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**Why and how the conception
“Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” aroused?**

Master of Arts

China and International Relations

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Content

Abstract	I
1. Introduction	1
1.1 The rise of “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine”	1
1.2 Different stands in Taiwan issue	2
1.3 Research question	3
2. Literature review	4
2.1 Research status	4
2.2 Contribution to knowledge	7
3. Methodology	7
3.1 Ontology and epistemology	7
3.2 Research design	10
3.3 Choice of theory	11
3.4 Choice of data	14
3.5 Analytical Limitation	15
4. Theoretical analysis	16
4.1 Identity	16
4.2 Strategic narratives	22
5. Case study	28
5.1 Statistics of visits of US officers in Biden Administration	28
5.2 The text analysis of the remarks during the meetings	36
6. Conclusion	41
Reference	43

Abstract

Since the Russia-Ukraine war, the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” has become very popular. This dissertation uses constructivism theories and methods to analyze the conception from the perspective of identity recognition and strategic narratives. In terms of identity, differences in identity perception among Taiwan, the United States, and mainland China have intensified in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war. Taiwan emphasized on “democratic state” identity and compared itself with Ukraine, believing that both are “the front of a democratic state threatened by authoritarianism.” The United States strengthens its identity as a “challenged power” and “protector” of Taiwan and regional order. From the perspective of strategic narrative, the United States is the main advocate of “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine”. The strategic aims contains: (1) deterring mainland China by showing Russia’s huge cost in the Ukraine war; (2) boosting the confidence of Asia-Pacific allies by “compensatory narratives”; (3) warning Taiwan authorities not to provoke the mainland and providing a moral excuse for the United States to increase arms sales to Taiwan. The popularity of “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” also relies on US strategic agenda setting. The dissertation chose the case of visits of US officials of the Biden administration to Taiwan. The case shows that the Ukraine war has an important impact on US’s Taiwan policy. The text analysis shows that: (1) The Ukraine war has changed the U.S. strategic community’s prediction of the future of the global order and the East Asian order; (2) The war has prompted the U.S. Strengthen Taiwan’s “democratic nation” identity, emphasizing the differences in political identities between mainland China and Taiwan; (3) The United States has noticed the impact of war on the global supply chain, especially the semiconductor industry; (4) Although the United States is following the “Ukrainian model” anticipate and prepare for war, but focus more on “dual deterrence” and maintaining the status quo.

Key words: Taiwan issue, Russia-Ukraine war, Sino-US relationship, Identity, Strategic narratives

1. Introduction

1.1 The rise of “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine”

The Taiwan issue has lasted for more than seven decades since the end of Chinese civil war. During the decades, the cross-strait relationship has changed from antagonistic isolation to limited communication, arousing global attention as this issue is the most sensitive factor in Sino-US relationship. As Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) took power in 2016, the tension increased cross the strait and the Russia-Ukraine war added fuel to the tension.

Since the break out of Russia-Ukraine war in the February of 2022, more warns that “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” has aroused. In March, an article called “Is Taiwan Next” was published in *New York Times*, which warns “not only Russia exerting control over Eastern Europe but also China imposing itself over East and Southeast Asia — particularly Taiwan” (Lopez, 2022). It is not a rare idea among scholars and commentators. *The Hill* reports that “the likelihood is growing that, on Biden’s watch, Chinese President Xi Jinping will move on Taiwan, just as Russian President Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine” (Chellaney, 2022). Colin H. Kahl, the undersecretary of defense for policy, also compared Taiwan to Ukraine and “hope(d) that they would draw the lesson from Russia’s experience” (Lopez, 2022). U.S. President Biden also mentioned Taiwan and Ukraine in May, claiming that “unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force, like Russia’s aggression against Ukraine this time, should never be tolerated in Indo-pacific” (The White House, 2022).

Although China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs has criticized Biden’s words and some scholars from Brookings Institute recognized that “the lesson is to tune out the comparisons between Ukraine’s situation and Taiwan’s security. Such analogies are unwarranted by observable realities” (Hass, 2022), the United States still insisted the statement in practice. For example, Senate Foreign Relations Committee overwhelmingly approves Taiwan Policy Act of 2022 and Biden’s Administration has

approved \$1.1 billion arms sale to Taiwan.

1.2 Different stands in Taiwan issue

Mainland China, Taiwan, USA and Japan has different stands in Taiwan issue, which makes it complex.

For the mainland China, national unity is an unswerving goal for decades. Deng Xiaoping proposed “One China, Two systems” to promote the reunification across Taiwan strait. In the report of the Twentieth National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), resolving the Taiwan issue and achieving national reunification were regarded as “a historic mission and an unshakable commitment” and “a natural requirement for realizing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation” (Xi, 2022). The CPC is a staunch supporter of the reunification of China. The difference is that the mainland China authorities represented by the CPC have never abandoned the peaceful reunification, while some people support “military reunification” in the context of global order changes which is getting more support in Chinese social media.

Taiwan authority’s attitude towards reunification is different from CPC. Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo disagree “Taiwan independence” or “international trusteeship” although they did not accept CPC’s legitimacy of China. Taiwan authority planned to conquer mainland China until 1970s, with the hope “counterattack on mainland” (“光复大陆”). Chiang Ching-kuo proposed “China’s Reunification under the Three Principles of the People” (“三民主义统一中国”) in 1981. This proposal evolved into “Guidelines for National Unification” (“国家统一纲领”) in 1991. During Ma Ying-jeou’s trip to mainland China in 2023, he claimed “both (mainland China and Taiwan) are part of our Republic of China, both are China” (Chen, 2023). In general, the Kuomintang’s political position is to oppose “Taiwan independence”, advocate “being friendly to the mainland”, promote cross-strait peace.

In contrast, the Democratic Progressive Party holds clear stand of “Taiwan dependence”. In *Resolution on Taiwan’s Future* (“台湾前途决议文”), DPP claimed that “Taiwan is an independent and sovereign state” and refused the “One China Principle” and “One Country, Two Systems” (DPP, 1999). It clearly put forward “the establishment of a sovereign and independent Taiwan Republic” in its party programme (DPP, 2019).

After the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the United States, the United States recognized the “one China” policy, but issues such as the US arms sales to Taiwan and the de facto diplomatic relations between the United States and Taiwan still exist. After the end of the cold war, the United States government has continuously adjusted its policy towards Taiwan, improved the relationship between the both sides, and supported Taiwan in domestic legislation, trade, military (Niu, 2005). The Biden government is more inclined to intervene in Taiwan, and is not worried that these interventions will drag the United States into the war with China (Roy, 2022).

Due to US-Japan alliance and geographical position near Taiwan strait, Japan is inevitably linked to Taiwan issue. Shinzo Abe claimed “A Taiwan emergency is a Japanese emergency, and therefore an emergency for the Japan-US alliance” (Blanchard, 2021). Although Japan’s policy adjustment does not mean overthrowing the “One China” policy, as an ally of the United States, Japan is actively introducing laws dealing with emergencies in Taiwan to balance Chinese interests in Taiwan, which arouses China’s distrust (Cheung, 2022).

1.3 Research question

The research question is *Why and how the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” aroused?* This thesis aims to analyze the reasons of the rise of the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” in the United States.

2. Literature review

2.1 Research status

Taiwan issue is a heated topic in recent years with the increasingly competitive rivalry between major powers in East Asia. Before the Ukraine war in 2022, some scholars have mentioned the Ukraine element in the analysis, but it is predicted that mainland China would not using the same way as Russia to “invade” Taiwan. Andrew J. Nathan disagreed that mainland China would not “invade” Taiwan and held that CPC is still playing the long game for three reasons: (1) Chinese leaders are confident to handle domestic problems than the West, which means the “decline of the West” is inevitable and waiting is the best choice; (2) Beijing has demonstrated strategic patience in pursuit of its other goals such as Beijing’s behaviors in South China Sea; (3) Conducting wars like Putin is difficult and costly (Nathan, 2020). Emily Holland compared Ukraine and Taiwan in the view of small powers in the shadow of great power rivalries, but admitted that Taiwan’s potential to protract civil war is much lower than Ukraine and China and Russia have vastly different strategies (Holland, 2017).

After the breakout of Ukraine war, scholars have showed different views surrounded China’s strategies to Taiwan and major power politics in East Asia. These opinions can be mainly divided into several aspects.

The first topic is about the current Sino-US competition in Taiwan issue after the Russia- Ukraine war. From the geopolitics, achieving the reunification across Taiwan strait allows China to break through the First Island Chain and Taiwan is a ideal staging ground to control the disputed Senkaku Islands (King, 2022). In addition to the importance of geographic location, mainland China’s “threats towards Taiwan are driving Washington and Taipei closer together” (Blanchette, 2022). Therefore, the task of strengthening Taiwan’s defenses and enhancing deterrence has become after

Ukraine even more urgent for U.S. defense planners (Keegan, & Churchman, 2022, p.91). And the U.S. is trying to force China to learn that the escalation of tension across Taiwan strait in the context of Ukraine crisis will harm its interests, which means that the U.S. is trying to avoid China escalating tensions in Taiwan to show support to distract U.S. and its alliance attention (Trush, 2022, p.598). Another explanation is that in order to eliminate the negative effects in the alliance that the United States displayed in the early stages of the Russia-Ukraine War, the United States will inevitably strengthen its Taiwan-related policy announcements to deter China and appease its allies (Feng, 2022, p.51). However, other holds a relatively positive view that it “opens a window of opportunity” in bargain the assistance towards Russia and Taiwan, for Beijing and Washington, to achieve reciprocity but Taiwan could not benefit from the transactions (Chan, 2022. p.958).

The second topic is the prediction of whether China conduct “invasion” like Russia. Some scholars hold that the likelihood of war in Taiwan in the future is not high. Although the United States have growing concern of mainland China’s attack towards Taiwan, most believe the war would not occur for at least two more years (Carlson, 2022). Other argued the Ukraine war would not be repeated in Asia as the United States check mainland China by visiting Taiwan to show supports and forming Quad initiatives (Bana, 2022). And conducting military actions like Russia is not “a rational choice” but “a dangerous gamble for the PRC” because the U.S. will respond more heavily and China’s economy is much more reliant to the West than Russia (Li, 2022, p.60-61). But other scholars do not think the likelihood of war is low and some warns that “war is no longer unimaginable” (Keegan & Churchman, 2022, p.93), because Russia’s invasion confirms Chinese leaders’ belief that it is a dangerous era and preparation for the war is necessary (Sacks, 2022). Some scholars blame China as the challengers of geopolitics in East Asia, but others hold that this escalation was motivated from both sides, but mainly fueled by the U.S (Trush, 2022, p.598). By comparing United States’ Taiwan Policy of Trump Administration and Biden Administration, Shao Yuqun pointed that Biden has no restraint in developing

unofficial relations to Taiwan, unbalancing the “dual deterrence” policy and there is a high risk of causing direct conflict between the two major powers (Shao, 2022, p.34).

The third topic is about United States’ Taiwan policy and its future changes after Ukraine war. Some agrees to take tougher measures against China and warns that “a weak response, or perception of weakness, could result in further chaos and uncertainty” (Kuzio, 2022). Most Chinese scholars also based on this worst-case scenario, believing that Washington will be more aggressive in Taiwan issue, which would harm the “One China” policy consistently. In the context of Russia-Ukraine war, the United States has further strengthened its military, economic, trade, and technological ties with the Taiwan, trying to build an “international barrier” through the U.S.-Japan alliance, Quad initiative, and the U.S.-EU linkage (Zhao, 2022, p.1). Xin Qiang analyzes the two shifts of US Taiwan policy of Biden Administration-- the attempt to incorporate Taiwan into the global “values alliance” and “high-tech alliance” and promotion the “internationalization” of Taiwan issue(Xin, 2022, p.3). Xia Ang and Xie Yu agrees Xin’s view and predict that Biden’s Taiwan policy continue to oscillate between “strategic ambiguity” and “strategic clarity” with a pragmatic attitude without overstimulating China (Xia & Xie, 2022, pp.17-19). And the U.S. will learn the successful experiences that shapes the situation without directly taking action in Ukraine in Taiwan Strait to strengthen self-defense force in Taiwan (Li, 2023, p.43). The Ukraine war inspired the U.S. strategic community that by showing Russia’s setbacks and costs in the war, it can change the perception of Chinese leaders and the public in order to deter China from taking military action on the Taiwan issue (Zuo, 2022, p.64). In the future, the United States is likely to continue to promote the “internationalization” of the Taiwan issue, conduct “public opinion building” to lead its “spillover” to be related to the Ukraine issue, and smear and attack the normal activities of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) in the airspace around the Taiwan Strait, with a view to establishing international morality deterrence against China (Cao, 2022, p.94).

2.2 Contribution to knowledge

Based on the research status, the thesis aims to contribute to knowledge in two perspectives as follows.

First, focusing on the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine”. Apart from few Chinese scholars, most have mentioned the Ukrainian factor in Taiwan issue and implied Ukraine and Taiwan are linked or paralleled. Although it is a misconception to some extent because Ukraine is a member of the U.N. with independent sovereign but Taiwan is not, the conception is so popular among U.S. strategic community and policy-makers. Most scholars did not mention why and how the conception aroused and this thesis will try to analyze it.

Second, changing theoretical perspective to constructivism instead of sole realism. When most researchers investigate the Sino-US relationship, realism is much more “powerful” than other theories as if both sides will fall into the war or “cold war” inevitably. However, it is hardly to explain the interactions and predict every strategic steps of both sides because something cannot be seen, such as identity, culture, determination and perception, plays a role in it. This thesis will try to analyze the rise of conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” in a different theoretical perspective.

3. Methodology

3.1 Ontology and epistemology

In IR studies, the question about what is the decisive factor in international politics has aroused many disputes. The realism focuses on the physical power because of the anarchy. Power struggle can explain the conflicts and wars in the world history, but it can hardly analyze the world in the our minds. Politics does not exclude the psychological elements because every political action is controlled by minds. Similarly, the IR studies have to explore something invisible, such as conception,

ideology, culture etc., in order to bridge the gap of realism theory and real world.

It is admitted that invisible elements can compliment the shortage of realism as more and more scholars have paid attention to the invisible elements in international politics. Constructivists emphasize the ontological status of ideas, which is different from realism and liberalism. Although it is unreasonable to claim that the human consciousness predates the birth of all substance, the consciousness is much more “decisive” in international relations because the IR studies, different from natural science, involved many elements of human wills. As Alexander Wendt has given the example that “500 British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the United States than 5 North Korean nuclear weapons” (Wendt, 1995, p.73), it inspires us that people will make choices based on what has existed in the minds. Materialism tends to find some “laws” from different foreign policies, conflicts, wars, sanctions and peace, but these “laws” can hardly predict precisely what happen it the future. The Brexit, 2016 US Election and Russia-Ukraine war have shocked many scholars because they did not confirm the “laws” in the IR. These phenomenon combined with some invisible elements like ideology, identity construction, culture and perception that can be easily ignored because it is “irrational” for the UK to leave the EU, for the U.S. citizen vote for a populist president and for Putin to invade Ukraine which has learned lessons in 2014.

When we talk about what is decisive in international relations, we should not forget that the human society is an inter-subjective domain that was created by mutual understanding and cognition (Cao, 2020). What fundamentally determines human society is ideas and culture, not objective substances. Dale C. Copeland criticized Wendt that national behavior itself cannot speak, and it is difficult for any nation to learn about others (Copeland, 2000, p.201). Especially in the field of security, the wrong speculation will be fatal. This critic does not prove the material elements can be the ontological status because “uncertainty”-- what Copeland defend-- is not an exclusive topic of realist worldview. The uncertainty can be explained by the

divergence of conception and the results of shifting of “international culture”. Although Robert Keohane hopes that Wendt’s work will focus on analysis of international relations not simply “renew ontological debates” (Keohane, 2000, pp.126-129), he admitted the importance of ideas and agrees to take ideas into the analysis of IR.

The thesis has argued the ideas as the ontological status in IR, but it does not mean we should exclude the material forces, especially this thesis aims to explore Taiwan issue-- a heated topic in realists. From a grand view, the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” serves for U.S. national interests and it can be seen as an example of “the tragedy of great power politics” (Mearsheimer & Alterman, 2001). It is unwise to imagine the two superpowers can battle it out just with ideas, but how to use the material forces is decided by ideas, like leaders’ judgement, determination, ideology, social culture.

After presenting the ontology in IR, how to turn the invisible ideas into something visible is important, otherwise the inference is unconvincing enough. It is likely for someone to speculate something crazy or conspiracy in politics. Someone believes that Trump has reached agreements with aliens and Biden is a lizard people who tries to control the world. These analysis is fragile not because they do not have a dedicated theory but because they cannot provide enough clues in material forces. To avoid similar mistakes, this thesis holds that only when the ideas can turn something really existed will we judge its legitimacy. Generally speaking, the ideas will be presented by discourse. However, there are too many discourses in international relations as every President, Speaker of Congress, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Secretary of Defense, Senators and House of Representatives in each nation generate political discourse. And what is disturbing is that even the discourse from the same person is different and discourses from President and Secretary of State are totally different, so that it is hardly for scholars to judge what ideas he/she hold and what ideas is important in policy decision.

In order to avoid turning the thesis into a purely speculation, the thesis holds that the discourse with action as a result is convincing. For example, “supporting Ukraine against Russia” can be a beautiful political slogan, but when the West have provided military aids, it shows the discourse has turned the material forces and it proves the real ideas of the West. No matter how “irrational” each policy may appear to a third party, each policy maker must have used his own rational ability at the moment of formulating the policy because the real actions is the results mere real ideas. The criterion for distinguishing which words are just boring “smoke bombs” and which words represent the real thoughts in people’s minds is to examine whether these words have become real actions. We can find the real ideas in policy makers’ minds through the actions, especially those actions will or have caused serious consequences.

3.2 Research design

To approach the research question *Why and how the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” aroused*, the thesis aims to focus on the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” by analyzing discourses and actions from the United States.

The research question contains two parts: why the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” aroused after the breakout of Russia-Ukraine war and how the conception become popular in the United States. Therefore, the thesis will concentrate on the reasons of the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” and also on the dissemination of the conception. International Relations rarely studies how a certain idea spreads, but in fact, “shared knowledge” are not a priori, and their formation depends on the interaction of members. What kind of knowledge can gain advantages among countries and eventually form a “shared knowledge” depends to a large extent on the hegemony of discourse.

The general framework to approach the research question is presented as follows:

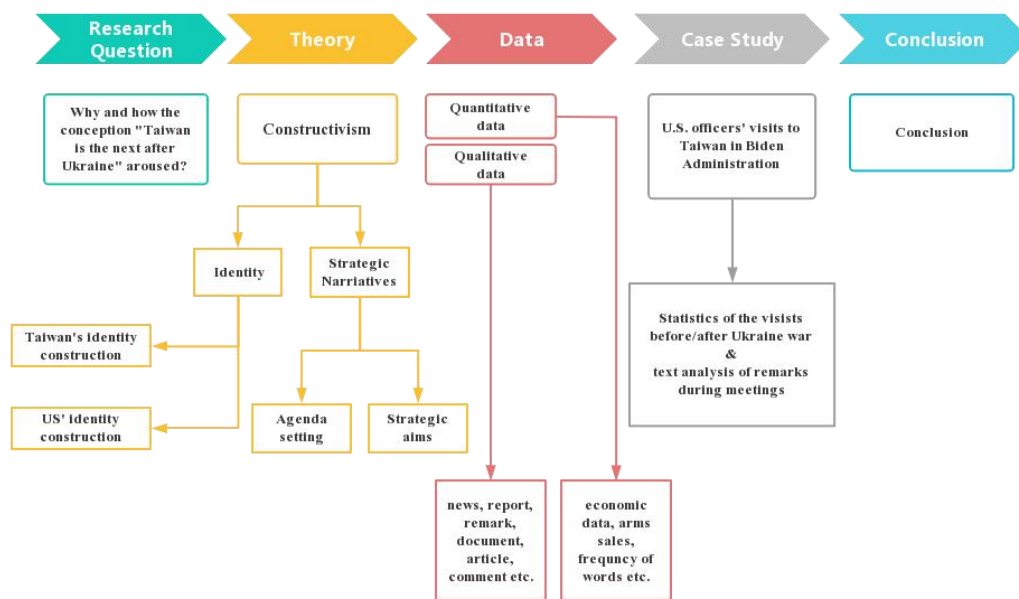


Figure 1 The analytical Framework

The figure shows that this thesis will analyze the rise of the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” in the U.S. through Constructivism that contains two perspectives: identity and strategic narratives. The qualitative data contains news, reports, remarks, documents, articles and comments and the quantitative data includes the economic data, arms sales and frequencies of key words in remarks. These data refers to the discourses and actions from the U.S. about the Taiwan issue to find clues of the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine”. Then, the thesis will take a typical case-- U.S. officers’ visits to Taiwan to show how the Ukraine war shapes the conception by statistics text analysis.

3.3 Choice of theory

In ontology and epistemology, this thesis claimed the ideas as the ontological status in international relations and the discourses and actions can present the invisible conception. Therefore, this thesis will use Constructivism as the core theory to approach the research question.

Constructivism theory has developed rapidly and some scholars have tried to divide the clusters of Constructivism. For example, Katzenstein, Keohane and Karasner divided constructivism into three clusters: conventional constructivism, critical constructivism and postmodern constructivism (Katzenstein, Keohane, & Krasner, 1998, p.675). Although constructivism are not static but a social analysis approach that deals with the role of human consciousness in social life (Finnemore, & Sikkink, 2001, p.391), it draws on many theories of sociology such as structuration and symbolic interaction, focusing on culture, norms, identity and knowledge. Like the people in sociology, the constructivism theory regards the nation like people, as Wendt pointed “States are people too” (Wendt, 1999, p.215).

Constructivism put the nation as the main unit in international relations and underlines the structure’s influence to the nation, but the “structure” in constructivism is different from structural realism because it refers to distribution of ideas (Ibid, p.5) instead of distribution of material forces. Wendt admits the anarchy of international relations and the different distributions of ideas forms three different cultures: Hobbesian culture, Lockean culture, and Kantian culture (Ibid, 247). Wars and violence are frequently used in Hobbesian culture as each nation sees others as enemy and self-help system forces the nation to expand military forces without limits. In the Lockean culture, nations are more likely to do so as “virtue” and “being a good citizen” (Ibid, 237) as national sovereignty is mutually recognized by all parties, and the rival relationship needs to avoid frequent use of violence. And in Kantian culture, wars to solve the disputes are unacceptable as each nation sees others as friends.

Constructivism also explains the state actors’ identity and interests. Unlike the rationalist assumptions of structural realism and liberal institutionalism, constructivists believe that national identities and interests are not given by nature but derived from acquired constructions. Wendt holds four types of identities: (1) person or corporate, (2) type, (3) role and (4) collective (Ibid, 224). The State is a “group self” with “auto-generic” quality (Ibid, 225). The type identity refers to a social category

and each actor can have several type identity at the same time. In IR, the type identity of a nation links to international system and culture. “Liberal democracy”, “evil nation”, “developed/developing nation” are common type identities. And the role identity is largely influenced by international system culture because the roles are determined by the structure instead of the nation itself. The collective identity relates to the mutual recognition of self and other. Based on the identity theory, constructivists hold that the interests presupposes identity, which means the national interests are constructed by identity.

“Identity is an individual’s or group’s sense of self” (Huntington & Dunn, 2004, p.21), so that the core question of identity is “who we are”. It involves affinity and similarity. When we talk about “who we are”, it is inevitable to mention “who are others”, which means who are different from us. When the “we” are identified, the “others” are identified at the same time. The interactions between “we” and “others” must be included in identity studies because the interactions help us to define “who are we” and “who are others”. It is hardly for us to define “we” if “others” does not exist. However, it is a pity to find that the interactions between “we” and “others” are not peaceful in many cases, especially in the terms of international relations. It can be explained from psychology as the self-esteem generates the belief that “our group” is better than “others” (Ibid, 2004, p.25). To prove the superiority, competition is needed so that opposition and stereotype for “enemy” are created.

And the constructivism theory also explains how the structure shapes the identity. There are two logics of identity formation: natural selection and cultural selection (Wendt, 1999, p.320). Natural selection is passive, requiring no cognition, rationality, or intention on the part of the actor. Cultural selection is the process of social acquisition and imitation, which spreads the determinants of certain behaviors across subjects and generations. Cultural selection is the main way to form the identity. For the natural selection, Wendt mentioned the narratives. Constructivists hold that the narratives formed the “collective memory” or “group beliefs” with myths and

traditions, and these narratives are transmitted through generations by socialization and ritual enactment (Ibid, p.163). Wendt also noticed the communication method in narratives. Verbal communication is more powerful than non-verbal communication, he presents an interesting example: If someone takes the lead, starts the discourse of “we” and points out what “we” should do, a collective can be quickly formed with “swift trust” than that in non-verbal communication (Ibid, 347).

Strategic Narratives are important in the process of construction. “Constructivism is, by its nature, a storytelling process” (Tobiason, 2022, p.125). For constructivists, the strategic narratives can turn into material forces because behavior is determined by thinking. Strategic narrative is a means to construct the shared knowledge and meanings in international politics, thus shaping the behaviors of actors in IR (Miskimmon et al., 2014, p.3). And understanding the strategic aims of actors is the most significant task in strategic narratives research with the focus on agenda setting and policy legitimacy (Ibid, pp.11-12). Language is the “house of being”, Heidegger reminds us that languages, discourse and narratives are not only tools but have ontological meaning in human society. This confirms the stands of constructivists and that is different from realism and liberalism.

3.4 Choice of data

To analyze the reasons of the rise of conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine”, the thesis will choose qualitative data and quantitative data at the same time.

The qualitative data includes four types: (1) U.S. official documents and remarks of officers; (2) academic papers and think tank reports; (3) opinions and news in newspapers and (4) comments in social media. And the quantitative data aims to reflect the U.S. attitude towards Taiwan after Russia-Ukraine war. As pointed in ontology, the discourses corresponding to actions is can really shows the conceptions. The main actions of the United States to support Taiwan are arms sales and visits to Taiwan. Therefore, the quantitative data includes the economic data, data of arms

sales to Taiwan, the frequencies of visits to Taiwan and the frequencies of key words in remarks during the visits.

3.5 Analytical Limitation

As the Taiwan issue is too complex and trying to analyze this issue through constructivism is not an easy job. The analytical framework is not perfect without any limitations. Three limitations are presented as follows.

First, the discussion of “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” in this thesis takes Sino-US relations as the textual background, which means that Europe, Japan and other countries are not within the scope of the discussion. In fact, the United States is not the only holder of the view that “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine”. Due to insufficient language skills and time constraints of the research, this thesis only considered information from mainland China, the United States, and Taiwan. Japan, which has a certain influence on the Taiwan issue, and European countries, which are increasingly concerned about the Taiwan Strait issue, are not within the scope of the research.

Second, the contradiction between constructivism theory and realism will probably occur in this research. Although Barkin thinks that constructivism and realism are not contradictory as constructivism is described as a cluster of research methods and analytical tools about “how to study world politics” (Barkin, 2003, p.338) and other scholars try to bridge the gap by proposing “constructive realism”, “realist constructivism” and “realist-constructivism” (Jackson, Nexon, Sterling-Folker, et al., 2004), it is hard to deny constructivism and realism are two different paradigms in IR. The ontology and epistemology of international relations have been expounded at the beginning of this chapter, there is no doubt that this cannot completely cut off the influence of realism. As presented in the literature review, realism is the most important theory in academic circles discussing the Taiwan issue in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war. The conception or slogan of “Taiwan is the next Ukraine” itself reflects the realism of the US strategy -- the U.S. has not denied the possibility and

risk of a conflict or even a war with China over the Taiwan issue. This thesis will try to avoid falling into the trap of realism, and will focus on national identity, strategic narrative and communication methods -- these perspectives proposed by constructivism.

Third, this thesis does not take the internal divergences of the United States into consideration. Some argues that “there is no American foreign policy but American foreign policies” because of multiple power structures of the United States. Republicans and Democrats, Congress and the White House, the federal government and state governments all have different views on Taiwan. But this thesis does not analyze it from the perspective of organizational structure or power distribution, but regards the United States as a whole entity.

4. Theoretical analysis

Constructivists hold that the influence of ideas is huge and it relates to two frequently mentioned concepts in constructivism -- identity and strategic narratives. Therefore, the thesis will take these two perspectives to approach the research question.

4.1 Identity

The conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” comes from the identity construction contributed by Taiwan and the United States. This part will analyze the Taiwan’s and US’s identity construction in the context of Russia-Ukraine war.

4.1.1 Taiwan’s self-constructed “Ukrainian-like” identity

It is not objective to attribute the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” to the United States because the authority and media in the Taiwan region have repeatedly compared itself with Ukraine. The identity construction arose from similarity and there are three similarities between Taiwan and Ukraine in the eyes of Taiwan

authority and media.

First, Taiwan is consolidating the identity of “democracy” linked Ukraine. One of reasons that DPP refuse to accept the reunification is the differences in ideology and social systems across the strait. Since the 1990s, Taiwan has witnessed a shift process in democratization. It rated first in Asian countries and regions in the *Democracy Index 2022* released by Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU, 2023). In Taiwan’s public opinions, the democratic political system deserves proud. In the world values survey, 91.3% interviewees say having a democratic political system is “very good” (35.3%) and “fairly good” (56%) (WVS, 2021). In Taiwan’s 2022 National Day Address, Tsai Ing-wen emphasized that Taiwan’s primary task is to “make our commitment to a free and democratic system an unbreakable national consensus” (Office of the president Republic of China, 2022). It is obvious that Taiwan highlights its identity as a democracy. In February 24 of 2023, one year after “special military operation”, Tsai Ing-wen tweeted “Today marks one year of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. In defending their country, the Ukrainian people have inspired the world with incredible bravery & determination” (Wen, 2023). Although Ukraine is listed as “hybrid regime” by Economist Intelligence Unit, it has turned a symbol of democracy with freedom. Taiwan joined the international sanctions against Russia at the second day of the war, claiming the identity of “a member of the global democratic alliance” and sanctioning Russia to defend “the core universal values of freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights” (Minster of Foreign Affairs Republic of China, 2022). And Taipei City Councillor Miao Po-ya (苗博雅) said Ukrainian are “not only fighting for their country, but also defending the world’s freedom and democracy” (Teng, 2023). Through these official claims, it is clear that Taiwan is actively strengthening its “democracy” identity in the context of Ukraine war to attract attentions from the “values alliance”, especially Biden has brought the traditional values to diplomacy.

Second, Taiwan links Ukraine for shared “independent statehood” identity. From the claims of Taiwan and Ukraine, it is easy to find that both sides emphasize their

“independence” from the former national system. Ukraine has become an independent nation since the the collapse of the Soviet Union and it highlights its legitimacy of territorial integrity and sovereign unity. In the Russia-Ukraine war, the identity divergence was mentioned again. Vladimir V. Putin says that “Modern Ukraine was entirely and fully created by Russia, more specifically the Bolshevik, communist Russia”, denying the legitimacy of statehood of Ukraine (Schwartz et al., 2022). Kyiv insists its statehood and planed to officially rename Russia as “Moscovia” as a counterattack (Sfroza, 2023). Both Russia and Ukraine try to prove its justice and legitimacy by promoting identity respectively. The similar situation also occurs in Taiwan. Although Taiwan is not a member of UN and its “independence” lacks basis of international law, it is a de facto self-governed island for several decades. Therefore, Taiwan authority claims that the People’s Republic of China has never had sovereignty in Taiwan, which means “Taiwan was never part of China” (Jacobs, 2016). Lai Ching-te (賴清德) declared that “Taiwan is already an independent and sovereign nation” so that it is unnecessary to declare independence (Yeh, et al, 2023). Taiwanese folks also have a similar identity. Due to the fact that the two sides of the strait have been separated for decades, with the death of many veterans whose ancestral home is in the mainland, the younger generation of Taiwan’s identity recognition of “Chinese” is declining. According to the survey conducted by Election Study Center, National Chengchi University (NCCU) in 2023, the changes in identity is obvious. From 1992 to 2022, the identity of “Taiwanese” rise from 17.6% to 60.8%, the identity of “Chinese” drop from 25.5% to 2.7% and the identity of “both Taiwanese and Chinese” decrease from 46.4% to 32.9% (NCCU, 2023). Based on the changes of identity, the vast majority of Taiwan residents advocate “maintaining the status quo”, according to the investigations by the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) in 2021 (MAC, 2021). And DPP has advanced the latest history teaching curriculum for “12-Year Basic Education” to promote the master narrative of multiculturalism as the core element of Taiwanese identity in order to weaken Sinocentrism in Taiwan’s history research (Lyu & Zhou, 2023).

Third, Taiwan shapes the identity of “threatened by authoritarian power” like Ukraine. Since the Ukraine crisis in 2014, more scholars start to compare Taiwan to Ukraine as both are “threatened by authoritarian powers”. In the West, the Ukraine war is widely interpreted as a global struggle between democracy and authoritarianism (Stanford University, 2023). Taiwan is actively construct its identity as “democracy fronts against authoritarianism” by propagating that mainland China will achieve unification by force in the near future. For example, Joseph Wu Chao-hsieh (吳釗燮) warned that mainland China is “more likely” to “invade” Taiwan in 2027 (Smith, 2023). Although using the force to unify is rarely mentioned and “peaceful unification” declaration has been repeated for decades in official documents and public speeches of PRC, Taiwan is constructing and strengthening its identity as if “persecuted by authoritarianism”. Some scholars have noticed that mainland China is different from Russia in many aspects, thus for PRC, conducting military operations like Russia is not wise and this likelihood is low. But these opinions did not change the Taiwan’s identity and Western opinions about the future Taiwan Strait war.

4.2.2 America’s identity construction on the future Taiwan issue

The conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” not only comes from the self identity construction, but also from the U.S.side. “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” can be seen as the U.S. prediction of the future Taiwan issue. And this prediction also links the identity of the USA.

First, the United States has become an anxious challenged power faced the rise of China. Since the end of cold war, due to the disintegration of the Soviet Union, China’s strategic value declined. There were debates among US strategic community, but in 1994 President Clinton decided to “de-link” China’s privileged trading status from its human rights record (Broder, & Mann, 1994). The “engaging policy” continues. It because of the close economic ties between China and the United States and the United States’ optimistic estimation of the future situation of Sino-US relations. In the view of Democrats and moderate Republicans, a strategy of

engagement with China can promote China's "integration" into the liberal international order dominated by the United States. But the strategic engagement policy did not turn China into a liberal democracy, thus more strategists reflected the "engaging policy" and tried to make a new China policy. Although Biden does not choose "decoupling" like Trump, it also regards China as a systemic challenger. Antony Blinken declared that China is the only country that can truly challenge the US-led global system (Wadhams, 2021). Today, China issues have become one of the few topics that can be agreed upon by both the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. The fundamental reason is that the United States has developed a serious identity crisis perception. They believe that the United States has become a challenged party, and the challenge from China is more severe than Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and Japan. On the Taiwan issue, both China and the United States have almost reached a corner. China cannot tolerate the loss of Taiwan, and the United States is bound by the Taiwan Relations Act. If China tries to overthrow the world order led by the United States, Taiwan is the priority and most convenient breakthrough. Therefore, in the US identity construction, China is the most risky challenger and US-China relationship has fallen into "a new cold war" that requires a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach (Carafano, 2023). Based on such identity cognition, the US predicts that it is highly possible for China to repeat the Russia-Ukraine case in the Taiwan Strait.

Second, the closer relationship between Russia and China consolidates US identity cognition as the challenged power. China-Russia relationship is getting closer before the war as Moscow is regarded as the good neighbor, good partner and good friend (Peng, 2019) and both sides established "a comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era" (Xinhua, 2019). Before the war, Putin visited Beijing, attending the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics. After the meeting, both sides released a Joint Statement on international relations and global sustainable development, criticizing the U.S. hegemony and interference (Xinhua, 2022). And the "no-limits" relationship has aroused the concerns and worries in the West as military

alliance is also a “no-limits” relationship. Whether it’s China’s real intentions or showy political rhetoric, this raises troublesome results when Russia conducted the “special military operation” after 20 days of the meeting. When the war break out, there are many conspiracies guessing China know Russian military plans in advance. Some analysts believe that China will soon take the same military action, launching a Taiwan Strait war in East Asia as a match for Russia’s military action. In their perception of identity, both China and Russia are disruptors and opponents of the world order led by the United States, both are “authoritarian nations”, and the leaders of both sides are ambitious “political strongmen”. They believe that the behavioral logic of China and Russia is the same, and the liberal international order will inevitably be challenged even threw by China and Russia. Based on the identity construction of “others”-- China and Russia, who are “challenger” and “enemy” to US -- it is reasonable for United States generate the perception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine”.

Third, the United States is strengthening its “protector” identity in Taiwan in the context of Ukraine. Another reason for the rise of “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” is US “Taiwan protector” identity. In the Taiwan Relation Act passed in 1979, US can provide weapons for Taiwan to defend itself (Senate, 1979). Currently, the United States is actively intervening in Taiwan Strait affairs and trying to shape the image of a “protector” of security and stability in East Asia. In Taiwan policy Act 2022, U.S. declared that it aims to “promotes the security of Taiwan, ensures regional stability, and deters People’s Republic of China (PRC) aggression against Taiwan. It also threatens severe sanctions against the PRC for hostile action against Taiwan” (Senate, 2022). Mainland China is blamed as the “potential saboteur” and “threats” of regional security and prosperity. In the context of Ukraine war, the “defender and protector” identity is strengthened because Ukraine is not a traditional ally or in the the U.S. sphere of influence. The United States could have done nothing about the war in Ukraine, but it have provided a amount of assistance and aids. As Taiwan’s strategic importance is higher than Ukraine, it is inevitable to involve U.S. in the potential war.

“Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” also means the United States have “responsibility” to “protect Taiwan” in the war. Although some analysts do not believe that “the United States will send troops to protect Taiwan” (Zhang, 2022), when Biden faced the question “Are you willing to get involved militarily to defend Taiwan if it comes to that?”, he answered yes (Stephens, 2022). Biden’s answer is not meaningless political rhetoric, and the United States has already begun actual actions. In the April of 2023, US conducted the the largest military exercises in decades with Philippines in South China Sea, which present a clear deterrence signal toward mainland China in Taiwan issue (Gomez, 2023). These actions show US identity of “protector” and “defender” in Taiwan and the United States and the Ukraine war has strengthened the identity.

4.2 Strategic narratives

Although Taiwan emphasized its similarities with Ukraine in terms of self-identity construction, Taiwan did not share the idea that “Taiwan is the next Ukraine” in the early days of the war. Tsai Ing-wen said Taiwan is different from Ukraine because of its strategic position, geographical location and international supply chain (Blanchard, 2022). This can be explained that the authority did not want to compare Ukraine at the first stage of war to arouse panic, which would promote the changes of public opinions from “maintaining status quo” to “welcoming unification”. Compared to Taiwan, the United States tends to propagate the conception by using strategic narratives. This part will analyze what is the strategic aims of United States and how they conduct the agenda setting in the context of Ukraine war.

4.2.1 US’s Strategic aims

“Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” is an important strategic narrative of the United States. It has mentioned by many scholars, researches in think tanks and officers. The strategic aims includes three aspects.

First, “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” is a serious discourse deterrence for mainland

China. Washington hopes China to learn lessons from the war and give up the military unification plans. As Russia has suffered multiple sanctions from the West and the West has strengthened its military assistance to Ukraine, through the strategic narrative that “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine”, the United States intends to exert a deterrent force on China, warning China to avoid using force against Taiwan. It is reported that Washington is considering options for a possible package of sanctions against China’s “invasion” to Taiwan (Blanchard, et al., 2022). Because China is dependent on foreign investment, foreign technology and export, and “Xi Jinping appears to be a rational leader, neither deluded nor desperate like Vladimir Putin” (Parton, 2022), the discourse aimed to have a deterrent result. Although the discourse deterrence cannot intimidate CPC and PLA, it is obvious that China has made some changes in the context of Ukraine war. The foreign minister Qin Gang declared “China-Russia relations are based on non-alliance, non-confrontation and non-targeting of any third party” (CGTN, 2023), which shows a lower profile compared to “no-limits relationship”. And China is trying to mediate the war, requiring “respecting the sovereignty of all countries”, “resuming peace talks”, “nuclear weapons must not be used”, “promoting post-conflict reconstruction” (FMPRC, 2023). These actions can be seen as the effectiveness of discourse deterrence.

Second, “Taiwan is the next Ukraine” is a “compensatory narrative” in order to maintain its Indo-pacific alliance system. Because at the beginning of the Ukraine war, the United States hesitated to provide aids and supports to Ukraine, avoiding the potential war escalation between NATO and Russia. This hesitation makes Taiwan nervous as on social media, some people hold skepticism about U.S. aid or the view that the U.S. abandons Taiwan, believing that the U.S. will not defend Taiwan in the event of a war in the Taiwan Strait in the future. And similar worries also occurs in other Indo-pacific allies because the United States refuse to send troops to Ukraine and did not provide heavy weapons to Ukraine until April. To appease the allies in Indo-pacific an strengthen the belief that they would gain enough supports in national

security risks, avoiding making Taiwan the first domino to collapse the alliance system is necessary. In March 1st of 2022, a delegation led by former Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Mike Mullen visited Taiwan to show promises of the peace and stability across Taiwan Strait (Associated Press, 2022). As the United States began to support Ukraine on a large scale, promoting “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” can complement the shortage of operations as the first stage of war.

Third, “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” can providing a moral excuse for increased arms sales to Taiwan and a warning to Taiwan. A notable phenomenon is that the Biden administration’s arms sales to Taiwan have grown rapidly after the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war. Before the Ukraine war, there are only 2 arms sales (total value: \$ 850 million) to Taiwan, but there are 10 arms sales (total value: \$ 2656 million) in the past one year. The list is presented in figure 2. The US statements claimed that “contribute to the recipient’s capability to provide for the defence” and Taiwan admitted these weapons are to “deal with threats and provocations from the Communist military” (Blanchard, 2023). It is the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” that drive the United States to approve the increasing arms sales to Taiwan. Some words like “political stability”, “militray balance” and “economic progress” are included in the U.S. statements (Hansler, 2022), which justified the arms sales. In the political logic of the United States, since “Taiwan is the next Ukraine,” the Ukraine war has brought major crises to Europe and the world. Therefore, increasing arms sales to Taiwan in advance will inevitably bring about peace, stability and prosperity. Such moral reasons, combined with the shaping of the identity of China as “evil nations” and “challengers of world order”, are very popular in the West. This provides moral support for the United States to continue to intervene deeply in the Taiwan issue.

The strategic narrative purpose of the United States to shape “Taiwan is the next Ukraine” also includes deterring the Taiwan authorities. From the national security strategy of the Biden administration, the relationship between China and the United

States is a “competitive relationship” rather than a “hostile relationship”, and the United States has not indicated that it will go to war with China on the Taiwan issue. Therefore, “Taiwan is the next Ukraine” is a “dual narrative deterrence”, which not only prevents China from repeating Russia’s military actions, but also prevents the Taiwan authorities from completely breaking through the “one China” policy. NATO can hardly simultaneously wage conflicts or wars with Russia and China in Europe and East Asia respectively. Since the outbreak of the war, NATO has not directly sent troops into Ukraine, and Ukraine has also suffered huge losses. “Taiwan is the next Ukraine” is indeed a deterrent to the Taiwan authorities. In Taiwan’s “Nine-in-One” election in 2022, the DPP suffered setbacks, and Tsai Ing-wen has resigned the party chair (Williams, 2022). An important reason for this election result is that the people of Taiwan are dissatisfied with the DPP’s radical mainland policy, and a considerable number of people are worried about wars like Ukraine suffered.

Biden Administration Arms Sales to Taiwan		
Date	Arms	Value (million)
2021-08-04	40 155mm M109A6 Paladin Medium Self-Propelled Howitzer System and related equipment	\$750
2022-02-07	Patriot International Engineering Services Program and Field Surveillance Program	\$100
2022-04-05	Patriot Contractor Technical Assistance	\$95
2022-06-08	Ship Spare Parts, Ship System Spare Parts	\$120
2022-07-15	Contractor Technical Assistance Support	\$108
2022-09-02	Contract Logistics Support for the Surveillance Radar Program	\$665.4
2022-09-02	AGM-84L-1 Harpoon Block II Missiles	\$355

2022-09-02	AIM-9X Block II Sidewinder Missiles	\$85.6
2022-12-06	Aircraft standard spare parts	\$330
2022-12-06	Aircraft non-standard spare parts	\$98
2022-12-28	Volcano (vehicle-launched) anti-tank munition-laying systems	\$180
2023-03-01	100 AGM-88B HARM; 23 HARM training missiles; 200 AIM-120C-8 AMRAAM; 4 AIM-120C-8 AMRAAM Guidance Sections	\$619

Figure 2 The Arms Sales to Taiwan of Biden Administration

(Source: Wikipedia “List of US arms sales to Taiwan”)

4.2.2 US’s Strategic agenda setting

Strategic narrative research requires analysis not only of strategic purpose but also of strategic agenda setting. In strategic narratives, purely textual content cannot shape the behavior of actors. For constructivists, the diffusion of ideas depends on interaction. Nowadays, when individuals and groups are deeply involved in international relations, “interactions” are no longer limited to secret diplomacy between governments, but are usually strategic agenda setting for social groups at all levels. With regard to “Taiwan is the next Ukraine”, mainland China, Taiwan, the United States and other countries have set up agendas in an attempt to influence international public opinion and global perception. But obviously, the US’s strategic agenda setting is the most successful.

First, the U.S. strategic communication system is the most competitive in the world, which played an important role in agenda setting. After the Ukraine war, a notable phenomenon is the “internationalization” of the Taiwan issue with more attentions and expressions from governments, think tanks, mass media and social media, which shows the power of U.S. strategic communication system. “Strategic communication” originated from marketing and public relations and after the September 11 attacks, the

United States took the lead in introducing “strategic communication” into the field of national security and international politics. The United States has formed a strategic communication system covering government agencies, think tanks, mass media, and non-governmental organizations. The U.S. strategic communication system is a coordinated communication system of the whole government and the whole society. Under the guidance of the National Security Council, the communication and contact are carefully designed, and it is good at non-kinetic operations (persuasion, seduction, manipulation) in the “gray zone” (Ji, 2023). The strategic communication system ensure the dissemination of strategic narratives of “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine”. It is easy to find that U.S. government agencies (the White House, Senate, House of Representatives, Department of Defense, Department of State etc.), mass media (The Hill, New York Times, The Atlantic, Foreign policy, VOA etc.), think tanks (Brookings institution, CSIS, Rand Corporation etc.) and social media influencers are linked in the shape of “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine”.

Second, the ability of the United States to set the agenda on the Taiwan issue also comes from its communication hegemony. Many scholars have used “cultural imperialism”, “media imperialism” and “cultural hegemony” to describe the West’s domination of the world through information, media and communication. These words means that the West, especially the United States, has the hegemony from information production to communication feedback. In short, the United States controls the channels of the global strategic narrative. Compared to the United States, mainland China has little advantages in global communication system. And in the western collective memory, China is regarded as a country keen on engaging in “propaganda”, and its information is far less reliable than the “fair and objective” American media. As to the Taiwan issue in the context of Ukraine war, the voice from mainland China is much less influential than the U.S. as most international mainstream media would not report the whole statement from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs or interpret the statements without Western-style political standpoint. And in social media, because of the throttling measures of the technology giants, the

exposure of Taiwan-related views of Chinese institutions, media and celebrities is far less than that of the United States and Taiwan. The same problem arises among NGOs, think tanks and academic research institutes. This has led to China's Taiwan-related statements being issued mainly by government agencies, accompanied by an increasing number of military exercises. This actually exposed the dilemma of the mainland China in the narrative of the Taiwan issue: Without communication hegemony, mainland China is more inclined to rely on serious statements and military deterrence to show its determination, but these are usually interpreted by the United States as China's imminent "invasion of Taiwan", thereby deepening China's narrative dilemma. This means that in shaping the strategic narrative on Taiwan in the context of the Ukraine war, the United States and Taiwan dominate the power of strategic narratives, while mainland China is described as the "enemy", the "destroyer", and the "axis of evil".

5. Case study

The case study is to compare the US officers' visits to Taiwan before/after the Ukraine war in Biden Administration. This part includes the statistics of the US visits and the context analysis of their speeches in press release.

5.1 Statistics of visits of US officers in Biden Administration

Since Biden took office since January 20 in 2021, there are 17 U.S. delegations who have visited Taiwan until the March of 2023. Before the breakout of Russia-Ukraine war, only 4 delegations visited Taiwan in 13 months (from January 20, 2021 to February 23, 2022). And 13 delegations have visited Taiwan in the 13 months since the Russian-Ukrainian war broke out (from February 24, 2022 to March 31, 2023). Here are specific lists of U.S. officers who have visited Taiwan in Biden Administration:

Table 1 (The list of US officers who visited Taiwan before Russia-Ukraine war)

Dates	Name	Position	Core issues
2021.11.25	Mark Takano	Representative (CA), chairman of the US House Committee on Veterans' Affairs	Cooperation in veterans' affairs, Post-Covid cooperation in trade and investment
	Colin Allred	Representative (TX)	
	Sara Jacobs	Representative (CA)	
	Elissa Slotkin	Representative (MI)	
	Nancy Mace	Representative (SC)	
2021.11.9	Tommy Tuberville	Senator (AL)	Supporting Taiwan's defense capabilities, trade cooperation
	Mike Lee	Senator (UT)	
	John Cornyn	Senator (TX)	
	Mike Crapo	Senator (ID)	
	Ro Khanna	Representative (CA)	
	Tony Gonzales	Representative (TX)	
	Jake Auchincloss	Representative (MA)	
	Jonathan Jackson	Representative (IL)	
2021.6.5	Tammy Duckworth	Senator (IL), member of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee	Vaccine donation to Taiwan
	Chris Coons	Senator (DE), member of the Senate Foreign	

		Relations Committee	
	Dan Sullivan	Senator (AK), member of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee	
2021.4.15	Chris Dodd	former Senator (CT)	Signaling supports to Taiwan
	Richard Armitage	former Deputy Secretaries of State	
	James Steinberg	former Deputy Secretaries of State	

Table 2 (The list of US officers who visited Taiwan after Russia-Ukraine war)

Dates	Name	Position	Core issues
2023.2.18	Ro Khanna	Representative (CA)	economic cooperation (semiconductor), security cooperation
	Tony Gonzales	Representative (TX)	
	Jake Auchincloss	Representative (MA)	
	Jonathan Jackson	Representative (IL)	
2023.1.17	Todd Young	Senator (IN)	Taiwan-US avoidance of double taxation agreement (ADTA), military cooperation, semiconductor cooperation
2022.12.20	John Curtis	Representative (UT)	Security cooperation, climate change cooperation, Taiwan's participation to IPEF
	Mariannette Miller-Meeks	Representative (IA)	
	Burgess Owens	Representative (UT)	

	Michelle Steel	Representative (CA)	
2022.12.4	Brad Little	Idaho Governor	Commercial exchange, Industrial cooperation
2022.10.12	Brad Wenstrup	Representative (OH)	ADTA, Taiwan National Day Celebration, technology cooperation (semiconductor)
	Seth Moulton	Representative (MA)	
	Michael Waltz	Representative (FL)	
	Kai Kahele	Representative (HI)	
	Stephanie Murphy	Representative (FL), Vice Chair of the House Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Intelligence and Special Operations	
	Andy Barr	Representative (KY), Member of the House China Task Force, Member of the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition between the U.S. and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)	
Kai Kahele	Representative (HI)		
Scott Franklin	Representative (FL), Member of Subcommittee on Intelligence and Special Operations and the Subcommittee on Cyber, Innovative		

		Technologies, and Information Systems	
	Joe Wilson	Representative (SC), Senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee	
	Darrell Issa	Representative (CA), Senior member of the House Judiciary Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee	
	Claudia Tenney	Representative (NY)	
	Kat Cammack	Representative (FL)	
2022.9.1	Doug Ducey	Arizona Governor	Attracting suppliers for a new \$12bn semiconductor plant
2022.8.25	Marsha Blackburn	Senator (TN), Ranking Member on the Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, and Data Security and the Subcommittee on Human Rights and the Law	Supporting Taiwan amid the tensions
2022.8.22	Eric Holcomb	Indiana Governor	Semiconductor supply chains
2022.8.14	Edward J.	Senator (MA), Chairman	Reaffirming support for

	Markey	of the Senate Foreign Relations East Asia, Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Subcommittee	Taiwan, Semiconductor supply chains
	John Garamendi	Representative (CA), Member of House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness	
	Don Beyer	Representative (VA), Chair of the Virginia Economic Recovery Commission	
	Alan Lowenthal	Representative (CA)	
	Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen	Representative (American Samoa)	
2022.8.2	Nancy Pelosi	Speaker of the House of Representatives	Supporting for embattled democracy movements, Semiconductor supply chains
	Gregory Meeks	Representative (NY)	
	Raja Krishnamoorthi	Representative (IL)	
	Suzan DelBene	Representative (WA)	
	Andy Kim	Representative (NJ)	
	Mark Takano	Representative (CA)	
2022.5.30	Tammy Duckworth	Senator (IL)	Security support, US-Taiwan economic relationship
	Dan Sullivan	Senator (AK), Member of	

		the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee	
	Chris Coons	Senator (DE)	
2022.4.15	Linsey Graham	Senator (SC), Ranking Member on the Senate Committee on the Judiciary; Member of the Senate Committee on Appropriations	Supporting freedom, Economic cooperation and trade, security cooperation
	Robert Menendez	Representative (NJ), Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee	
	Richard Burr	Senator (NC), Ranking Member of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee	
	Robert Portman	Senator (OH), Ranking Member of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs	
	Ronny Jackson	Representative (TX), Member of Committee on Foreign Affairs, Member of Committee on Armed Services	
	Ben Sasse	Senator (NE)	
2022.3.1	Michael Glenn Mullen	Former United States Navy Admiral, The 17th chairman of the Joint	Supporting Taiwan in the context of Ukraine war

		Chiefs of Staff	
	Meghan O'Sullivan	Former deputy national security advisor, Member of the board of directors of the Council on Foreign Relations	
	Michele Flournoy	Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy	

By comparing the Table 1 and Table 2, it is easy to find three major differences of U.S. visits to Taiwan before/after Ukraine:

The first difference is frequency of visits. Compared with before the outbreak of the war, the frequency of US officials' visits to Taiwan increased significantly after the war. Especially in August 2022, Pelosi arrived in Taiwan the day after China's PLA Day to show her indifference to China's "military deterrence". After Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, three more US delegations visited Taiwan within a month, including not only members of Congress but also local governors. It shows that the breakout of the Ukraine war has changed the the views of U.S. strategic communities and politicians about East Asian order.

The second difference is the positions of visitors. Compared with before the outbreak of the war, the ranks of American officials visiting Taiwan after the war were higher and more diverse. Among them, Pelosi is the speaker of the House of Representatives, and many senators, governors, and former defense officials have traveled to Taiwan.

The third is the core issues during the visit. After the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine

War, American officials visiting Taiwan put more emphasis on the defense of Taiwan’s “free and democratic system”, and paid more attention to the changes in the East Asian order caused by the war. They have more clearly expressed their concerns about the potential war between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, and they are also concerned about the semiconductor supply chain in the context of Ukraine war.

5.2 The text analysis of the remarks during the meetings

The dissertation collects the remarks of Tsai Ing-wen and U.S. officers during the meetings from the website of “Office of President Republic of China (Taiwan)” (<https://www.president.gov.tw/>). The data is listed as follows:

Table 3 The remarks of Tsai Ing-wen and U.S. officers in the meetings¹

Date of meeting	Title of news	Website
2021-4-15	President Tsai meets senior US delegation sent by President Biden	https://english.president.gov.tw/News/6116
2021-6-16	President Tsai meets US Senate delegation	https://english.president.gov.tw/NEWS/6128
2021-11-26	President Tsai meets delegation led by US House Veterans’ Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano	https://english.president.gov.tw/News/6195
2022-3-2	President Tsai meets US delegation sent by President Biden	https://english.president.gov.tw/NEWS/6238
2022-4-15	President Tsai meets senior US congressional delegation led by Senator Graham	https://english.president.gov.tw/News/6262

¹ The remarks during the meeting of Tsai Ing-wen with US delegation (Tommy Tuberville, Mike Lee, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Ro Khanna etc.) in November 10, 2021 were not published.

2022-5-31	President Tsai meets US delegation led by Senator Duckworth	https://english.president.gov.tw/News/6270
2022-8-3	President Tsai meets US delegation led by House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi	https://english.president.gov.tw/NEWS/6292
2022-8-15	President Tsai meets US delegation led by Senator Ed Markey	https://english.president.gov.tw/News/6301
2022-8-22	President Tsai meets Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb	https://english.president.gov.tw/NEWS/6304
2022-8-26	President Tsai meets US Senator Marsha Blackburn	https://english.president.gov.tw/News/6308
2022-9-1	President Tsai meets Arizona Governor Doug Ducey	https://english.president.gov.tw/NEWS/6315
2022-10-12	President Tsai meets US House delegation	https://english.president.gov.tw/NEWS/6351
2022-12-6	President Tsai meets Idaho Governor Brad Little	https://english.president.gov.tw/NEWS/6406
2022-12-20	President Tsai meets US House delegation led by Rep. John Curtis	https://english.president.gov.tw/News/6416
2023-1-17	President Tsai meets US delegation led by Senator Todd Young	https://english.president.gov.tw/News/6431
2023-2-21	President Tsai meets US House delegation led by Representative Ro Khanna	https://english.president.gov.tw/NEWS/6448

By using the AI text analysis tools and choosing related words by manual screening, it shows the word clouds of the remarks and frequencies of key words as follows:

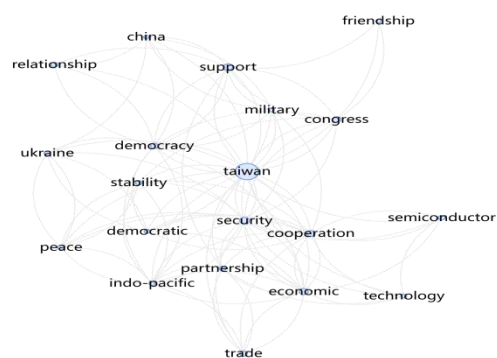
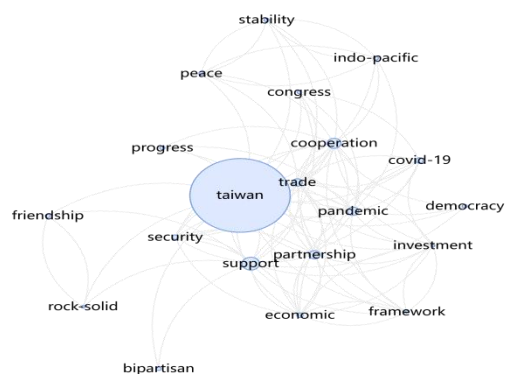


Figure 2 20 Key words of remarks (before Ukraine war)

Figure 3 20 Key words of remarks (after Ukraine war)

Table 4 Frequencies of key words in different areas

Areas	Typical words	Frequency (before war)	Frequency (after war)
Regional order	China	1	17
	Japan	3	3
	Russia	0	10
	Ukraine	0	25
	Indo-pacific	4	22
	Communist party	0	10
	cross-strait/Taiwan strait	2	13
Total		10	100
Ideology & values	democracy/ democratic	6	58
	freedom/free	3	29
	human rights/voting rights/ civil rights	1	11

	rule of law	1	3
	authoritarianism/ authoritarian	0	16
Total		11	117
Security	military	0	16
	(self-)defense/ defend	2	28
	threat(s)	0	10
	stability	4	25
	Peace(ful)	5	27
	security/ secure	7	62
Total		16	168
Economics	economic/ economy	5	56
	trade	8	35
	business	1	14
	invest(ment)	3	9
Total		17	114
Technology	technology/high-tech	2	25
	semiconductor(s)	0	35
	supply chain(s)	0	24
	prosperity	2	15
Total		4	99

The figures and table above presents the changes of remarks during the visits. First, the Ukraine war has changed the views of global order of U.S. leaders. For example, Michael Mullen, former United States Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff pointed that “We come to Taiwan at a very difficult and critical moment in world history....democracy is facing sustained and alarming challenges, most recently in Ukraine. Now more than ever, democracy needs champions” during the visit to Taiwan after one week of Russian “special military operation” (Associated Press,

2022). This expression shows that the great changes of the Biden Administration's predicts to the future of world order. In such circumstance, it is a good chance for mainland China to reunite by force as NATO is hardly to win a two-front war. Therefore, "Taiwan is the next after Ukraine" can be seen not only as a logical prediction of the US strategic community, but also as a US strategic warning to the future international order.

Second, the remarks show that Taiwan and the United States are strengthening the shared identity of "democratic nations" after Ukraine war. In the remarks of both sides, mainland China and Russia are threats of "liberal world". For example, Senator Ben Sasse said "the world and America's citizens have noticed that the Chinese Communist Party gave the green light to Vladimir Putin to bully and attack and provoke his neighbors. The world knows what side the Chinese Communist Party leadership was on. And the world increasingly stands not only with Ukraine, but with Taiwan" (Office of the president Republic of China, 2022). It proves that the Ukraine war and closer Russia-China relationship has brought China passivity and trouble in cross-strait issue. Under the framework of Biden's diplomacy based on values, this narrative tries to shape the common identity of U.S.-Taiwan-Ukraine and the "Beijing-Moscow Axis". Therefore, the discourse "Taiwan is the next after Ukraine" demonstrates that Taiwan shares similar identity-- democracies faced threats of authoritarianism and the United States should spare no efforts to "protect" them.

Third, another remarkable phenomenon is the US increasingly care about supply chain, especially about the semiconductor industry. After the Ukraine war, the supply chain security has caused severe disruptions in global markets in raw materials as Ukraine is a major exporter of agricultural products and Russia is a important energy supplier (OECD, 2022). If the cross-strait war happened, in consideration that mainland China is the largest exporter and Taiwan is a semiconductor leader, its implication will be more serve than Ukraine war. By preaching "Taiwan is the next after Ukraine", the United States can speed up the process of TSMC going to the

United States to set up factories. At the same time, this narrative can also reduce the confidence of foreign companies investing in China and promote foreign companies to transfer their investment in China to the United States or its allies.

Fourth, the remarks also show US “dual deterrence”. Although the conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” is very popular, the United States obviously has no intention of provoking a war in the Taiwan Strait or encouraging Taiwan to provoke a war in the Taiwan Strait. From the remarks, “peace”, “stability” and “prosperity” in the region were repeatedly mentioned, and the frequency was much higher than that of Ukraine before the war. Michael Mullen, representing the Biden Administration, promised that “the United States will continue to oppose any unilateral changes to the status quo and will continue to support a peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues” (Lee & Wu, 2022). This means that the United States opposes China’s unification of Taiwan by force, and also opposes Taiwan’s touching the bottom line of the mainland and triggering a war. Under such a premise, “Taiwan is the next Ukraine” is a strategic narrative carefully shaped by the United States to deter mainland China and Taiwan, and Washington will not completely change its strategy toward China.

6. Conclusion

The Taiwan issue has become the most complicated and sensitive topic in Sino-US relations. After the Ukrainian war broke out, conception “Taiwan is the next after Ukraine” became very popular, and a large number of politicians, mass media, think tank researchers, and analysts shared this view. This dissertation uses constructivism theories and methods to analyze the conception from the perspective of identity recognition and strategic narratives.

In terms of identity, differences in identity perception among Taiwan, the United States, and mainland China have intensified in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war.

The rise of China, the closeness of Sino-Russian relations and China's "neutrality" in the Ukraine war have made the US strategic circles anxious about China. This has gradually shaped the dual identity of China and the United States as "challenger and challenged". Washington, D.C. is worried that China will imitate Russia and undermine the US-led world order. Against the backdrop of the Russo-Ukraine War, Taiwan has placed more emphasis on its own "democratic state" status, and compared itself with Ukraine, believing that both are "the front of a democratic state threatened by authoritarianism." Moreover, after the outbreak of the war, the United States is also constantly strengthening its identity as the defender of Taiwan, because Ukraine, which the United States has vigorously supported, is not as legal as Taiwan.

From the perspective of strategic narrative, the United States is the main advocate of "Taiwan is the next after Ukraine". The purpose of the U.S. strategic narrative is threefold: the first is to deter mainland China by showing Russia's huge cost in the Ukraine war. Second, by comparing Taiwan and Ukraine as "compensatory narratives," it can effectively boost the confidence of Asia-Pacific allies. Third, this is a warning to the Taiwan authorities not to actively provoke the mainland, and it also provides a moral excuse for the United States to increase arms sales to Taiwan. In shaping the international community's perception that "Taiwan is the next Ukraine," the United States' strategic agenda-setting capabilities have played an important role. The strategic communication system of the United States is more complete than that of China, and China's official statements, think tank opinions, mass media, and public diplomacy are not as influential as the United States. Although China has an advantage in international law and official diplomacy, the international community is more inclined to believe information from the United States and Taiwan.

This article also uses the visits of US officials of the Biden administration to Taiwan as a case and analyzes the text of the remarks made by Tsai Ing-wen and US officials during the meetings. Through the statistics, it finds that the Ukrainian war has had an important impact on US Taiwan policy. During roughly the same period of time (13

months), the frequency, positions, and issues involved in visits by US officials to Taiwan have undergone tremendous changes. By analyzing the high-frequency words and key words in the texts, it shows that: (1) The Ukraine war has changed the U.S. strategic community's prediction of the future of the global order and the East Asian order; (2) The war has prompted the U.S. to strengthen Taiwan's "democratic nation" identity, emphasizing the differences in political identities between mainland China and Taiwan; (3) The United States has noticed the impact of war on the global supply chain, especially the semiconductor industry; (4) Although the United States is following the "Ukrainian model" to anticipate and prepare for war, it focuses more on "dual deterrence" and maintaining the status quo.

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