台灣人的跨海峽兩岸網路知覺：廈門爲例

Jens Damm

摘要

　　本文探討在跨海峽的網路空間中，特別是在網路社區和部落格裏台灣人的知覺。論文的第一部分是背景介紹，概述跨海峽網路社區，並介紹跨國和跨地區網路社區對社會、政治、文化轉變的廣泛影響潛力，這些轉變在近幾十年來已塑造了含中國大陸、香港、澳門、台灣、新加坡五地的「大中華地區」。第二部分則以跨海峽的網路空間中，廣泛的跨地區和跨國交流爲例，分析「台灣人」、「台胞」、「台商」有何不同？網路空間的互動方式如何造成他們不同的知覺？亦即以媒體論述分析法分析廈門網的部落格內容，凸顯社會實踐與政策領域轉變下跨海峽知覺的變遷。在方法論上，本文對社交和參與式媒體作論述分析。分析內容涵蓋了海峽兩岸社會實踐的潛在變化，以及各種政策領域的轉變。

The Cross-Strait Perception of the Taiwanese in Cyberspace: The Case of Xiamen

Jens Damm

Abstract

This paper investigates the perceptions of the Taiwanese within Cross-Strait cyberspace with a particular focus on the role of cybercommunities and Blogs. The first section of the paper provides a brief general overview of Cross-Strait cybercommunities and describes the potential influence of transnational and transregional cybercommunities on the broad societal, political, and cultural transformations which, in recent decades, have shaped "Greater China" including the PRC proper, Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and Singapore.

The second part of the paper deals with examples taken from the wide range of transregional/transnational communications that can be found crossing the Taiwan Strait within this cyberspace: what are the differences between "Taiwanese" (*Taiwanren* 台灣人, "Taiwanese compatriots" (*Taibao* 台胞) and "Taiwanese business people" (*Taishang* 台商) and in which way does the interactive part of the cyberspace contribute to these perceived differences? A media- based discourse analysis is employed to analyze the Blogs found on the Xiamen Net with the aim of highlighting the changes in Cross-Strait perceptions, taking into account shifts in social practices and policy areas.

Methodologically, this study employs an approach that is based on a discourse analysis of social and participatory media such as Blogs. The analysis takes into account the underlying changes in social practices and the shifts in various policy fields on each side of the Taiwan Strait

Introduction

Migration and mobility across the Taiwan Strait has reached new heights during the last two decades: up to one million Taiwanese business people, the so-called *Taishang* 台商 with their families, and also younger Taiwanese graduates, have settled on the Mainland either temporarily or, increasingly, for longer periods. At the same time, up to 10 percent of all marriages in Taiwan involve a Taiwanese man and a woman from the Mainland, and, since the opening of Taiwan for Mainland Chinese tourists in 2008, more than a million Chinese tourists have visited Taiwan (Friedman, 2010b)[1].

The question arises as to how this has influenced the perception of the Taiwanese by the Mainland Chinese, that is, of the Taiwanese living in Taiwan and of the Taiwanese diaspora in Mainland China. And, in particular, how mediated communication within the restricted, but nevertheless existing and expanding Cross-Strait cyberspace has influenced these perceptions and shaped the images of the other.

To demonstrate how these Cross-Strait, and thus transregional cybercommunities, actually work, this paper examines the ambiguous roles and, in particular, the related perceptions, of two groups of Taiwanese citizens within Cross-Strait cyberspace based on an analysis of various entries at found at Blogs hosted by Xiamen Net. The first group is made up of migrants and sojourners who reside in Xiamen, in the Province of Fujian, a city just across the Taiwan Strait; the second group is composed of the Taiwanese in Taiwan who have encountered the Mainland Chinese on visits to Taiwan, mainly since the opening of Taiwan for Mainland tourists. The period under research covers recent years, although the economic transformation and the related new flow of migration from Taiwan to Mainland China are two of the characteristic features pertaining to the 1990s and the new millennium. The discourse analysis in this paper is based on interactive cybercommunities, in particular Blogs, and online newspapers, and is focused on perceptions of identity, ethnic and national belonging, every day behavior, traditional and modern behavior, and also changes in political consciousness. The city of Xiamen and some other areas of neighboring

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1 Taiwanese Mainland Áffairs Council, http://www.mac.gov.tw/big5/statistic/ass_lp/0a/10011/5.pdf
    (accessed 20 May 2012).

Fujian are of particular interest in this research for two main reasons, first of all, Fujian, including the Specific Economic Zone of Xiamen, is one of the three regions with the highest numbers of Taiwanese migrants and sojourners, and secondly, in the state- led discourse of the PRC, an emphasis was placed on cultural affinity and this led to Xiamen's being declared the Specific Economic Zone that would primarily target Taiwanese business people (Cichosz, 2011). Previous research has shown that notwithstanding the unresolved question of national identity and the pragmatic adherence to the so-called 1992 Consensus, according to which those on each side of the Taiwan Strait adhere to the "One China principle," (although they do not agree on the meaning of this term), the Taiwanese in China form a specific group in the context of the ethnic and national identity in their self-perception (Corcuff, 2011; Friedman, 2010a). In the official state-discourse, however, the Chinese, and also the indigenous population of Taiwan, are described as part of the motherland (*zuguo* 祖國), and " It is the common aspiration of all the Chinese in the world to usher in a new phase of peaceful development of Cross-Strait relations, work for the well-being of our compatriots on both sides of the Strait and for peace in the Taiwan Strait region, safeguard the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation, realize the peaceful reunification of our motherland and the Chinese nation's rejuvenation" (Wang, 2011) . "Hu Jintao, addressing the Taiwanese ethnic minority compatriots directly, as important members of the great family of the peoples of China, declared 'for a long period of time, you have engaged in an unwavering struggle to resist foreign aggression and preserve national dignity, and have worked tirelessly for the development of the peoples of China and the development of Taiwan, making a great contribution to the improvement and development of Cross-Strait relations. Your own actions prove that compatriots on either side of the Strait only need to unite their hearts and work in unison, in order to be capable of properly protecting and establishing our common homeland, and create a new era for the peaceful development of Cross-Strait relations" (Allen, 2009) .

The questions arises of whether their mainland counterparts perceive the Taiwanese residing in Xiamen and Fujian as a specific diaspora, as compatriots, or as members of the same ethnicity and race, and thus adhere to or differ from the official statements and discourse. By examining various cybercommunities, Blog entries and related discussions that focus on descriptions

of cultural sameness and differences, I am going to demonstrate that the public discourse as expressed in the cyberspace is broader and more ambivalent than the official discourse and the official statements issued by the Communist Party and the local (and central) governments. I follow the line taken by other researchers, such as Guobin Yang, and proceed from the assumption that some sort of transnational Chinese public sphere exists, despite the heavy censorship of China's Internet. (MacKinnon, 2008; Yang, 2003, 2009)

Cross-Strait Chinese Language Cybercommunities

While a substantial body of literature has been published on the influence and importance of Mainland China's Internet and particularly on the potential power of cybercommunities to influence the broad societal, political developments within China proper, few researchers have examined the role of the Cross-Strait cyberspace, itself, which includes various civic and nationalist communities, marginalized groups, as well as ethnic diasporas and groups (Damm, 2010; Hung, 2004; Liu, 2008; Wu, 2007).One essential problem for trans-regional and Cross-Strait relations remains: the fact that the cyberspace in China is characterized by censorship and control(Hung, 2010; MacKinnon, 2008, 2012; Qiu, 2009). However, the literature that is available on Chinas Internet shows that the Blogosphere is very special, and while it does not in any way offer a totally free and uncontrolled space within the highly controlled Internet, it certainly opens up new spaces for more open and free discussions (Katz & Lai, 2009; Kluver et al., 2010; MacKinnon, 2008, 2012). Guobin Yang, one of the best-known writers on China's Internet, argues that the Internet in China is a much contested space that is shaped neither by control alone nor by entertainment: "I understand online activism to be any form of Internet-based collective action that promotes, contests, or resists changes" (Yang, 2009: 3).

Another problem with regard to the Cross-Strait cyberspace derives from the fact that applications used to build cybercommunities in Mainland China differ from those used in other parts of "Greater China" in several ways. Firstly, the so-called new social networks, such as Facebook and MySpace, are partly blocked in China, as are the commonly used Blog sites, such as the Taiwanese Wretch (*wuming xiaozhan* 無名小站),[2]and also the international Blog sites, such as BlogSpot, and thus rendered useless for Cross-Strait communication and transnational

communication. Within China, other social media, such as Facebook, are regularly blocked by China's Internet policy that is also often referred to as the "Great Firewall" That is not to say that there are no alternatives: in fact, the Chinese versions of Facebook, such as the Renren Network (www.renren.com, formerly known as the Xiaonei Network, www.xiaonei.com), which is popular among college students, and Kaixin001 (www.kaixin001.com) are widely used in the People's Republic of China (PRC), but play a less important role in Hong Kong and in Taiwan and are therefore not suitable for use in Cross-Strait communication (Lin, 2011; Qin, 2011).

The extent to which this Chinese Blogo (and BBS) sphere has not accomplished the critical functions of the Habermasian public sphere also remains disputed. According to Jürgen Habermas, this "public sphere" refers to "a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens. ⋯ Citizens behave as a public body when they confer in an unrestricted fashion – that is, with the guarantee of freedom of assembly and association and the freedom to express and publish their opinions – about matter of general interest" (Habermas, 2001: 102). In the Chinese Blog and BBS sphere, however, the "homogenous space of embodied subjects in symmetrical relations" (Poster, 2001: 265) is unlikely to occur because BBS moderators and state censors exercise their right to regulate the information provided (Jin, 2008: 36). Other authors prefer the term "heteroglossia" for the Chinese cyberspace. Bakhtin uses this term instead of public sphere to describe the interactive parts of the cyberspace (Bakhtin, Holquist & Emerson, 1986; Farrer, 2007)."

Mediated communication, in the form of traditional media and new media, together with lived experiences, is most important for creating, forming and changing the self and perceived identities. In a PhD dissertation, Huang Shu-ling (Huang, 2010) highlighted these phenomena among various groups of Taishang residing in various parts of Mainland China. Other research undertaken from a theoretical perspective and also this empirical research based on interviews has shown quite clearly that the media play a vital role in forming a specific cultural identity and also in forming a certain perspective of the other – in this case the Taiwanese. And it does not matter

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2　According to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wretch_(website) (accessed 12 May 2012) has been blocked in the PRC since 2007.

whether a personal experience has taken place, or whether, through mediated communication, the shared meaning of the other's culture is produced and utilized (Carey, 1989; Huang, 2010). In the case of Taiwan, the sense of belonging to a community (Anderson, 1999; Hall, 1992) is further complicated by historical and political factors, such as the long-standing political rivalry between the Kuomintang (KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the issue of identity formation in Taiwan itself (Rigger, 2006; Schubert&Damm, 2011). Globalization, migration and sojourning seem to play a particular role in communications across the Taiwan Strait: mediated communication interacts with the lived experiences of the Taiwanese residing in Xiamen (as migrants, sojourners, tourists) (Schubert, 2010c: 90) and the Mainland Chinese who, in increasing numbers, are coming to Taiwan as tourists, business people, students and journalists. This is due not only to the worldwide trend of globalization that has made borders more porous, but also, in the case of Taiwan, to the dramatic political upheavals which led to the opening of the border at a hitherto unknown speed. Huang (Huang, 2010: 45) stated with regard to communication, identity and globalization: "Communication, understood as 'the construction, apprehension, and utilization of symbolic forms ", plays a significant role in the formation and transformation of identity. The most powerful and seemingly natural identity is cultural identity. Cultural identities, in the plural form as defined by Hall, are "those aspects of our identities which arise from our 'belonging' to distinctive ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious and, above all, national cultures" (Hall, 1992: 274). In Carey's view, communication produces not only citizens who assume a relation in space to their contemporaries, but also patriots who assume a relation in time to the tradition of national culture. Similarly, Hall argues that "national identities are not things we are born with, but are formed and transformed within and in relation to representation" (Hall, 1992: 292).

Cross-Strait Relations and the Importance of Fujian and Xiamen

The general period under research covers more recent years, but the specific relationship between Fujian, (Xiamen in particular) and Taiwan is traced back to 1987, to the ensuing tremendous political upheavals that occurred within the two entities on each side of the Taiwan Strait and the resulting influences on Cross-Strait policies; the economic transformations and the new flow of migration from Taiwan to Mainland China, are some of the characteristic features.

The PRC started to launch its reform and opening policy in the early 1980s, and Xiamen, in particular, benefited hugely, progressing rapidly to become the thriving and international city that it is today. Although Xiamen was granted the status of a specific Economic Zone in 1981, the central government did not include the city among the several municipalities enjoying independent status in the state＇s economic planning until after 1988. When other parts of the city, such as the Xinglin (杏林) and Haicang (海滄) Districts, were designated specific investment areas for business people from Taiwan, particularly after 1989, the city was able to develop more autonomy and to become less reliant on the central government. Investments made by overseas Chinese and, in particular, Taiwanese business people, increased to such an extent that the city began to recover its status as a famous center for trade, commerce and modernity (Wang 2004).

The financial position of these Taiwanese business people, and, to some extent, the special treatment offered to investors by the PRC authorities as well as their group specific behavior, has led to their being perceived in various ways by the media, (including the new media and the Internet). This is particularly due to the fact that increased Cross-Strait integration has led to research being carried out on specific groups, for example, on the Taishang (new Taiwanese businessmen and women residing in Mainland China) and their specific identity (Schubert, 2010b), as well as on the influence of the growing number of new migrants (mainly from Mainland China and Southeast Asia) to Taiwan (Hsia, 2009). On 1 November 2010, according to the National Bureau of Statistics of the PRC, 170,283 people from Taiwan had been resident in China for more than three months and 5,140,600 Taiwanese visitors had travelled to the PRC in 2010. After the opening of Taiwan for Mainland Chinese tourists, the number of tourists to Taiwan reached 1.6 million in 2010. [3]

This paper also takes into consideration various strands of previous empirically-based research that has dealt with Cross-Strait relations and the perceptions of the Taiwanese residing in China. Sheng Lijun, for example, examined Cross-Strait relations under Chen Shui-bian (Sheng,

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3　Data derived from the statistics by the Taiwanese Mainland Áffairs Council, http://www.mac. gov.tw/big5/statistic/ass_lp/0a/10011/5.pdf (accessed 20 May 2012), the China National Tourist Office in the United States (http://www.cnto.org/chinastats_2005MajorStats.asp, accessed 20 may 2012) and (C. Wang and Li, 2010)

2002) and the changes in China＇s perception. Gunter Schubert (Schubert, 2010a,2010c) analyzed the political thinking of the Taishang, basing his research on interviews carried out, not in Fujian and Xiamen, but in two other areas with a high concentration of Taiwanese business people (Shanghai上海/Dongshan 東山 and the Pearl River Delta 珠江三角洲) after the election of Ma Ying-jeou馬英九 as President of the Republic of China in 2008, which was a time of rapid rapprochement between the two governments in Beijing and Taipei. Schubert (2010b:74-75), who points out that the Taiwanese in Mainland China have been described variously as victims of Cross-Strait policy (at least until 2008), or as being responsible for selling out the country (by the Green Camp) (ibid: 78), also mentions that it ＂hardly makes sense to speak of a homogenous ＇group＇ of actors in this case.＂

The role played by virtual communities and the Internet in the group identity of diasporic and quasi-diasporic groups such as the Taiwanese, has been the focus of various researchers. Yang and Kang (Kang&Yang, 2011) examined the use of the Internet by Taiwanese who are resident in the United States and concluded that ＂Geographical proximity is no longer a problem for diasporic Taiwanese (or any) immigrant groups to form their own virtual communities on the Internet. Thorough case studies have further established what the Internet can accomplish in creating a distinctive space where diasporic groups can make the best use of these technicalcharacteristics.＂ Wenjing (2005) contended that immigrant communities use the Internet to (re-)construct their homeland, (re-)invent cultural practices, and ethnic identities. This is all in line with the current trend of globalization which is seen as the extension and consequence of modernity or, to use the term coined by Giddens, ＂high modernity.＂ The key to understanding globalization is thus the concept of deterritorialization, which is ＂the loss of the natural relation of culture to geographical and social territories.＂ (Tomlinson, 1999: 107). The study carried out by Ong(2003) on the transnational Chinese, including the Taiwanese, and the ways in which they have employed the new communication and information technologies, showed how the technology-enabled opinion-making processes can lead to the emergence of a huaren ethnic identity in a global framework. Both diaspora studies and media studies have claimed that modern subjects are constantly on the move in one way or another, whether travelling physically or taking

part in mediated communication.

Brenda Chan (Chan, 2005, 2006, 2010) provided an excellent overview of the use of the Internet by New Chinese migrants in general. Chan also elaborated on the essential question of the Internet and the diasporic public sphere, referring to the work of Arjun Appudurai with regard to the emergence of a diasporic public sphere "as migrants engage in the work of post national imagination" (Chan, 2010: 229).

In addition, Saunders and Ding (2006) drew comparisons between the Russian and Chinese diasporas online and came to the conclusion that the Internet seems to strengthen the nationalist sentiment in the Chinese diaspora but weakens the nationalist sentiment in the Russian diaspora.

Cyberspace can be described as a location where the "combination and interaction of both physical and virtual spaces created by the Internet will produce a distinctive environment where ethnic identity … will be formed" (Damm&homas, 2006; Kang &Yang, 2011: 163) and thus one of the main features of the analysis will be ethnicity ("they vs. we," Chinese, *huaren*華人, Taiwanese, Zhongguoren中國人, which terms are employed?), ethnicity vs. sameness, ethnicity in terms of ancestry, language (Taiwanese vs. Minnan 閩南), culture (Chinese, Minnan, Taiwanese), with the further addition of ethnicitization as a process and its interlinkages to migration (Brown, 2004).

Taiwanese in Xiamen vs. Taiwanese in Taiwan and Mainland Chinese

The Taiwanese community in China could be regarded as a transnational community which, shaped by particular political realities, is engaged simultaneously in two worlds without giving up the one or the other. Thus, the linkages of the Taiwanese community in Mainland China with Taiwan can be regarded as a social field which connects home and destination. However the political statements emanating from China are ambivalent and while it is recognized that the Taiwanese (as well as the Hong Kongnese) have a specific status, they are, at the same time, regarded as part of the Chinese nation, for example, the migration of Han Chinese descendants from Taiwan to Xiamen is regarded as a return to the "Motherland" by the CCP and the PRC, and also the use of the term *Tongbao* 同胞, meaning compatriots, is not used for ethnic Singapore

Chinese. However, the number of Taiwanese who identify with the civil nationhood of the PRC is almost zero (Huang, 2010: 9) and Tseng (2005) referred to the permanent temporality of this group.

Building on related research carried out on the Taiwanese residing outside Taiwan, a concept of ethnicity is employed that refers to ancestry, language and culture and has connotations with both the categorization of and identification with a specific racial group. Another important concept to bear in mind is that of the diaspora, that is, whether the Taiwanese can be regarded as a specific diaspora in Xiamen, China, and whether differences can be perceived between the various ethnic groups coming from Taiwan, such as the Hoklo and the Mainlanders?

The movement of people across borders (however a border may be defined, in terms of nation/state or other) is not, of course, a new phenomenon, but the newly formed diasporas seem to differ from older forms of diasporas in that they are more stable, that is, they do not necessarily result in either assimilation or return (Ang, 2003). Recent research has employed the term, diaspora, to examine Chinese migration and migrants in different parts of the world (Kong, 2003; Kong, 2003; Liu, 2006; Ma, 2003), and research on various Taiwanese forms of diaspora has become the vogue (Williams, 2003). It has also become obvious that the new media, including the Internet, have not only helped to shape the new forms of diaspora but also present themselves as suitable tools for research on these (Anthias, 1998; Franklin, 2003; Helland, 2007; Hiller& Franz, 2004; Schiller, 2005).

Methodology and Procedure: Internet-based Textual and Discourse Analysis

Methodologically, this paper builds on information obtained from newspaper articles, employing approaches derived from discourse analysis and media perceptions, including imagological research, in order to examine certain stereotypes and images produced and reproduced in the new media. The analysis is based on a textual analysis of new media and Internet publications found in the Mainland Chinese cyberspace with a specific focus on Blogs and online newspaper articles found at the Blog search function of Xiamen Net 廈門網 (http://www.xmnn.cn/) but related research that was carried out at a preliminary stage in Dongguan

and Shanghai (and at national Chinese level) did not reveal any significant differences, with the exception of local cultural identity.

As mentioned above, a discursive analysis of the media shows how certain stereotypes and images are produced and reproduced in the media which lends validity to the assumption that reality is socially constructed and that the media play an important role in shaping our understanding of reality. Language shapes the categories and constructs we use: the "theory of dialogue" developed by the Russian philosopher and semiotician, Mikhail Bakhtin, emphasizes the power of discourse to increase the understanding of multiple perspectives and create myriad possibilities. Bakhtin contended that relationships and connections exist among all living beings, and that dialogue creates a new understanding of a situation that demands change.

More precisely, by adopting the social constructionist point of view, the critical discourse analysis model presented by Norman Fairclough (1996) and Dijk (2008) is used to decode the description of Taiwanese residing on the other side of the Taiwan Strait. The investigation builds on a Foucauldian concept of discourse as an empirical concept, as a kind of practice that belongs to collectives and is located in social areas or fields. Fairclough, in particular, regards texts and objects (such as the analyzed media texts) as "orders of discourse", contextually ordered in time and space, and subject to social interaction. Each part of the discourse is then influenced and shaped by interactions between the texts and the social environment. In my analysis, the discursive practices within the cyberspace are highlighted through an examination of the various social practices and different contributors to the Blogs, including the specific legal environment. The concept of intersubjectivity is the key to comprehending identity, including the identity of the other in terms of historical, social and cultural perception, as well as the underlying issues related to the ways in which the Taiwanese are perceived as the "self" or the "other" and the identity formation process that has prevailed.

How does the perception from Chinese side take into account the split identities in Taiwan between the Green Camp and the Blue Camp? In particular, are they aware of the growing consensus of opinion in Taiwan on 1) the claim to a strong Taiwanese identity, that is not,

however, necessarily translated into a national identity and 2) changes in the current status quo between Taiwan and China only being made if these changes meet with the approval of Taiwan's population?

For research purposes, the advantages of conducting interviews with the Taishang 台商 and other Taiwanese migrants in China (Fujian and Xiamen) are obvious: their numbers are limited, which makes it relatively easy to take representative samples, and there is a wide variety of related research. The Internet, however, offers much better opportunities to examine the views of the other side, that is, the perception of this group by the Mainland Chinese.

Traditionally, the media in China were monopolized by the state, but since the beginning of the new millennium, the media have been divided into two sections: the media that are supposed to make a profit and the ideological media. Nevertheless, state control over the content remains strong. The same is true for the Internet where at least twelve state agencies are involved in monitoring and controlling (MacKinnon, 2012).

With regard to Taiwan, Chinese Internet users are only able to gain access to a tiny segment of Taiwan's online news system, for example, the more conservative media which support the unification stance of the KMT and the CCP, such as the China Times and the United Daily News, which are accessible in Mainland China via their Online Editions. Huang (Huang, 2010: 37-38), however, described the changes in China's media world as a highly contradictory process: new forms of state control and censorship came into force at the same time as commercial media outlets were proliferating. While a new form of nationalism emerged in the new media and found expression on the Internet, investigative journalism also blossomed. Restrictions on foreign news and cultural inflows were prevalent as well as piracy and the illegal use of the media. The popularity of interpersonal communication via cell phones and computers increased, particularly in the case of Weibo, which is the Mainland Chinese equivalent of Twitter .

Although the Chinese Internet is strictly censored, one may assume that fairly open discussions in Blogs and BBSs can take place providing the "strong taboo topics", such as Taiwanese independence, are avoided. I was also able to find Blog entries representing opinions

that were directly opposed to the official views of the official administration and the one party rule of the Communists. To summarize, it is precisely the greater interactivity and the wide range of opinions expressed by professional journalists on Blog sites that makes the Internet such a useful tool for our research. In addition, a variety of readers' responses can be found which, as will be shown in the analysis, include pupils speaking about Taiwan and the Taiwanese, probably as part of a task given to them by their teachers. In contrast to the print media, which is more likely to be subject to direct control and censorship under certain circumstances[4], the interactive reply function and the informality of the Internet enable a wider range of opinions to be expressed.

Research Questions

From these observations, it can be concluded that the mass media's perception of the Taiwanese and the other overseas Chinese residing in Xiamen derives from the fact that the mindsets of the individuals on each side of the Taiwan-Strait (and this is the mutual perception) are not usually formed by personal encounters, but via the description of the "other" and the "self" in the media. In addition, the media analysis presented in the research takes into account the underlying changes in social practices and the shifts in various policy fields on each side of the Taiwan Strait. The key questions deal with the roles played by the different kinds of media and the way that the representation of the Taiwanese (residing in Xiamen) in the media has been reshaped in line with shifting power-relations and the integration of global and regional developments.

The main objective of this research, therefore, is to examine the way that Taiwanese migrants to Xiamen and Fujian, both long term and short term, are perceived. The key research

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4 That is not to say that Blogs and BBSs are not monitored. As MacKinnon said: "If one combines the growing online space for private civic discourse provided by blogs with a functionally effective system of censorship and filtering, the result appears to be a recipe for gradual, slow evolution—not democratic revolution." Furthermore, she warns against looking solely into instances where "bloggers clash with government censors or the web hosting companies who act as proxies for government censors. But to look only at these instances of conflict is to miss a great deal of what is really happening, much more quietly, under the surface. Powerful socio-political change can be expected to emerge as a result of the millions of online conversations taking place daily on the Chinese Internet: conversations that manage to stay comfortably within the confines of censorship" (MacKinnon, 2008: 44-45)

questions can be formulated as follows: What is the role of the new media with regard to reshaping the way that the Taiwanese are perceived? Which discussions and changes in perception can be observed in the period under research, and, in particular, which dominant discourses can be found? This leads finally to the larger question, have the new media (Internet, Blogs, online newspapers, accessible on both sides of the Taiwan Strait simultaneously), in recent times, led to the greater pluralization of opinions and have interactive media environments, such as Blogs and forums, changed the subjectivities and current alternative views?

Choice of Data

The preliminary classification and further identification of the media and new media as well as a qualitative content analysis of the websites have been undertaken. The data was collected from the texts found during the Blog search at Xiamen Net, using various search terms for a qualitative and quantitative coding of the texts and the identification of various content clusters.

A search with *Taiwanren*台灣人 resulted in 26 hits, *Taiwan tongbao*台灣同胞, in 17 and *Taibao*台胞, in 36. The terms Taiwan tongbao and Taibao each carry the meaning of "Taiwanese compatriots" but they have different semantic connotations:[5]*Taiwan tongbao* is used to refer to people in Taiwan who are residing in Taiwan (or to people from Taiwan residing outside Taiwan but not in Mainland China). In most of the texts, this term was employed to refer to natural

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5   The terms Taiwanren, Taiwan tongbao and Taibao all have a complex history and the usage of these terms differs according to periods and places. Huang (2010, 14), for example, mentions that the term Taiwanren was first used in the 1920s to refer to the Japanese colonial rulers. However, it is not clear whether the term Taiwanren was used to refer to all non-Japanese citizens of the island or only to the Hoklo, which is the largest ethnic group in Taiwan.

The term Taishang (Huang 2010> 26) refers to business owners and expatriates, employed by Taiwanese companies, but there are tourists, teachers, students and artists from Taiwan on the Mainland, who are sometimes included in this group. With regard to the question of migration, integration and assimilation, therefore, the term Taishang does not usually distinguish between long term residents and short term business visitors who have invested in China. The two terms, Taiwan tongbao and Taibao, although often translated as Taiwanese compatriots are not often used in Taiwan: in Mainland China, Taiwanese tongbao is used to refer to people living in Taiwan, while Taibao refers to people from Taiwan residing on the Mainland.

disasters/calamities that occurred in Taiwan and focused on the "family ties" (*yi jia ren* 一家人). Taibao, however, seems to be used to refer to people from Taiwan who have resided for a certain period of time in Mainland China.

Content Clusters: the Varied Perceptions of the Taiwanese

Building on the dominant discourses found in both China (PRC) and in Taiwan with regard to national identity, ethnic identity, and the specific relations between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, several clusters of articles were identified which appeared to either support or contradict the dominant state-led discourses.

Taiwan Tongbao as "Difficult Family Members"

The Blog entry Jian Hui (健輝，2008) describes the experience of a Minnan-speaking man who, in 1989, was sent by a company to Switzerland, where he met a colleague whose wife was Taiwanese. There was a strong focus on the description of cultural affinity (such as the common dialect and the language spoken, Minnan), which led immediately to intimate feelings, for example, "like being in an old friend's house" *(lao pengyou de jiali yiyang* 老朋友的家裡一樣). The Blog entry refers to a period lasting over 20 years and follows this up with expressions such as "if there is a bond between them, the two will meet across a thousand years" (*you yuan qian li lai xianghui*有緣千里來相會), concluding with possible implications ranging from the purely personal to the political: we can see that "flesh and blood cannot be divided either by people or by force" (*keyi jian liang'an tongbao de gurou zhi qing shi ren he liliang ye bu neng zuge de*可以見兩岸同胞的骨肉之情是人和力量也不能阻隔的).

One of the many examples of Blog entries dealing with natural disasters/calamities that occurred on both sides of the Taiwan Strait and with the help and support, including financial donations, given by people on both sides, is the entry Liu Jiecheng (劉潔成，2008). With reference to the devastating earthquake in Sichuan in 2008, a connection is made between Xiamen and Fujian; the Taiwanese are described as the most generous donors and as those who gave donations unhesitatingly, whether as civic groups or individual persons, to help the victims. The generosity of Taiwanese organizations, such as the Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi

Foundation (*ciji* 慈濟)[6], in a global context, including in "your home country, the Chinese Mainland" (*zuguo dalu* 祖國大陸) is also mentioned.

Interestingly enough, not only the general aspect of humanitarian aid is mentioned ("humanitarianism does not know any borders"), but also the specific situation ("Taiwanese people connected by the same blood" *xuemai xianglian de Taiwan renmin* 血脈相連的台灣人民): in this Blog entry, a change from *Tongbao* to the people of Taiwan takes place, before finally these "people of Taiwan" are then included in the "virtue of the Chinese nation" (*Zhonghua minzu de meide* 中華民族的美德).

Several Blog entries place a special emphasis on the "family union" between the people in Taiwan and in China, including the government in China, while the Taiwanese government (leader) and the media, particularly, of course, the critical Pan-Green media, are described in negative (separatist) terms. Shi Jifeng (世紀風，2008) mentions the Olympic Games in Beijing as an example of a situation where the Taiwanese independence-inclined leader acted against the will of the Taiwanese compatriots; Liu Jiecheng (劉潔成，2009) proclaimed "Taiwanese Compatriots! We are all one family!" (*Taiwan tongbao, women shi yi jia ren* 台灣同胞，我們是一家人) when parts of the mountainous region in Taiwan were destroyed by the typhoon, Morokat. Although, ironically enough, in Taiwan itself, Morokat was seen as being disastrous for Ma in the same way that Hurricane Katharina was for George W. Bush, these Blog entries did not offer any criticism of the KMT government, since Ma Ying-jeou and the KMT were now in power. The Pan-Green media, however, were sharply attacked: "Some politicians, for specific intentions, and the Green media are unable to understand the specific bond between the people in Southern Taiwan and the Mainland." The entry concludes by emphasizing the sincerity of the people in China "because we are one family" (*yinwei women doushi yijia ren* 因爲我們都是一家人). Many comments marked the entry with a "5" as excellent and several commentators took up the issue of "family" with remarks such as the "Mainland and China are one family" (*dalu he Taiwan ben shi yi jiaqin* 大陸台灣本是一家親) and "The compatriots' family" (*tongbao*

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6 Http://www.tzuchi.org. For an overview, see (C. J. Huang, 2009).

yi jiaqin 同胞一家親). These commentators also showed their dissatisfaction with the Pan-Green Camp by adding "angry emoticons."

Mengxing de shuilian (夢醒的睡蓮，2009a) is one of the few examples that produces a kind of counter narrative: this Blog describes the opinion of an anonymous Taiwanese individual who is being interviewed by the mainland Chinese author (there is no guarantee, of course, that this interview really took place; it could have been invented to present a more multifaceted picture of Taiwan and also to distance the writer from "non-correct" political opinions). The guest from Taiwan, described as Blue-inclined, attributes an important role in the democratization of Taiwan to the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), and is also quoted as saying that "no matter which party in Taiwan rules, the preference for unification is very low." In answer to the question, how has this happened, since we are all "Chinese" (*Zhongguoren*中國人), Singapore is cited as an example of a state with a Chinese population that does not belong to China. The "politically-correct" author ridicules this argument, pointing out that "Singapore does not belong to the soil of China, but Taiwan, historically, has always been part of Chinese soil *(Zhongguo de lingtu*中國 的領土)" but this is a dubious argument given that China was ruled by the Japanese from 1895 to 1945 and there is also the other question of whether the rule of the "alien Manchu" regime can be counted as the rule of the Chinese. And while it is stated that economic development in China is much improved today, the Taiwanese guest (*keyou* 遊客) is quoted as saying that, in contrast to China, where the one-party rule system is strong, Taiwan is certainly a democracy. Here the comments are much more critical, and even "non peaceful" unification is not excluded.

Only one commentator is specifically against unification based on the "one country, two systems" model, but the various replies to this statement are seen to be in agreement with the CCP's statement that unification is an unavoidable trend.

Taiwanren in Xiamen: Local and Ethnic Bonds and their Limitations

How exactly is the term, Taiwanren, used, what are the connotations of the term and what differences to the use of the term in Taiwan can be found elsewhere? The term, Taiwanren, is largely used in Taiwan itself as an expression of identity (see, for example, the poll carried out

by the Election Study Center of National Chengchi University (http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/) (Muyard, 2010), where Taiwanren is opposed to Zhongguoren (Chinese) in the context of (national) identity.[7]

Provincial affiliations are built in the same way, however, by adding the term *ren* 人 to the province name, thus, an individual from Canton would be a *Guangdongren* 廣東人, an individual from Fujian would be a Fujianren 福建人and, if Taiwan were seen as a province, then an individual from Taiwan would also be *Taiwanren* -台灣人 - in a different political context, of course. While cases could be observed where people in Taiwan are described as *Taiwan renmin* 台灣人民，that is, the "people of Taiwan" in a political context, but denying any national identity, the Blog entry Hong Ying (泓瑩，2007) employs the term "Taiwanese" (*Taiwanren*台灣人) in the provincial and local sense, while the idea that "Taiwanese" is a local sub-identity of "Chinese" (*Zhongguoren* 中國人) is probably so deeply embedded in the Mainland Chinese discourse that the question asked by the Election Study Center would not have made any sense to the authors of the mainland Blogs that were being researched: "The roots of the Taiwanese are in the Mainland, and the Minnan Mainland and Taiwan are only separated by water" (*Taiwanren de genzai dalu, Minnan dalu yu Taiwan jinjin shi yi shui zhi ge*台灣人的根在大陸，閩南大陸於台灣僅僅是一水之隔)。

The entry Xiamen lüshi Wang Xiaolin (廈門律師王曉林，2011) entitled "Bless the people of Taiwan, bless the Chinese nation" (*zufu Taiwan renmin, zufu Zhonghua minzu*祝福台灣人民，祝福中華民族is particularly interesting: this was written in 2008 when Ma Ying-jeou and the Chinese KMT were re-elected as the ruling party. The writer uses the term Taiwanese

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7 Since 1992, people in Taiwan have been asked which identity describes them best: only Taiwanese (Taiwanren 台灣人), Taiwanese and Chinese (Zhongguoren) simultaneously, or only Chinese (Zhongguoren). There has been a steady increase in "only Taiwanese," while "only Chinese" has drastically declined. The latest figures are as follows (survey from mid-2011): 54.2 percent of Taiwan's population chose Taiwanese (1992: 17.6 percent), and 39 percent, both Taiwanese and Chinese (1992: 46.4 percent), while the number of those choosing only Chinese, dropped to a low of 4.1 percent (1992: 25.5) (2.7 Percent providing no answer, in 1992: 10.5) (NCCU Election Survey Center's annual surveys, see http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/english/modules/tinyd2/index.php?id=6 for the latest poll (1992/06-2011/06)).

(*Taiwanren* 台灣人) to refer to the ruling people of Taiwan (not to the members of the Chinese province of Taiwan) when emphasizing the fact that the Taiwanese people are the masters of their own destiny, but only from the point of view that they have chosen to remain within the "Chinese family/ethnicity," this being described as a "wise and courageous" decision for their future and as the "road to salvation." In the last paragraph, the writer again tries to bind all the people in the "three Chinese areas" together politically, claiming that the people in these three Chinese areas across the Taiwan Strait (*liang'an san di* | 兩岸三地) are all now heading towards a democratic future and substantiating this argument by lumping together Taiwan's election results, the partial democratic development of Hong Kong that was initiated by the former British colonial powers and a statement from China's 17th CPC National Congress to the effect that the "development of socialist democratic politics is the unswerving goal of our party" and the "people's democracy is the life of socialism." The final sentence is a reference to Sun Yat-sen, and thus Taiwan's "rightful" election of Ma Ying-jeou is seen as the fulfillment of Sun Yat-sen's nationalism!

A counter-discourse, or at least the questioning of some mainstream assumptions is found in Qing Gege (青哥哥，2009) which asks why the bonds between the two places are much weaker than one would expect[8], despite "the racial composition of the Taiwanese," "the common understanding that "blood is thicker than water" and the fact that the origins of the Taiwanese can be traced to Fujian. This Blog starts by drawing attention to the renaming of Zhongzhai Bay 鐘宅灣in Xiamen to the Bay of the Five Bonds (*wu yuan bay* 五緣灣), and suggests the following reasons for the change: "The first is geographical, Fujian and Taiwan are very close; the second is based on a blood connection, the ancestors of 80% of all Taiwanese compatriots came from Fujian and communication and traffic between the two sides is very tight-knit; the third is the

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8　Interestingly enough, alternative explanations, such as the current Taiwanese discourse on the varied and multicultural composition of Taiwan, both in terms of origin and in terms of the multilateral origins of cultural influences which has led to a specific hybrid Taiwanese culture, are ignored, although, for example, these explanations can be found in the academic discourse in Taiwan. See, for example, the writings from the Taiwan Center at Xiamen University.

cultural bond, Taiwan＇s language, culture, customs, and habits are similar to those of Fujian; the fourth is commerce: since the reform and opening policy, Fujian has become the third most important region for Taiwanese business, and business activities are very common; the fifth is related to the legal bond, that is, in the view of the central government, Taiwan, historically, came under the jurisdiction of Fujian Province.＂

The author then, however, wonders why, given these five strong bonds, most Taiwanese business people have chosen to invest in Dongguan and Kunshan. Furthermore, confessing his puzzlement over the fact that the groups in Taiwan who are pursuing independence are the descendants of the Fujian people, who despise the Mainlanders (*waishengren* 外省人) and are trying to sever their bonds with Fujian, the author suggests, somewhat ironically, that it might have been better to rename Zhongzhai Bay 鐘宅灣 in Xiamen as the Bay of ＂No Bonds＂ (*wu yuan* 無緣) rather as than the Bay of ＂Five Bonds＂ (*wu yuan* 五緣 (these two terms sound similar in Mandarin). The author also cites various polls as showing that for almost 40% of the Taiwanese respondents, Japan was the country or region they liked the most (despite some recent problems with the Senkaku Islands). And when asked which country or region they felt closest to, 69% of the Taiwanese answered: Japan.

Mengxing de shuilian (夢醒的睡蓮，2009b) deals with natural disasters and asks why the general population in Xiamen is reluctant to send donations to Taiwan. The conclusion is that if the Taiwanese show that they are inclined to rely more on ＂foreigners＂ (Japan and US) than on ＂the members of their own family,＂ the Chinese Mainlanders will be reluctant to trust them.

Some of the cultural misunderstandings arising, however, derive from the different curricula found in schools and universities, as is shown in the ＂Taiwanese know of Lin Yutang, but don＇t know of Lu Xun＂ (*Taiwanren zhi Lin Yutang que bu zhi Lu Xun*台灣人知林語堂卻不知魯迅). Wang Lujia (王鷺佳，2010) discusses the fact that in Taiwan, at least for a long time, authors such as Lin Yutang and Hu Shi were seen as representatives of Chinese culture, while the work of Lu Xun and other authors who were famous in the PRC was hardly known at all[9]。

Taiwan is more Chinese than China?

On the question of cultural affinity and differences between Taiwan and China, one important issue, which appeared in several entries, was the idea that, culturally, Taiwan is more Chinese than the Mainland of China. For example, Pangguangzhe in "Although being Chinese, why are Taiwanese more popular?" (*tong wei Zhongguoren, weishenme Taiwanren shou huanying?* 同為中國人，為什麼台灣人受歡迎？) starts from the assumption that the Taiwanren have more traditional attitudes and states that the Chinese Mainland, in general, has a long tradition of civilization and was developed much earlier than Taiwan but the fact is that Taiwan is now the bearer of the Chinese cultural heritage (*Zhonghua wenhua de chengchuan zhi di* 是中華文化的承傳之地).

In accordance with KMT historiography, the Cultural Revolution in Mainland China is described as destructive with regard to traditional Chinese culture, while the Cultural Renaissance Movement (*Zhonghua fuxing yundong* 文化復興運動) in Taiwan (which is, in fact, more a political anti-Communist movement than a cultural movement) is praised, indirectly, for maintaining Chinese culture.[10] In more detail, the Taiwanese are said to have incorporated such traditional moral values as a "sense of propriety, justice, and integrity" (*li yi lian chi de daode*

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9   The work of Lu Xun, as well as that of many other left-wing authors, was banned in Taiwan after 1949 (Tenner Lu Xun's Last Days and after, 1982: 444). After the lifting of Martial Law, all Lu Xun's works became available and in, 1997, the Foxing Chinese Opera Troupe, at that time one of the few remaining state-sponsored cultural groups, even presented Lu Xun's "The True Story of A Q" as if it had taken place in Taiwan and in Hoklo! Nevertheless, Lu Xun never became a "state hero" and his works are not widely taught in schools (Guy, 1999). Lin Yutang, was educated on Gulangyu and taught at Amoy (Xiamen) University from 1926-1927. The usual biographies in the PRC, however, do not mention the fact that Lin Yutang was an ardent conservative and that Amoy University, in the 1920s, was not in any way supportive of the CCP. After 1949, Lin went first to the US and later to Taiwan, where he died in 1976.

10 The Cultural Renaissance Movement, launched in 1966, also aimed to bring Chinese culture to the "uncivilized" groups, such as the Aborigines, which showed clearly that the KMT had serious doubts about the extent to which Taiwan was the heart of Chinese culture at that time. (Phillips 2003: 14, Damm 2011, forthcoming).

*guannian*禮義廉恥的道德觀念),[11]with reference also being made to traditional Chinese religious beliefs and the blossoming of these in Taiwan.

Other signs of the continuing existence of traditional Chinese values are highlighted by drawing attention to street names such as "loyalty and filial piety" (*zhongxiao* 忠孝)、"compassion" (*renai* 仁愛)、"faith and justice" (*xinzi* 信義)、"peace" (*heping* 和平); the writer chooses not to mention, however, the many streets named after Chiang Kai-shek and Sun Yat-sen, and the fact that the early KMT re-named most of Taipei's streets according to the map of the ROC to remind the people of Taiwan that the Mainland had to be reconquered from Taiwan. In addition to mentioning the National Palace Museum, which certainly has the largest range of exhibits of traditional Chinese culture, the author states that "history has entrusted Taiwan with the treasures of Chinese culture", presenting a rather far-fetched interpretation of history by way of explanation: while Mainland China had suffered under the Manchu (Qing dynasty: 1644-1911) and later during the Cultural revolution (1966-1976), Fujian and, in particular, Taiwan had provided "safe havens" for the early Han Chinese culture since the Song dynasty.[12]In addition, the Taiwanese people are said to have incorporated traditional Chinese values and religious beliefs which have been eradicated in Mainland China as a result of the one party culture. The years of Japanese rule are disregarded and the writer declaims "Since 1949, the orthodox Chinese culture (*zhengtong Zhonghua wenhua* 正統中華文化) has blossomed in Taiwan and democratic Taiwan has become the example for all ethnic Chinese democratization." "Taiwan is not only the land of the Chinese cultural heritage, but also the Holy Land of Freedom in the hearts of the Chinese people".

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11 This Blog is written by the well-known Blogger, Yan Changhai.

12 While it is difficult to assess the precise date when Taiwan came under Chinese rule, it is almost undisputed in Taiwan that, in 1662, the Ming Emperor, Koxinga (Zheng Chenggong) took Taiwan back from the Dutch and that in 1683, when Qing troops captured the island, many parts of the island were still fully under the control of the indigenous population. In 1885, Taiwan became a province of China under the Qing Dynasty and rapidly integrated into the Qing Empire; in 1895, Taiwan was given to Japan under the Treaty of Shimonoseki. During the Song and Ming dynasties, some migration from Fujian to Taiwan took place, but this was not encouraged and was generally even forbidden by the Chinese rulers.

Mutual Stereotypes

As mentioned before, mutual stereotypes exist and are often found in Blog entries: one standard stereotype for Taiwanese men is their being "full of lust" (*haose* 好色). While Chinese culture is usually regarded as positive, the negative aspects found in Taiwan and the Taiwanese are attributed to the negative influence of the Japanese "pornographic/erotic culture" (*seqing wenhua* 色情文化) without going into any other details of how the Japanese culture has influenced Taiwan. Another Blog entry by Ceng Fanshu (曾凡樹，2011), however, compares the "potential" use of the Hong Kongnese, Singaporeans and Taiwanese "ethnic Chinese" culture for Mainlanders, who had encountered decades of Communist anti-traditional campaigns, for example, during the Cultural revolution.

I also found other entries where the Taiwanese are described in negative terms (the same held true for years, for the Hong Kongnese), as being "too many," too selfish and arrogant, being engaged in prostitution and driving up the prices for real estate. A long and angry discussion at the BBS http://bbs.xmfish.com/simple/?t2816722.html (accessed 12 December 2011), for example, started with the introduction: "Comrades, have you also realized that the number of Taiwanese people has become too high recently? The boss of the badminton hall I went to is Taiwanese; when I was walking around with my girlfriend eating a Lotus flavored snack, I realized that the owner is also Taiwanese. When I went to have a cup of coffee in the evening, the waitress said all products were directly brought in by the boss from Taiwan. Taiwanese businessmen are everywhere. Yeah, really! People admire it. We Xiamen people do not benefit from this, but there are a lot of benefits for the people of Taiwan! I have heard that Taiwanese people can get to Taiwan for only 2000 Taiwanese dollars. Can you imagine that we would be able to go to Taiwan for only 2000 dollars? When will the pendulum swing in the other direction so that we can go to Taiwan to open a small business like a street vendor?"

And the discussion continues with further comments, such as, "They say the money of the Chinese is easy to earn", "Death to the Taiwanese", Taiwanese self-esteem is too high. Always talk about democracy. … But actually it is a fake democracy, nothing to be proud of."

"Taiwanese are pigs."

In Xiamen lüshi Wang Xiaolin (廈門律師王曉林，2011), entitled "Taiwanese, you should also understand the Mainland Chinese of Today" (*Taiwanren, ni shifou ye gai liaojie xiaxian ru jin de daluren* 台灣人，你是否也該了解下現如今的大陸人), the basic line of argumentation is that the young people in Mainland China know more about the political and societal system in Taiwan than the Taiwanese know about the system in Mainland China and the writer contends that "only when the Taiwanese really understand the Mainlanders, will relations across the Strait not be hampered by the games of the DPP."

The first commentator to this Blog entry, however, seems to have a better understanding of the situation and states that mutual understanding, although important, does not necessarily lead to mutual opinions; citing the case of Hong Kong and the "one country, two systems model" the author concludes that although the Taiwanese are familiar with the idea, "they are not interested in this system at all."

Becoming Localized: *Taibao* in Mainland China

Many of the entries dealing with the "Taiwanes compatriots" (*Taibao* 台胞), the Taiwanese residing in Mainland China, present pictures and reports of official, semi-official and civil gatherings and from these a different picture emerges. Basically, the political undertones are almost invisible, and the positive description of the Taibao living in Mainland China, contradicting as it does the earlier findings of empirical research, is most surprising (Lee, 2010; Schubert, 2010b).

The article Xia Longxuan (夏龍軒，2007) deals with the frequent complaints made by the Taiwanese living in Mainland China about the Mainland people, who are criticized for being loud, for spitting everywhere and for smoking, but the author refers to the official policy of establishing Xiamen as a civilized city in order to show that the complaints of the Taibao are taken seriously.

The entry, Wang Lujia (王鷺佳，2008), shows a picture of a young man who is being arrested for selling pornographic material to the Taibao. Other Blog entries offer information about

the "Taiwanese compatriots" and the way that they have integrated in the society of Xiamen, for example, one article on 37 Taiwanese who received certificates to act as lawyers in Xiamen, Xiamen ribao shying jizhe Yao Fan (廈門日報攝影記者姚凡，2009) describes the smooth integration of the Taiwanese into Mainland China society, when for the first time, "Taiwanese compatriots were legally allowed to act as lawyers in China."

Taishang: Daily Life in a Friendly Environment

The highest number of entries (82 hits) was found using the search term, *Taishang* (台商); the Taishang are Taiwanese business people in China. However, many of the Blogs and newspaper articles were irrelevant to the research question, for example, some provided information on gatherings and new legal regulations.

An entry about the activities of the *Taishang* in Xiamen Ren keyi maoxiang (人可以貌相，2005) features an interview with the Director of the Taishang Association in Xiamen where the focus was on the cultural affinity which was supposed to make investment in Xiamen easier than in other places in China: "After Wu Chin-chung (吳進忠) had explored Guangdong, Beijing, Dongbei, Shanghai and other places, he felt 'quite at home' when he came to Fujian's Xiamen with its 'language, customs, and the geographical bonds.'"

A more patriotic entry in the form of a lyrical poem was obtained by searching with the term *Taishang*[13]: "Geci zhengqu tianzi diyi hao" (歌詞征曲天字第一號，2008)

> A relation difficult to give up -- Taishang
> To see the homeland of China from the other side of the Strait,
> Snow melting, and spring coming.
> Taishang invest in the motherland, just like the swallows return to the North.
> Like a rising wind and scudding clouds; a man wants to chase it like a silver dragon rising.
> Money rain is nourishing fancy buildings, like spring rain is nourishing bamboo shoots.
> China, oh China, how magnificent you are!
> Ah, how magnificent. Motherland, Motherland!
> We can exceed any dynasty of Chinese history, just in the near future.

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13 This lyrical poem was written by Yang Chongzheng 楊崇正. She has published more poems and songs at http://blog.xmnn.cn/?uid-4147-action-spacelist-type-blog.

楊崇正—（民族，美聲歌詞）

隔岸看祖國大地，冰雪消融，春光明媚。

雁陣北歸，台商投資祖基地，
風起云涌，赤子心潮逐浪起。
甘作銀龍…，
錢雨澆長瓊樓玉宇，如無邊春筍。
華夏神州，無比壯麗！
啊…啊…啊…
祖國，祖國！
超秦漢，越唐明，指日可期。
指日可期！輝光照耀寰宇，
中華更風流，兩岸同榮譽，同榮譽…！

The Blog entry Xiamen ribao shiying jizhe Yao Fan (廈門日報攝影記者姚凡，2009b) presents the commemoration festivities of 20 years of the Taishang in Xiamen with many pictures and some basic information; the pictures show traditional cultural performances and official speeches. Other Blog entries such as Peiran you yu (沛然有雨，2009) deal with "love stories" involving the *Taishang*, remaining mostly at a personal level, while occasionally mentioning the political problems that can arise from marriages between the Taiwanese and the Chinese Mainlanders (Although many restrictions have been relaxed during recent years Taiwan still has very strict regulations about the migration of Mainlanders for the purpose of marriage; a wide range of literature is available on the topic of this sort of migration!). The entry, Peiran you yu (沛然有雨, 2009), presents various interviews with the Taishang and their life stories (see also: Peiran you u (沛然有雨，2010).

Conclusion

Some brief conclusions can be drawn from the case studies presented in this paper: first of all, although Blogging is a relatively new phenomenon in China, other studies (Damm, 2007, 2008; MacKinnon, 2008; Yang, 2003, 2009) have shown that Blogging activities are steadily gaining influence in establishing a new public sphere and our research has enabled us to obtain a clear picture of recent developments. The decision to focus on Xiamen and Fujian was based on two factors: the high percentage of resident Taiwanese in the region and the geographical

location. Future research, however, should include one of the other regions with a high percentage of resident Taiwanese, because the "localized" cultural factors differ, and other lines of argumentation might be more relevant with regard to the way that the Taiwanese are perceived.

The new media and Blogs play an important role in how the Taiwanese are perceived. The Blogs featured in this research reflect the opinions of people who have either visited Taiwan, or have met Taiwanese people on the Mainland: while many described personal experiences, both state and official discourses were also questioned through the interactive functions of the Blogs. All in all, a high degree of interactivity was found: most of the Blogs elicited quite a large number of responses (even if these were often rather short) and sometimes also critical comments.

There were several dominant lines of argumentation: firstly, in the nationalist discourse, the claim that Taiwan belongs to China and that, politically, this "problem" could be solved via the "one country two systems" model. Secondly, after the election of a "pro-China" candidate as a "leader" in Taiwan, the democratic structures in Taiwan were often praised, in contrast to the negative descriptions found during the rule of Chen Shui-bian. Thirdly, it was stressed that Taiwan is culturally more Chinese than China. As I have shown, this is a dominant theme that is explained in detail in several Blogs by means of examples drawn from customs, behavior, religious attitudes and history.

The Blogs dealing with the "Taiwanese compatriots/*Taibao*" (台胞) emphasized their smooth integration within Xiamen's society by highlighting the similar cultural background, the use of the same "dialect" *Minnanhua* (閩南話), the similar diet and the good working environment. Even more importantly, the increasing number of Taiwanese who have been able to obtain lawyers' licenses and even gain positions in the political administration is mentioned and praised.

In the *Taiwan tongbao* (台灣同胞) (partly Taiwanren 台灣人) Blogs, there is a stronger focus on Taiwan being culturally Chinese and, particularly since the election of Ma Ying-jeou, democracy has been seen as a sign of progress: Taiwan is described as both modern and traditional at the same time. In some respects, this resembles the KMT discourse, which is easier to accept

than the newer "Taiwanization and localization" discourse; the latter emphasizes the fact that Taiwan has developed its own hybrid (national) identity, which, although it does not deny its Chinese roots, does not in any way regard these as the only roots. Discussions based on the idea that Taiwan possesses a unique culture and is a multicultural society, very different from China, are not accepted and the importance of the Aboriginal culture in Taiwan is not mentioned in one single Blog entry.

The wider question, regarding the extent to which the new forms of media, the Internet and particularly, the Blogs have influenced the discourse is not easy to answer. Nevertheless, several cases demonstrated that counter discourses, even the questioning of the state-led discourse on the sameness of people in mainland China and Taiwan have emerged and even official newspaper reports, being blogged on and discussed, have led to a broader range of discussions. To return to earlier statements, concerning the extent to which the Chinese cyberspace, and here particularly, the Cross-Strait cyberspace, have created a "Habermasian" civil society, it could be argued that although there are still too many state-led restrictions, that the number of participants is limited, and that, socially, the Taiwanese could seldom be identified, a rational and unemotional discussion has developed which differs from that found in more nationalist forums and Blogs.

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