely maintenance of the status quo increased (cf. Central Election Centre, 2013b). Nonetheless, Taiwan's national identity contains of a

particular antagonism, especially for those who believe in unification at one day. On one side, economic interrelations made an unification logical and inevitable but at the same time the increased Taiwan identity aggravated a peaceful fusion. So far, beside any improvement in political relations between both countries, no spillover effect has taken place in the political arena (cf. Day and Yao, 2004).

To sum up hypothesis 2, one can note that Ma preferred to use the political neutral term Mainland (China) when he referred to the other side of the Strait. This is in accordance with his understanding of the 1992 Consensus. However, like Chen, Ma rather used Taiwan than the Republic of China, when he referred to his own country. This stays abreast of changes in the national identity of the Taiwanese population.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to explore how a difference within the worldview of Chen Shui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou can explain the improved cross-Strait relations between Taiwan and China. This objective is illustrated in the paper's research question:

Is there a difference between the Operational Code of Chen Shui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou that can explain the improved cross-Strait relations?

To answer this question, the operational code of both actors was assessed and compared. Four central beliefs were at the heart of this comparison: nature of the political universe, realization of one's objectives, best strategy to achieve a certain goal, and risk-taking. Having done this, it is possible to answer the posted question now.

As the results of the operational code shown, there is a difference between Ma Ying-jeou and Chen Shui-bian. However, this difference is only statistical significant for seven of the sixteen traits in general respectively for two of the four traits of concern. The computed scores did not produce the significant differences that the paper expected in the beginning. As research of certain literature and statements has suggested, the differences between Chen and Ma were estimated to be much higher and thus, more significant. Rather than evaluating this as a counterargument to the FPA-approach, this can rather be seen as a further argument against the importance of the role of the president, as this paper has discussed that issue in there very beginning. Moreover, to a stark extent, this can contribute to the (neo-)realist assumptions about the role of the individual and the emphasize of systemic factors or the national interest as the main driving force of international relations. Liberalist could argue, that rather than the personality of Chen Shui-bian or Ma Ying-jeou, it is the economic sphere and the continuously increasing economic relations between the RoC and PRC that contributed to the improved cross-Strait Relations. Both assumptions are valid in their own right. However, it is fair to emphasize, that the individual was too long taken out of context and in some cases and situations it is worth to bring the actor back in.

Therefore, rather than taking the results of the paper as inadequate or insufficient, the results of the paper are valid, because, beside any statistical significance, what is important to emphasize is the direction in which the scores of Chen and Ma differ. Although the difference for some traits were just slightly higher, they illustrated that Ma's operational code in general was more optimistic towards the realization of an actors' aims and the predictability of the future, more friendlier towards the nature of the political universe, and more cooperative as the best strategy to achieve a certain objective. This influenced Ma's personality and decisions and further, contributed to the easing tensions across the Taiwan Strait. The comparison of

five particular keywords (People's Republic of China, Mainland (China), Republic of China, Taiwan, 1992 Consensus) illustrated that Ma, unlike Chen, preferred to use the political neutral term Mainland (China) instead of People's Republic of China but used Taiwan more than Republic of China, like Chen did as well. However, the difference is that Ma accepted the 1992 Consensus (an important measure for cross-Strait relations with Beijing) and therefore, was able to interpret it in a way that allowed him to “neglect” the existence of another sovereign state across the country without provoking any tensions with Beijing. Whatsoever, Ma's pragmatic and less fiery language helped to ease the tensions across the Strait.

Nonetheless, two further restraints have to be mentioned that influence the significance of this paper: first of all, to which extend the operational code alone influenced any improvement in the cross-Strait relations has to be further investigated. This has two reasons: First, the worldview is just one particular portion of an actors' personality. It is an important portion that can never be neglected but as it is the aim of the foreign policy analysis to consider all three level of analysis (individual, state, system) other influencing factors have to be taken into account. Of course, this would need more time. Thus, within the given amount of time of this paper, the results are valid. The term cross-Strait relations already suggest the second reason. There are, at least two players in the game. This paper focused only on Taiwan. But to understand the improvements across the Taiwan Strait it is also important to understand the altered behaviour of the People's Republic of China. Although the Anti-Secession law of 2005 extinguished any attempt for independence by making it clear that such a move would immediately provoke the use of military force, Beijing behaves in a much more coexistent way than it does a decade ago. Thus, it would be interesting to compare leaders across the Strait.

The second restraint was numerously mentioned throughout the paper. There is a thin edge between the personality of an actor and his or her party membership. Several developments since Ma's KMT returned to power can be explained by party ideology. However, the membership within a party is always a result of political socialization and socialization is an influencing factor of an actors' personality. Therefore, it would be interesting to study situations, where a leader acts contrary to the party line. This would enhance the influence of his or her personal attitudes. In this context, a comparison of two presidents from the same party could provide more insightful results, because any difference could be explained more by the personality of an actor than between candidates of two parties. Of course, this is difficult for Taiwan inasmuch as it still is a young democracy that had just two democratic precipitated leadership changes. However, it is an interesting topic for future investigations. The foreign policy analysis provides the necessary and sophisticated tools for researches to do such an analysis. Because what has not changed after all, decisions are still made by human beings and we have to understand them to understand the behaviour of their countries.

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