

Taiwan Fellowship Research Report

*Cultural Industries and Industries with a cultural content as a tool to
improve the cross-Strait relations*



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Abstract

I initiated this research coming from the European experience regarding the role of culture in alterity, imagology, détente and conflict prevention. The paper starts presenting the theoretical reflection on cultural industries as a conflict prevention too, the eventual role of European integration as a potential model and some conceptual clarifications. Then are exposed several case studies involving cultural industries and industries with cultural content and their role in the process of cross-Strait search for “win-win” formulas and reconciliation: “The Cross Strait Cultural Industries Fairs”, “Shanghai World Expo”, “Music, TV, Theatre, Film”, “Cross-Strait Media Exchange”, “Museums cooperation across the Strait”, “Cross-Strait Student exchanges”, “Cultural Tourism”. One chapter provide arguments for the way technology as such as an “Industry with a cultural content” can be an act of culture with reconciliatory effect. Further questions on how to translate cultural features into modern desirable products and how those products used in their daily life may create further bridges of communication across the Taiwan Strait are addressed. The capacity for cultural persuasion of industries with a cultural content seems to be stronger than the one of cultural industries as such, being generated by a world where economic interests and the “language of money” prevail the “language of politics”. One of the several conclusions is that the simple exposure of good quality culture or “art for art” without political expectation, just for the genuine pleasure of sharing cultural values may have a stronger reconciliatory effect.

Keywords

Cross-Strait relations, Cultural Industries, Conflict prevention

Foreword

To what extent cultural industries are relevant for cross - Strait relations? Cultural exchanges, cultural industries and culture in general in other parts of the world is a proved effective tool which adds to the general preconditions necessary for reconciliation and the *background atmosphere* in which everything can be discussed and the military solution is out of the foreseeable scenarios.¹ The paradigms common for other parts of the world (for Europe in particular) cannot be applied in the case of cross-Strait relations.² However despite the fact that cross-Strait cultural

¹ *Cross-Strait relations* as a working concept is used to define the complex multilayered relations between Mainland China and Taiwan (politically, militarily, economically, social, religios, ideological etc).

² A good example of “constructive compromise” for conflict prevention is the one retrieved by Mark Harrison (Mark Harrison: 2012) from the former president Ma, a policy of the so called “Three Nos”. It was a reinforcement

exchanges have their unique specificity they cannot be studied as a separate phenomenon detached and isolated from the role culture, cultural industries and cultural exchanges played in other parts of the world. Additional theoretic and documentation problems make this topic a difficult academic approach. As a non-mandarin speaker I encountered difficulties in my documentation, relative few sources being available in English. I should add to this the general reluctance of civil servants in Taiwan to approach the issue of cross-Strait relations. Barometers that record changes in alterity or the effects of actions with a cultural dimension are debatable due to the complexity and terminological ambiguity of everything related to culture and the “cause – effect” issue. Mindsets changes in time, often in generations. Any change is difficult to measure or demonstrate that is the sole result of a particular action. A temporal dimension is needed as well as taking into account as many as possible disruptive external factors. Restrictive definitions of the *cultural phenomenon* also affects the relevance of the official reports and analyses I have encountered during my research in Taipei.

It took me some years to approach the European experience regarding the role of culture and cultural industries regarding, local and regional branding, alterity, imagology, détente and conflict prevention. Over the years, my approach has crystallized slowly with the help of academics and institutions, among which I mention The Faculty of European Sciences of Babes-Bolyai University (Cluj-Napoca, Romania), where a doctoral research in this field was accepted in 2002 and defended almost a decade later. I am particularly grateful for the opportunity to apply the accumulated research experience in the field of cultural industries as a conflict prevention tool to the cross–Strait case with a three months research fellowship generously provided by Taiwan Fellowship. National Chenghi University in Taipei kindly provided the research infrastructure for three months in 2020, regardless the many inconveniences due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Two decades ago when I started my researches on the subject of cultural industries as a reconciliation tool, the subject was relatively new. Since then I noticed:

of the so called “1992 consensus”, “...there is one China but each side is free to interpret what China means”. The result of this policy was the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) that eliminates tariffs on goods from Taiwan to Mainland China. According to Harrison the language used to draft the document in an example of carefully crafted language design to achieve a compromise (Mark Harrison, “Cross-Straits Relations” in *China Story Yearbook 2012 Red Rising, Red Eclipse* editor Jeremy R. Barme, Australian Centre on China in the World, ANU- Australian National University– College of Asia & The Pacific pp.53-61, available on line: https://www.academia.edu/15027581/China_Story_Yearbook_2012_Red_Rising_Red_Eclipse, accessed 25 of October 2020.).

- The development of academic interest (expressed in courses and degrees) in cultural industries, local branding, public and cultural diplomacy, “soft power”, “smart power”, all subjects not only “trendy” but also reflecting a real demand for expertise.
- Developments in the field of multidisciplinary and communication between “frontier sciences”. In this sense cultural industries are a tool of “soft power” but also a branding and marketing tool involving cooperation across various fields (arts, history, restoration, marketing, branding, sociology, politics etc.).
- The inter-academic communication facilitated by the virtual space and the inter-university exchange programs, as well as the debate on the new media for the representation of culture, cultural heritage and branding.
- The experience of *European integration* which involved a particular attention for the common European culture, aiming at promoting a sense of unity and common interests in societies affected by historical animosities.
- The express introduction of a *cultural dimension* in most economic agreements meant to facilitate mutual knowledge and reconciliation.
- The new history textbooks which ideally are meant to provide a “multiperspective” approach.
- The convergence of culture and trade interests and the new relationships between governmental cultural institutions and the private sector.
- The fact that cultural relations are not secondary to economic or political relations but rather a part of a system of communicating “blood vessels” that continuously inter-relate being mutually dependent on each other.

Research questions

1. How a “win-win” formula will look or sound like in the cultural exchanges between Taipei and Beijing? There is any kind of “culture” discourse which may satisfy both Mainland China and Taiwan? How to avoid the “zero-sum game” attitude in the cross – Strait cultural relations?
2. The message transmitted by the Taiwan’s pavilions in the World Exhibition in Shanghai 2010, Shenzhen and Xiamen Cultural Industries Fair.
3. The effects of the cross-Strait flights and opening Taiwan for Mainland China Tourists?
4. The type (the programs) of cultural tourism which may improve cross–Strait relations?
5. The indicators of “good” or “improved” cross-Strait relationships in cultural terms?
6. How traditional Chinese/Taiwanese design (form, shape, colour, material) is translated into today’s industrial design ideas.
7. Cross Strait cultural collaboration and the creation of content with “Global appeal”?

The working concepts

“Cultural industries”

Although the concept nominated as such “Cultural Industries” is only few decades ago developed by Theodor W. Adorno and the Frankfurt School, industries or economic activities with a cultural content exists since immemorial times. Specific gastronomy, a spectacle, a show or a nice architecture was always a reason to travel. Today *Cultural Industries* refers usually to: all types of visual arts and exhibitions (including on line), all types of performing shows, auctions, design, film, music, ethnic gastronomy, various forms of publications, the new media, cultural and creative tourism, architecture, fashion, advertising, restoring, promoting and valorizing historic heritage (material and immaterial) in various industries.

“Industries with a cultural content”

I intentionally added to the cultural industries the *Industries/technologies with cultural content* which in my view would be those industries and products of technology which in terms of design, use and concept are associated with a certain culture/identity. This association is emphasized when offers comparative advantages in terms of branding. Within the car industry *Ferrari, Lamborghini, Alfa Romeo* are associated with the Italian culture, Italian design, Italian lifestyle (just like another products such as *Vespa, Aprilia, Cagiva, Ilii coffe, Prada*), *Rolls Royce*, or *Jaguar* are associated with the British, culture and lifestyle. Even if today’s owners of those companies are not any longer British the new owners are trying to keep the *Britishness* in the design of new models as it is one of the main reasons potential clients would buy them. Same logic apply for the fashion industry for France, Italy or Britain, interior design for Scandinavians or watches for Swiss. The *de facto* branding effect of those industries with a cultural content is significant. It is a source of prestige more powerful than the most powerful cultural diplomacy actions. The cultural relevance of certain brands is the key of their global success.

In this context are there any Taiwanese products /technologies with a potential cultural branding dimension (especially in Mainland China)? “Industries with a cultural content” may insure a *de facto* positive cultural presence for Taiwan in Mainland China outside political/ideological considerations. Industries with a cultural content and cultural industries private driven have the advantage of being ideologically neutral and “above” political changes.

“Cultural security”

“Cultural security” remain one of the issues of high concern for many states and it is influenced by Cultural industries in their various forms. The “Cold War” was lost by the “Warsaw Pact” long time before 1989 under the influence of desirable “cultural products” like: music (*Jazz, Disco and Rock*), fashion (Blue jeans etc.), *Western Cinema, Western design, Western “life style”*. In terms of “Power projection” the “cultural products” can be powerful. Under this circumstances both Mainland China and Taiwan apply a “screening” to most *cultural imports*.

“Cultural Tourism” as a Cultural Industry

To a certain extent all forms tourism might be considered “cultural tourism” as it enhance personal experience with foreign unknown places and cultures (gastronomy, customs, architecture, life style, various forms of art).³ What we need here is a definition capable to distinguish the “leisure centered tourism” from the “cultural – educational related tourism” and then the functional “blend” between them. The number of consumers of elevated forms of culture increase and culture consumption became a natural part of daily life and leisure. The very definition of “Culture” has changed. “Culture” becomes a “way of life” and an intrinsic value of any living standard in the post-industrial “knowledge economy”. Tourists increasingly visit destinations to experience not only *sun/sea/sand* or only museums but also the *lifestyles* in sum, the “atmosphere” of a certain place. No one can expect miracles by simply “injecting money” to develop |cultural industries in a certain location. To be “fertile ground” for cultural industries a particular place must have the necessary cultural “effervescence” (universities, artists, intellectuals etc.). Sometimes that

³ OECD . *The Impact of Culture on Tourism*. OECD, Paris, 2009

“cultural” and “creative effervescence” can be imported (the case of thematic festivals) but again, the “location” must be “culturally friendly”. “Cultural Quality” cannot be assured without the proper information, education and awareness of the local community about issues such as “real authenticity”, “real cultural quality”, etc. Ironically often the availability of money and the misunderstood “modernization” prove to be for the authentic cultural heritage more destructive than neglect and poverty. Some variables in *Cultural tourism* are rather subtle such as “Atmosphere” or the “Vibe” of a certain location. I noticed that some locations although well organized, well maintained fail to attract visitors because the “lack of atmosphere”...or the people find those places “too aseptic”, “tasteless” and “boring”. Often visitors quantify the “atmosphere” factor with things like: “the frenzy of the streets”, the “lifestyle”, the “music”, the “relax attitude”, the “people who behave naturally”, the “authenticity” of architecture (including furniture and interior design), the “openness” of the people, the “romanticism” of the streets and weather (autumn colors, fog, light), etc.

Quality cultural tourism may offer solutions for the *seasonality problem*. Culturally-motivated visitors tend to depend less by *Sun/Sea/Sand* and they tend to visit less commercial destination in search for authentic experiences. Professionally done cultural tourism can increase the level of cultural awareness among the local people which may stimulate if not an unrealistic “return to their authentic traditions” at least a proper valorization of traditions within the modern/contemporary *daily life*. The personal development dimension of CT also creates ground for the development of a new brand of CT namely “Creative Tourism”. It imply the involvement and blending of the visitor into the *daily life* of a location usually under the form of “learning experiences” (ex: learning to produce lavender soap in Marseille or oil painting in Amsterdam, dancing Tango in Buenos Aires, learning Taiwanese cooking in Taipei).

Cultural industries and “Security communities”

The security communities as places where military conflict is excluded as conceptualized by Karl Deutsch⁴ and more recently by Emanuel Adler are based on a pragmatic economic dimension which never lacks the cultural dimension⁵. In this case, the cultural industries represent the quintessence of this mixture between economic and cultural interests.

Conflict prevention, cultural industries and the need for a local theoretical reflection

Theoretical reflection on *cultural industries and conflict prevention* exists in most academic circles in East Asia but is little known to Western academia. With relatively little published in English and with main stream western publications difficult to reach the East Asian theoretical reflection remains relatively unknown to the Western audiences. In the training programs of the universities in East Asia that I dealt with (including NCCU), I noticed that the theory within the social sciences is studied from an almost exclusively Western (Anglo-American) perspective. Non "mainstream" domestic contributions are treated in a fugitive matter. The remarkable economic and technological advance in this part of the world left behind theoretical reflection. We are waiting for a conflict prevention theory which reflects the cultural values of this area, adapted to a post-industrial reality. Once incorporated into the main stream we can hope for an “integrated universal theory” whose models would include the *oriental* vein in its contemporary dimension. At the opposite extreme are those invoking an "exceptionalism" of East Asia and the lack of relevance of Western theories. This “exceptionalism” involve isolation and diminished chances to become universal.

⁴ Emmanuel Adler & Michael Barnett, “Security communities in theoretical perspective” In E. Adler & M. Barnett (Eds.), *Security Communities (Cambridge Studies in International Relations)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998 pp. 3-28.

⁵ Emanuel Adler, “Imagined (Security) Communities,” *Millennium Journal of International Studies* Vol. 26/2, 1997 pp. 249-277.

I noticed the "New Confucianism" a cosmopolite Confucianism which, along with traditional Confucian teachings, is equally inspired by Western neo-liberalism.⁶ The ideals of many East Asian intellectuals do not differ from those of their Western counterparts. They are also searching for a universal political theory that synthesizes the entire wisdom of humanity.

The interest in instrumenting culture for persuasion in the case of East Asia did not have to wait the Western theorists. In the *Art of War*, Sun Tzu considered the supreme refinement of the head of state to subdue his enemy by the power of persuasion, without the use of weapons.⁷ And in works dedicated to the "art of government" during the Han dynasty, the followers of Confucianism recommended that the primacy of persuasive abilities be given priority over the military in protecting the kingdom from the barbarians.⁸

In sum, the fundamental values of Chinese culture and civilization expressed in Confucianism, Taoism, Daoism and Buddhism makes it a culture with universal values focused on non-violence, morality, balance and harmony.⁹

Europe a potential model?

When we have a regional potential conflictual situation there often is the temptation to draft a parallel with the reconciliation experience of post WWII Europe and the European integration as such. The European integration through economic, political and cultural projects is a valuable example for other parts of the world but, the comparatist perspective has its own limits. The Franco - German reconciliation can provide some inspiration. However it occurred in some specific Cold War conditions between two separate nations, with distinct languages and cultures which is not the case across the Taiwan Strait. In Western Europe a common enemy namely the

⁶ **Suter**, Rafael (2018). "New Confucianism and the Sinicization of Metaphysics and Transcendentalism: Conceptualizations of Philosophy in the Early Works of Xiong Shili and Mou Zongsan", in *Concepts of Philosophy in Asia and the Islamic world*, Brill/Rodopi (e-book), pp.348–393, <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004360112>.

⁷ **Zhang** Feng (2015). "Confucian Foreign Policy Traditions in Chinese History", *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Volume 8, Issue 2, Summer 2015, pp. 197–218, available on line: <https://academic.oup.com/cjip/article/8/2/197/353237> accesat 15 Septembrie 2020.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

Soviet Union and the post war poverty “pushed” further the reconciliation. There was also an entire generation of intellectuals and politicians who knew that a new war must be avoided at any costs.

By 2020 Mainland China and Taiwan are more economically integrated than the West European states in the 50s and 60s. They have among them more channels of communication and they share a common language and culture. They have also common interests in particular as the disputes in the South China Sea are concerned and there is also well acknowledged the fact that any particular economic failures will be detrimental for both sides. The rapprochement between East and West Germany is also not very useful as an example due to the fact that it was occurring between internationally recognized states, between members of two different military blocks. The relations between the two Germanys were never warm enough, their economies were not integrated, West German companies did not have significant investments in East Germany and the capacity of East Germans to travel in the West was strictly limited and controlled. The differences in terms of size between West and East Germany make any comparative approach with the cross-Strait case unworkable. The EU integration is useful to show the importance of economic integration and political efforts to achieve open borders for ordinary people. Probably the best lesson Europe can provide for the cross-Strait relations in terms of experience is the fact that mutual understanding leading to reconciliation involves several layers of the civil society and all the actors who can shape the public opinion (teachers, media influencers, civil society organizations). In Europe those different actors were acting over the decades “drop by drop” “layer by layer” with a large variety of strategies and tools. Problems were addressed and debated publicly. Reconciliation commissions were commissioned to design new school text books and probably the most significant, the civil actors and the local authorities had the possibility to act directly with their counterparts to establish cultural routes, commemorations, mutual celebrations, mutual assistance, and cultural programs. Many of the mentioned activities were not exceptional political actions but rather as “normal” or “routine” endeavors between the neighbors or “friends in need”.

While the European integration as a whole is not necessarily a model for the cross –Strait relations, particular details from this entire process can be useful. In particular the various reconciliation and conflict prevention programs may provide interesting examples. Cultural events must involve not only a small minority of culture initiators but rather the entire population or “the urban community” of a city or region for whom good quality culture must become a daily routine

not something exceptional. Or here European Union with its “European Cultural Capital” offers to the world an exceptional useful example for the public private cooperation to enhance to involvement of civil society into a cultural event. In the case of European Cultural Capitals the events as such are triggering a cultural rejuvenation of the entire urban civil society, boosting the creation of new artistic movements, the self-cultural awareness and the cultural self-confidence of the local citizens.¹⁰ This kind of events if succeed to involve the entire society will be the fertile ground for the creation in time of the so called “cultural atmosphere” and “cultural vibe” of a certain location.

The cross-Strait cultural industry fairs

Since 2008 the city of Xiamen is the host of the *Cross Strait Cultural Industries Fair*. The event coincided with the general wave of cross-Strait rapprochement and concessions in search for the “win-win” formulas and reconciliation. It was expected that the cultural dimension would give “wings” to the already spectacular grow economic relations. The success of the entire project was demonstrated by the ascendant results in terms of participants and visitors from a year to another.¹¹ All Taiwanese cities were represented.¹² Also this event evolved from a pure cross-Strait to an

¹⁰ Chen Shu, Wu Zhihan. From Functional City to Cultural City: Research on the Construction of Public Culture in the "Capital of European Culture" [J]. Journal of Shandong University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition). 2017, 05: 72-83 quoted in Qiaohua He, Gang Wei, Yan Xu (2019), “Exploration on the Construction of Cultural Environment in Xiamen City”, 2nd International Conference on Economy, Management and Entrepreneurship (ICOEME 2019) *Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research*, volume 85 College of Business & Management Xiamen Huaxia University, p. 6, available on line: <https://www.atlantispress.com/article/125910827.pdf>, accessed 14 Jan 2021.

¹¹ MOC - Ministry of Culture- Taiwan, “Taiwanese crafts to join Xiamen fair”, 2013/10/17, available on line at: https://www.moc.gov.tw/en/information_196_75997.html, accessed 11 Oct 2020.

¹² Ibidem.

event involving also Hong Kong and Macau respectively international participants.¹³ The 13th ICIF was also organized in exceptional circumstances in 2020 between 4-7 of December using on line and off line facilities due to the Covid 19 restrictions. For the on line part a special cloud was created in order to host virtual booths, conferences, workshops, business events etc.¹⁴

By analyzing those ICIF, I was trying to identify a typology of this major cross-Strait cultural exchange event. The usual events involve digital content conferences, matchmaking conferences, informative conferences all spread in various thematic panels. Taiwan universities had the opportunity to expose their programs. Apart from the usual various trade pavilions during the event various workshops are debating subjects of interests for the cross-Strait cultural exchanges and digital communication.

Typology of participants:

- Craft research and development centers, craft development associations; Universities such as: The Oriental Design College, Shu-te University of Technology and the University of Arts (most of them presenting fashion design works inspired by traditional models used in a new interpretative and creative manner); Relevant public institutions such as The National Palace Museum of Taiwan, Craft manufacturers such as Heli, Xipeng, Selangor, Haoheyuan, Yituo, Xingtai, Franz porcelain etc.¹⁵

Thematic interests identified:

- Interests in reviving Chinese traditional crafts, new crafts and new techniques with a modern innovative interpretation of traditional motifs; Taiwanese and Fujhanese indigenous crafts, customs, design and the interpretations of those in modern fashion; A new emphasize on ecology, green technologies and the use of recycled materials (in

¹³ Cultural Affairs Bureau of the Macao SAR Government, “Cultural Affairs Bureau organized the participation of a delegation in the 13th Cross-strait (Xiamen) Cultural Industries Fair”, 2020/12/09, available on line at: <https://news.gov.mo/detail/en/N20LINp3iT;jsessionid=77931629C4C8C3D335E17FCCED3EA744.app02?0>, accessed 7 of Dec 2020.

¹⁴ Interview with employees from NCL - Taipei.

¹⁵ Ibidem

creative design, manufacturing and crafts); A general interest on the modern creativity and aesthetics of craft culture based on reviving ancient techniques and modern interpretations of symbols and traditional shapes; A general interest on classic design daily life objects and crafts with Chinese traditional meanings; A general interest on quality Cultural Tourism Projects and prospective programs.

The spillover of this event was perhaps as important as the event itself. For example in 2015, 60 Taiwanese brands set up a “Cross-Strait Cultural and Creative Design Center” in Hangzhou City and an Exhibition place.¹⁶ In Xiamen another “spillover” effects can be nominated as: The Cross-Strait Book Fair, Cross-Strait Folk Art Festival, The song contest in Southern Fujian, The Baosheng Tzu Chi Culture Festival, cross-Strait Dragon Boat Race and the creation of a “Cross-strait Hakka youth cultural and creative center”.¹⁷

Shanghai World Expo 2010

At the invitation of Mainland China, Taiwan’s participation at the World Expo in Shanghai 2010 was the first participation in more than 4 decades (since the 1970 World Expo in Osaka, Japan).¹⁸ Taipei World Trade Center was the organizer of Taiwan’s participation and the main contractor of this significant managerial endeavor.¹⁹ Taiwan’s participation involved private and nonprofit entities only. Contributions were not only financial but also in materials received by the

¹⁶ Philip Liu. “Cultural and Creative Businesses Thriving in Taiwan“, *Taiwan Business Topics*, 14 of December 2015, available on line: <https://topics.amcham.com.tw/2015/12/cultural-and-creative-businesses-thriving-in-taiwan/>, accessed 14 of November 2020.

¹⁷ Qiaohua He, Gang Wei, Yan Xu. “Exploration on the Construction of Cultural Environment in Xiamen City”, 2nd International Conference on Economy, Management and Entrepreneurship (ICOEME 2019) *Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research*, volume 85 College of Business & Management Xiamen Huaxia University, p.2, available on line: <https://www.atlantis-pess.com/article/125910827.pdf>, accessed 14 ian 2021.

¹⁸ *Taiwan Today*. “Taiwan pavilion comes out tops at Shanghai Expo”, publication date: June 01, 2010, on line edition: <https://taiwantoday.tw/news.php?unit=10,23,45,10&post=16714>, accessed 21 November 2020.

¹⁹ Paul Rockower. “A tale of two pavilions”, USC – University of Southern California, CPD Blog, published on August 5, 2010, available on line: <https://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/blog/tale-two-pavilions>, accessed 21 of November 2020.

organizer such as glass, steel, concrete etc.²⁰ With an impressive 658 square m the pavilion was designed as a glass cube with a huge lantern ball in the center.²¹ The form and shape was on purpose chosen because its profound signification in the Chinese philosophy resembling a traditional lantern which symbolize health and joy.²² The globe of the lantern was suspended above a pool of water from the Sun Moon Lake.²³ The designer of the pavilion was C.Y Lee the designer of Taipei 101 the land mark building of Taipei City and between 2010 and 2013 the tallest building in the World.²⁴ Taipei 101 was meant to be also a building whose design has profound symbolic and cultural significations and in cultural terms through its “chineseness”, a culturally friendly gesture towards Mainland China. Inside was design a dome theater showing the best of Taiwanese hi-tech products and achievements giving the possibility to visitors (another cultural friendly gesture towards the mainland Chinese) to light and fly virtual lanterns whose flight could be seen also from the outside in an impressive show of light (especially at night).²⁵ Lighting a virtual lantern day and night was an opportunity for the visitors to send their wishes to heaven and also a gesture with profound significations for the local Chinese.²⁶ The location of the pavilion was symbolically chosen by the hosts in the vicinity of China’s pavilion (designed as a Crown) and near by the pavilions of Hong Kong and Macau.²⁷ In the Taiwan various booths within the pavilions could be noticed a general effort to preserve and enhance traditional Chinese culture as well as the cultures of the island minorities. The basic traditional Chinese ideas of wisdom and harmonious living was reflected in the entire exhibitioner design inspirationally blended with the general theme of the World Expo “Better city, better life”.²⁸ The pavilion was meant to facilitate exchanges with the visitors and business community and to create a friendly atmosphere suitable

²⁰ Ibidem.

²¹ Ibidem

²² Ibidem.

²³ Ibidem.

²⁴ Ibidem.

²⁵ Ho Chie. “Better City, Better Life: The Taiwan Pavilion at the Shanghai World Expo“, *Taiwaneseamerican.org*, posted on October 9, 2010, available on line at: <http://www.taiwaneseamerican.org/2010/10/better-city-better-life-the-taiwan-pavilion-at-the-shanghai-world-expo/>, accessed 27 of November 2020.

²⁶ Ibidem.

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ Paul Rockower. “A tale of two pavilions”, USC – University of Southern California, CPD Blog, published on August 5, 2010, available on line: <https://uspublicdiplomacy.org/blog/tale-two-pavilions>, accessed 21 of November 2020.

for a new era on the cross-Strait relations.²⁹ Shanghai is also a special location for Taiwanese. More than a third of Taiwanese travelers to Mainland China have this city as destination, also this city hosts the biggest Taiwanese community outside Taiwan.³⁰ The Taiwanese pavilion may have emphasized on purpose traditional Chinese cultural values and customs in order to show the world that they are entitled to the biggest share in the Mainland China market.

Other Cultural industries fairs

Shenzhen International Cultural Industry Fair organized since 2009 is the main international cultural industry fair in Mainland China.³¹ In 2020 it was organized in November exclusively on line due to the pandemic. Answering the invitation of Beijing authorities, relevant Taiwanese companies participated at this event since 2009 with an especially dedicated pavilion big enough to accommodate hundredths of booths for various crafts manufacturers and business matching events. Considering the specificity of the relations between Beijing and Taipei participation of Taiwan at this event was organized by a Taiwanese NGO named TAITRA (Taiwan External Trade Development Council).³² It was founded in 1970 with the mission to assist local companies to expand their global reach. Being sponsored by government and various enterprises this organization has several offices across Taiwan and an impressive number of employed specialists (about 1300).³³ For the 2009 participation TAITRA organized the Taiwan Pavilion with 4 sections namely “Brand Boutique area”, “Aesthetic Craft area”, “Creative Design area”, “Educational toy area”.³⁴ The organizers publicly expressed their hope that the participation of Taiwan will be a supplementary platform of cooperation across the Strait within the dynamic field of cultural and creative industries.³⁵

²⁹ Ibidem.

³⁰ Ibidem.

³¹ SETO- Shenzhen Economic and Trade Office in Australia, <https://seto.org.au/?p=1945>, accessed 28 of November 2020.

³² TAITRA. Official web site: <https://about.taitra.org.tw/About-TAITRA>, accessed 28 of November 2020.

³³ Ibidem.

³⁴ Taiwan Trade, <https://pt.taiwantrade.com/news/2015-chinese-shenzhen-international-cultural-industry-fair-48893.html>, accessed 28 of November 2020.

³⁵ Ibidem.

According to Jun Wang, the most important Cultural industries fairs in Mainland China in the last decade (apart from Shenzhen Cultural Industry fair and the Cross Strait Xiamen Cultural Industry Fair with Taiwanese participation) are as follows:

- *The “Silk Road” (Dunhuang) International Cultural Expo; China Beijing International Cultural and Creative Industry Expo; China (Wuxi) International Culture and Art Industry Fair; Shandong Cultural Industries Fair; China Intangible Cultural Heritage Expo; China Suzhou Creative and Design Cultural Industry Expo; Hangzhou Cultural and Creative Industry Expo; China (Yiwu) Cultural Products Trade Fair.*³⁶

Most of the above mentioned events have sections on: film, television, cultural creativity, cultural technology and cultural tourism).³⁷ Most of them benefit from a significant international participation.³⁸

Cultural industries: Music, TV, Theatre, Film

Significant for the cross-Strait cultural industries cooperation in terms of impact is the *Music industry*. Taiwan pop music is since decades popular in Mainland China and many Taiwanese artists took advantage of the gradual opening of the Chinese mainland market in order to access a much larger market.³⁹ Many pop artists active now in Mainland China originated from Taiwan (*Jolin Tsai, A-Mei, Jay Chou, S.H.E, Wu Yue Tian*) which is widely considered the nest of the global Chinese pop culture (“C-pop” or “Mando-pop”).⁴⁰

In Taiwan passing the *Cultural and Creative Industries Act* in 2010 was a major development favoring creativity through fiscal incentives, subsidies etc. On February 28, 2018 the

³⁶ Jun Wang, “Constructing the cultural regions in China: thinking through the lens of territory effect”, paper presented at the *RC21 International Conference on “The Ideal City: between myth and reality. Representations, policies, contradictions and challenges for tomorrow's urban life”*, Urbino (Italy) 27-29 August 2015, pp.6-7, <http://www.rc21.org/en/conferences/urbino2015/>, accessed 29 of November 2020.

³⁷ Ibidem.

³⁸ Ibidem.

³⁹ *Taiwan Today*. “Unchained Melodies”, on line edition 1st of March 2011, available on line: <https://taiwantoday.tw/news.php?post=6399&unit=4,29,31,45>, accessed 28 Nov 2020.

⁴⁰ Ibidem.

government of Mainland China announced *31 favorable measures* regarding the access of Taiwanese audiovisuals and publications although there still are restrictions regarding authorizations, venue, and content of the songs.⁴¹ In Taiwan due to the imbalance in terms of size with the Mainland China there are regulations with regard to audiovisuals and publications originating from Mainland China.⁴² Mainland movies, radio and television programs must be reviewed and approved by the competent authority, the *MOC Bureau of Audiovisual and Music Industry Development* and with all Chinese subtitles converted to Traditional Chinese subtitles before being screened and broadcasted.⁴³ Also in Mainland China audiovisuals must comply with the MOC “Regulations concerning the numbers, categories and hours Mainland movie and television program to be launched, screened and broadcasted in the Taiwan Area”⁴⁴.

TV and cinema productions in a time favoring the visual culture are an important cross-Strait mutual knowledge tool across a wide range of public. Most Taiwanese cinema productions have the potential to access the market of Mainland China and the market represented by the world largest diaspora which happens to be mandarin speaking. A well-crafted TV serial has the capacity to influence towards a reconciliatory attitude across the Strait. Produced gradually and broadcasted over several years can reach and act at the subconscious level of a big number of individuals across a wide range of ages and educational levels. In the case of TV serials another advantage, they can be also adjusted across the years to achieve the desired effect.

The ECFA provided the necessary concrete step and economic background for the cross – Strait cooperation on the field.⁴⁵ In the past only 50 foreign movies (including from Taiwan) were allowed to be screened per year in Mainland China (from 2012 this quota grew to 64).⁴⁶ The removal in Mainland China of quota for made in Taiwan cinema and TV productions creates a fertile ground for the development of this cultural industry in Taiwan. Relevant film producers

⁴¹ MAC – Mainland Affairs Council, “Cross-strait cultural and educational exchanges”, <https://www.mac.gov.tw/en/cp.aspx?n=14F997EC59624E90>, accessed on 20 of November 2020.

⁴² MOC “Regulations concerning Mainland movie, video, television and radio program productions brought into Taiwan, or launched, sold, produced, screened, broadcasted, exhibited and viewed in the Taiwan Area”,

⁴³ Ibidem.

⁴⁴ Ibidem.

⁴⁵ Weiying Peng, “China, Film Coproduction and Soft Power Competition”, PhD Thesis submitted for the Creative Industries Faculty Queensland University of Technology 2015, p.94, available on line: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/33505374.pdf?repositoryId=310>, accessed 1 of December 2020.

⁴⁶ Ibidem, p.62.

from South Korea, or Japan may find producing in Taiwan particularly lucrative due to the access to Mainland China market. In Taiwan there are still quota restrictions for Movies and TV productions originating from Mainland China except the films who won important international prizes which are exempted from this quota, (in my view a noticeable reciprocal friendly gesture shown by Taipei).⁴⁷ The importance and the will to maintain the cross-Strait Film Festivals alive was shown by the fact that the 2020 Shanghai International Film Festival and the SIFF Film Festival were not cancelled during the COVID-19 pandemic but moved on line at the beginning of August 2020. In Taiwan was created the Taiwan Creative Content Agency (TAICCA) which under the new pandemic conditions had an essential role in offering a suitable platform for the Taiwanese film producers. TAICCA was capable to create in 2020 a virtual Taiwan Pavilion which participated at the SIFF Festival, Beijing International Film Festival, Hong Kong and Busan Film Festival etc.⁴⁸ As far as the cross-Strait cultural relations are concerned is relevant the fact that TAICCA created a program called “Taiwan Cinema Highlights” (basically a selection of film content as video clips) which were promoted upon line on Chinese video streaming platforms (Tencent, iQiyi, Mango TV).⁴⁹

Some analysts (ex Keane: 2013, 2015) have noticed that since the mid 2000 in Taiwan due to the increased competition, and the increased competition from the internet on line streaming production many TV stations had to adapt their productions to make them suitable for the Mainland Chinese market, the direct result being a growing number of cross-Strait coproduction (usually commercial *Idol Drama* reproducing various romance, love stories and recipes rooted in the common Confucian society). Mainland China offers to Taiwanese investors significant advantages in terms of cost effectiveness which overlap the eventual political differences (market entrance for film industry, production costs, audience).⁵⁰ For the cross-Strait relationship can be noticed a number of drama subjects in which Taiwanese characters encounter characters from the new rising Mainland China (usually within a love story) in which the lovers have to confront the generational

⁴⁷ Mainland Affairs Council (ROC – Taiwan). “Cross-strait cultural and educational exchanges”, <https://www.mac.gov.tw/en/cp.aspx?n=14F997EC59624E90>, accessed 1 of December 2020.

⁴⁸ TAICCA, News “Taiwan Cinema Highlights” Brightens the Shanghai International Film Festival and Market, 2020-07-31, available on line: <https://en.taicca.tw/article/53e5ae1c>, accessed 2 of December 2020.

⁴⁹ Ibidem.

⁵⁰ Keane, M. *The Chinese Television Industry*. London: Palgrave quoted by Weiyang Peng, “China, Film Coproduction and Soft Power Competition”, PhD Thesis submitted for the Creative Industries Faculty Queensland University of Technology, 2015, p. 8, available on line: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/33505374.pdf?repositoryId=310>, accessed 1 of December 2020.

differences and stereotypes rooted in their parents mind (representing metaphorically "the Old world").⁵¹ The fact that many TV serials produced in Taiwan are jointly financed by Taiwanese and mainland Chinese companies by definition creates a suitable content and a supplementary "bridge of communication". TV serials like *Fathers Don't Like Each Other* (2011) treat with humor various obstacles lovers have to face when dealing with the cross strait stereotypes which are still rooted in the old generation minds.⁵² Relevant in this case that the various existing stereotypes are acknowledged and treated with humor while the young lovers metaphorically represents the new generation for which the stereotypes does not matter or they are negligible when it comes to love and marriage.⁵³ Also the two old fathers who are always arguing each other is another cross–Strait metaphor and allegory for the general idea that "yes we have differences but we treat them even with humor in the family".⁵⁴ During the episodes the two fathers have to face various external obstacles and enemies and eventually end up helping each other (another metaphor).⁵⁵ According to (Jocelyn Yi-Hsuan Lai) this TV serials received a subsidy from the KMT government in 2012.⁵⁶

Interesting cross-Strait collaborations in the last decades can be seen within the field of theatre and operas especially new post-modern interpretations of classical western operas derivate from East Asian themes. The stage is often non-conventional (stadiums or sport halls, with the background realized with digital technologies and virtual reality techniques). Here, the most quoted example is the interpretation in Taiwan of Giacomo Puccini's Opera "Turandot" by the mainland Chinese producer Yimou in 2010.⁵⁷ The production was presented as a cross-Strait cooperation and showed on stage in an unconventional setting in Taichung Intercontinental Baseball Stadium in 2010.⁵⁸ On the stage performed at the same time three orchestras and two choruses from Mainland China and Taiwan with a lavish use of special effects and technology.⁵⁹

⁵¹ Ibidem.

⁵² Jocelyn Yi-Hsuan Lai. "Divergent staging of East Asian patriarchy within the confucian order in Taiwan's transnational television drama co-productions", *Continuum*, 2020, 34:5, 651-664, DOI: 10.1080/10304312.2020.1812215.

⁵³ Ibidem.

⁵⁴ Ibidem

⁵⁵ Ibidem.

⁵⁶ Ibidem.

⁵⁷ Tuan, Iris Hsin-chun. "Zhang Yimou's Turandot in Taiwan: Intercultural Spectacle, Aesthetic of Excess, and cross-Strait Sensibility", *Theatre Topics*; Baltimore Vol. 21, Iss. 2, (Sep 2011): pp.175-183.

⁵⁸ Ibidem.

⁵⁹ Ibidem.

On purpose the initial version of Puccini's opera which already was fueled by European various fantasies about the Far East, was pigmented with some "extras" in order to accentuate the Chinese-ness of the performance such as a show of martial arts.⁶⁰ This cross–Strait cultural tour *de force* was also depicted as the *avangarde* of a much expected event such as the decision of the Taiwanese government to allow the entrance of individual tourists from Mainland China in June 2011.⁶¹

Cross-Strait Media Exchange

I included "media exchanges" as a cultural industry or industry with a cultural content as far as it is related with the entertainment industry (in particular the one related to cultural events, tourism, various services with a cultural dimension). At the same time several TV programs are based on various interpretation of *News* which depend on the flow and direct access to information of journalists and media agencies. Access to information involved by "media exchange" is related with the "quality of content" and the "quality of content" make the difference between success and failure in this multibillion dollar industry. Worth to mention that in under this "paradigm" the factor "success" imply the issue of "audience" and "influence".

In the last decade the cross-Strait relations were further improved by the media and journalist exchanges. The opening process evaluated in stages. In early 2000 Mainland journalists were allowed to locate their press offices and activity in Taiwan (initially by rotation a particular individual being allowed to reside in Taiwan for the length of one month, few month latter they being allowed to reside longer period of time).⁶² In 2008 the length of stay for Mainland journalists from Taiwan was further extended to six months together with another measures designed to simplify the application process and to increase the number of media agencies eligible while the next year the number of journalists per media agency was increased from two to five.⁶³ According

⁶⁰ Metzger, Sean. "Ice Queens, Rice Queens, and Intercultural Investments in Zhang Yimou's Turandot." *Asian Theatre Journal* 20.2 (2003):p.2012.

⁶¹ Tuan, Iris Hsin-chun. "Zhang Yimou's Turandot in Taiwan: Intercultural Spectacle, Aesthetic of Excess, and Cross-Strait Sensibility", *Theatre Topics*; Baltimore Vol. 21, Iss. 2, (Sep 2011): pp.175-183.

⁶² MAC (Mainland Affairs Council), "Cross-strait cultural and educational exchanges I. Information Services for Cross-Strait Stationed Journalists", <https://www.mac.gov.tw/en/cp.aspx?n=14F997EC59624E90>, accessed 3 of December 2020.

⁶³ *Ibidem*.

with MAC - Taiwan, by 2020 some ten Mainland Chinese media agencies with physical offices located in Taiwan namely: “*XinHua News Agency, People’s Daily, China National Radio, China Central Television, China News Service, Southeast Television, Fujian News Group, Xiamen Star, Shenzhen Press Group, and Hunan Television*”.⁶⁴

Beijing authorities established *The Jiuzhou Culture Communication Center* in Beijing, and *The Publishing Exchange Center across the Taiwan Strait* in Guangzhou both dedicated for the cross-Strait information exchange.⁶⁵ This media centers are organizing *Strait Forums* where Taiwanese journalists and media owners are invited to participate.⁶⁶ In 2009 *The Straits Exchange Foundation of Taiwan* organized the first “Media Executives Delegation” in Mainland China.⁶⁷ Most analysts have noticed in Taiwan significant efforts from the major media groups to find a mutual acceptable discourse and to respect certain rules regarding each other sensitive topics.⁶⁸

Museums cooperation across the Strait

A promising sign of museum cross-Strait collaboration is the planned Pingtan Art Museum located in an artificial island near by Pingtan Island, a museum build on purpose in order to host artefacts from both Mainland China and Taiwan in joint exhibitions as a symbol of the improved cross-Strait cultural and economic relations. The architectural plans were initiated in February 2014 for what is to become the largest private museum in Asia.⁶⁹ Pingtan is the closest island to Taiwan and the largest island in the Fujian province set to be the location for a new experimental zone and a potential prime location for trade and cultural communication between Mainland China and Taiwan. The concern for modern design, harmony, ecology and respect for the environment

⁶⁴ Ibidem.

⁶⁵ Huang Jaw-Nian. “The China Factor in Taiwan’s Media Outsourcing Chinese Censorship Abroad”, *China Perspectives* No.3.2017, pp.30-31. Available on line URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/chinaperspectives/7388>, accessed 2 December 2020.

⁶⁶ Ibidem.

⁶⁷ Ibidem.

⁶⁸ Ibidem.

⁶⁹ MAD Architects. „Pingtan Art Museum in China”, 10.02 2014, article available on: https://arqa.com/en/_arqanews-archivo-en/pingtan-art-museum-china.html, accessed 30 of Now 2020.

was the rule in the architectural design of the museum building resembling oceanic cavernous spaces created by a mixture of high quality concrete and local sand shells.⁷⁰

One year after 2008 which marked a corner in the cross-Strait relations the most important museum in Mainland China, the Palace Museum from Beijing and the most important museum in Taiwan National palace Museum from Taipei organized the first ever joint exhibition "Harmony and Integrity: The Yongzheng Emperor and His Times." and exchange of artefacts in October 2009.⁷¹ Both museums have a particular important significance on both sides of the Strait and in Taiwan several decades was used by KMT to show Taiwan as the preserver of the traditional Chinese culture.⁷² In 1949 a significant part of Beijing Palace Museums were evacuated by KMT to Taiwan although some authors suggest that the NPM hosts not the major part but some 20% of the former Beijing Palace museum artefacts, tough some of the most important.⁷³

Under the auspices of the Executive Yuan's *Prosperity Stimulation Policy*, the National Palace Museum from Taipei became a strategic institution in the front line of the new policy towards the cross-Strait cultural exchanges which became a top priority.⁷⁴ The results were fruitful as expressed in joint exhibitions, bilateral agreements the end beneficiary being the general public across the Strait.⁷⁵ Is interesting the language and expressions used in the NPM *Official Report*. The word "consensus" is used instead the word "agreement" in relations with the Palace Museum in Beijing.⁷⁶ According with the NPM *Official Report 2009* a "consensus" with PM was reached on 9 issues.⁷⁷ I find important to reproduce the text as published by the authors because it has the chance become the base for the future cross-Strait museum cooperation:

1) promoting substantial cooperation on the premise of not touching the issues concerning names and regulations, 2) the implementation of bilateral cooperation mechanisms, 3) working towards

⁷⁰ Riccardo Bianchini. "China - The Museum is an Island", *INEXIBIT- MAD Architects*, 2016.10.18 <https://www.inexhibit.com/case-studies/china-museum-island-pingtang-art-museum-mad/> accessed 30 Nov 2020.

⁷¹Chou, Kung-shin. *National Palace Museum 2009 Annual Report*, p.125, available on line: <http://www.npm.gov.tw/en/down.ashx?sNo=10000265>, accessed 30 Nov 2020.

⁷² Lee, Wei-I. "The Construction of Community Imaginaries in Taiwan's Museums and Archives Committees (1945-1978)" in *The Margins of Becoming: Identity and Culture in Taiwan*, edited by Carsten Storm, Mark Harrison *Studia Formosiana*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007, p.178.

⁷³ Ibidem.

⁷⁴Chou, Kung-shin. *National Palace Museum, 2009 Annual Report*, p.125, available on line: <http://www.npm.gov.tw/en/down.ashx?sNo=10000265>, accessed 30 Nov 2020.

⁷⁵ Ibidem.

⁷⁶ Ibidem.

⁷⁷ Ibidem.

*a reciprocal agreement on the use of artifact images, 4) setting up an exchange mechanism for exhibitions, 5) encouraging personnel exchanges, 6) establishing a platform for exchanging publications, 7) promoting exchange of information and outreach programs, 8) creating regular channels for academic exchange, and 9) encouraging exchange of cultural and creative products.*⁷⁸

Further discussions with the representatives of Palace Museum from Beijing involved relevant issues such as the coordination of efforts in order to attract more visitors from each side, the possibilities to integrate digital content on the basis of reciprocity.⁷⁹ In the same year further discussions involved the issue of academic exchanges, exchanges of personal and publications, the establishment a platform of direct dialogue.⁸⁰ Further discussions ended with new “consensuses” regarding: *Encouraging exchange of cultural and creative products: 1) sending personnel to see and learn their counterpart's methods of promoting cultural and creative products, inviting one another to attend workshops, and discussing the possible approach of joint product development, and 2) launching a coordinated effort to fight against copyright infringement.*⁸¹

Similar “consensus” was reached between NPM and the Nanjing Museum.⁸²

The “harvest” of an entire year of debates, meetings and discussions was finally materialized in the long awaited NPM grand exhibition "Harmony and Integrity: The Yongzheng Emperor and His Times."⁸³ It was an event with profound cultural but also political significations for the cross-Strait relationship. The “core” of the entire event was insured by the 37 artefacts borrowed by NPM from the Palace Museum respectively two artefacts from the Shanghai Museum.⁸⁴ The reciprocal event was organized in Beijing in 6-9 of November 2009 as: *The First International Symposium organized by the Palace Museums across the Strait: The Complexities and Challenges of Rulership: Emperor Yongzheng and His Accomplishments in His Time.* Again the “tour de force” demonstrated by the two institutions across the Strait in the entire year 2009 demonstrated again that “where is a will there is always a way to achieve it”. Also I can conclude that the joint management of common cultural heritage across the Taiwan Strait creates a shared

⁷⁸ Ibidem.

⁷⁹ Ibidem.

⁸⁰ Ibidem, p.127.

⁸¹ Ibidem.

⁸² Ibidem.

⁸³ Ibidem.

⁸⁴ Ibidem, p.129.

sense of responsibility with positive outcomes as far as mutual understanding and reconciliation is concerned.

Worth to mention here the *Cross-Straits Culture and Creative Industrial Park* by the Vanke architectural company, in Chengyang (Quingdao District).⁸⁵ It hosts a bookstore with books from Taiwan and several meeting places for various cross-Strait joint cultural activities.⁸⁶ A *Cross Strait Forum* was developed in the island of Pingtan on a large scale (93 hectares of water front conference halls, theatre, convention, cultural and exhibition facilities).⁸⁷

I can conclude here that the impressive infrastructure is there waiting for the much wanted “defrost” in the cross-Strait relations.

Cross–Strait Student exchanges

The term “student exchanges” in the context of this research must be interpreted also as “student admission of access”. I consider it also in the specific context of this research a “cultural industry” as far as university education is a cultural activity but also a highly rewarded business. In countries like New Zealand, offering “British style” education for “Asian” students represent the third largest “industry” and GDP contributor after agriculture and tourism. The Chinese students studying outside Mainland China are components of a cultural industry in US, Australia, UK etc. The various admission and visa regulations are also a matter of educational policies which in a way or another fall under a general “cultural policy” or “cultural relations”. Same rationality apply for Mainland China students aspiring to study in Taiwan. In particular considering that most of them are studying in private universities they fall under the auspices of a certain lucrative “cultural industry”.⁸⁸ This “cultural industry” is dependent on government regulations regarding the access,

⁸⁵ CLOU Architects. “Cross-Straits culture and Creative Park”, 2019 in *ARCHELLO* web site: <https://archello.com/project/cross-straits-culture-and-creative-industrial-park#stories>, accessed 3 December 2020.

⁸⁶ Ibidem.

⁸⁷ Ibidem.

⁸⁸ Chuing Prudence Chou. “Reaching Across the Strait: Contact Hypothesis in the Context of Chinese University Students in Taiwan”, chapter in “Cultural and Educational Exchanges between Rival Societies Cooperation and Competition in an Interdependent World” by Chuing Prudence Chou, Jonathan Spangler *Editors* Department of Education National Chengchi University Taipei, Taiwan, Springer, 2018, p.118.

residence status, scholarships, access to employment opportunities after graduation, mutual recognition of degrees etc.

The academic exchanges and in particular student exchanges have a particular reconciliatory role as shown by the European Union most massive and successful of the EU cultural programs namely the *Erasmus* student exchange program. According with Messick and Mackie the direct contact among the young people in general and the long term one in particular may increase mutual understanding.⁸⁹ Massive interpersonal contact under the right conditions may lay the foundation for a *Security community* as defined by Karl Deutch in 1957 and more recently Emmanuel Adler and Barnett.⁹⁰

Cross-Strait educational exchanges were already subject of several academic researches. I have noticed that most authors are mentioning the progresses and achievements as well as the limitations and barriers which still exist.⁹¹ The authors noticed the general feeling of satisfaction among mainland Chinese students enrolled in Taiwanese universities while their presence helped the local residents to have a better understanding and impression about Mainland China.⁹² It may have counted to this positive impression the fact that the students from Mainland China accepted for enrolment in Taiwanese universities are usually post graduates with good grades from top universities.

According with Kao (2009) since 1987 in 25 years 235000 mainland Chinese professional, academics, students (about 10% of the total visitors from Mainland China) travelled to Taiwan.⁹³ The real significant student exchanges begun at the end of 2010 (Chou 2014) where Taiwan legislators allowed Taiwanese universities to accept the enrolment of students from Mainland

⁸⁹ David M. Messick and Diane M. Mackie. "Intergroup Relations" *Annual Review of Psychology*, Vol. 40:p.66 (Volume publication date February 1989) <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.ps.40.020189.000401>

⁹⁰ Adler, Emanuel and Barnett, Michael (eds), *Security Communities*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p.41.

⁹¹ Chuing_Prudence_Chou, "Reaching across the Strait: Contact Hypothesis in the Context of Chinese University Students in Taiwan", chapter in "Cultural and Educational Exchanges between Rival Societies Cooperation and Competition in an Interdependent World" by Chuing_Prudence_Chou, _Jonathan_Spangler *Editors* Department of Education National Chengchi University Taipei, Taiwan, Springer, 2018.

⁹² Ibidem.

⁹³ Kao, K. L. "The educational, cultural, and economic impact of opening up the intake of Chinese students in Taiwan", in *The past and prospective cross-strait cultural and educational exchange public forum*, Taipei: National Chengchi University, 2009.

China (initially only from the coastal regions high school graduates) and from 41 Mainland Chinese Universities.⁹⁴ From some 800 the number of Mainland Chinese students rose to some 42000 by 2016.⁹⁵ Some pieces of legislation were needed such as *The Junior College Act* (Ministry of Justice 2014), the *Act Governing Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area* (Ministry of Justice 2015a, b, c), and the *University Act*.⁹⁶ *The University Entrance Committee for Mainland Chinese Students* was established in 2011.⁹⁷

There are still some limitations affecting the Mainland Chinese students studying in Taiwan. Apart from the a bunch of top Mainland Chinese universities eligible for credit transfers there was established a 1% quota in 2010 raised at 2% in 2013 (Ministry of Justice 2013).⁹⁸ Mainland Chinese prospective students are excluded from enrolment for degrees majoring in medicine, pharmaceuticals, or hi-tech (perhaps the most tempting for a prospective student pursuing a university degree in Taiwan).⁹⁹ Mainland Chinese students also are also excluded from: access at public founded scholarships, employment in Taiwan (part time or full time), professional licenses or employment in Taiwan after graduation.¹⁰⁰ Further measures such as the access to the public health system since 2017, increased access to private scholarships, access to internships and the possibility to extend their stay in Taiwan after graduation may have attenuate the effects of still existing restrictions and limitations.¹⁰¹

Although the lack of an “equal status” with the locals may at a first view upset the Mainland Chinese students (according with my personal research) in fact the above mentioned limitations and restrictions have little effect in the decision to choose Taiwan as a destination for university education or their general impression about life in Taiwan. As I have noticed the students from Mainland China enrolled at Taiwanese universities usually came from affluent families and do not

⁹⁴ Chuing Prudence Chou, “Reaching Across the Strait: Contact Hypothesis in the Context of Chinese University Students in Taiwan”, chapter in “Cultural and Educational Exchanges between Rival Societies Cooperation and Competition in an Interdependent World” by Chuing Prudence Chou, Jonathan Spangler *Editors* Department of Education National Chengchi University Taipei, Taiwan, Springer, 2018, p.117.

⁹⁵ Ibidem.

⁹⁶ Ibidem, p.118.

⁹⁷ Ibidem, p.118.

⁹⁸ Ibidem.

⁹⁹ Ibidem, p.119.

¹⁰⁰ Ibidem.

¹⁰¹ Ibidem.

have the time or the need to seek in Taiwan full or part time jobs as students. Also most of them are not affected by the lack of access to the local job market after graduation as they are rather looking for the gigantic job market in Mainland China where anyway some of the most affluent Taiwanese companies have already relocated their production facilities.

The warm character of the people, the quality of courses in parallel with a more relaxed attitude, the relative clean air, mild climate and green environment are among the things appreciated by Mainland students in Taiwan.¹⁰² Across the Strait, Mainland China accepts students and job seekers from Taiwan a policy which may further improve in a medium term perspective the cross-Strait relations.¹⁰³

In Taiwan the Mainland Affairs Council has organized several activities whose aim was to encourage student exchanges and youth interaction in general such as: “*Exploration of Taiwan’s Diverse Culture Workshop*,” “*Cross-Strait Young Students Civic Consciousness and Media Literacy Workshop*,” “*Cross-Strait Law Students Forum*,” “*Cross-Strait Mass Communication Graduate Students Forum*.” Worth to mention the MAC “*Regulations Governing MAC Subsidy for Organization of Cross-Strait Private Exchange Activities*.” which according with the official declarations is meant to encourage the private sector in organizing cross –Strait activities targeting the youth.¹⁰⁴ Further in February 2018 in Mainland China were adopted 15 measures to allow Taiwanese academics to apply for public funds for research in science and technology developed by public or private research institutes in Mainland China.¹⁰⁵

In conclusion in the last decade there were impressive efforts and progresses from both sides across the Strait to improve the cross strait youth, student and academic exchanges however there is still a long way to go in order to achieve the much wanted climate of mutual trust. The

¹⁰² Ibidem, p.121.

¹⁰³ Ibidem, p.124.

¹⁰⁴ Mainland Affairs Council. „Cross-strait cultural and educational exchanges, T. What are the government’s purposes and supporting measures for allowing Mainland Chinese students to study in Taiwan?”, available on line: <https://www.mac.gov.tw/en/cp.aspx?n=14F997EC59624E90>, accessed 3 of December 2020.

¹⁰⁵ Mainland Affairs Council. „Cross-strait cultural and educational exchanges, Z. Regarding the 31 Taiwan-related measures announced by Mainland China, which encourage Taiwanese scholars and researchers of science and technology to apply for Mainland’s national funds in order to attract Taiwan’s technologies and talents. What are the views of the MAC on this?” available on line: <https://www.mac.gov.tw/en/cp.aspx?n=14F997EC59624E90>, accessed 3 of December 2020.

authorities in Taiwan seems to watch with precaution, and adopt usually a “defensive” position facing Beijing initiatives to increase the flow of Taiwanese students and scientists into Mainland China.

The role of Cultural Tourism

I noticed that most tourist exchanges between Mainland China and Taiwan involve a certain degree of cultural dimension.

In Mainland China the wave of fast modernization and urbanization came at a cost in terms of cultural heritage and the mainland visitors to Taiwan often feel that Taiwan has preserved traditional Chinese customs better and as a “natural way of living”. Those customs are not artificially revived for tourists, those customs are just dally life. Representations of traditional Chinese culture that can be seen in Taiwan (like ceremonies celebrating the birth of Confucius and the Burning of Wang Yeh’s Boat Festival) are appreciated by mainlanders.¹⁰⁶ Another traditional Chinese cultural customs preserved in Taiwan who capture the attention of Cultural tour organizers are: “Mazu pilgrimage” dedicated to the Sea Goodes a practice once widely spread in the entire Chinese coastal regions, ceremonies dedicated to Wang Yeh (a healing good) in which the good statue is paraded through the streets collecting peoples illness or the ceremonies connected to the birthday of Confucius especially at the Confucius Temple in Taipei.¹⁰⁷ The specialized media usually notices in Taipei as of high interest for Mainland visitors the various performances of *Yayue* (traditional Chinese imperial court music), *Nanguan music*, *Tang Dynasty dances* and *Glove puppetry*.¹⁰⁸

Like in other places the young generations are more inclined towards various international cultural waves. Despite this trend can be noticed a recent continuous interests to keep alive or to revive cultural traditions and performances and the arrival of Mainland Chinese tourists gave a

¹⁰⁶ Cindy Sui. “Keeping traditional Chinese culture alive”, BBC News, on 13 Oct 2011, available on line at: www.bbc.com/news/world-radio-and-tv-15153707, accessed 26 Nov 2020.

¹⁰⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁰⁸ Laura Conigliaro, “Cultural Diplomacy: Taiwan”, Project 2049 Institute, published on line in October 13, 2013: <https://project2049.net/2013/10/13/cultural-diplomacy-taiwan/>, accessed 10 of October 2020.

stronger motivation to preserve and enhance the past heritage.¹⁰⁹ The very blend of traditional and modernity is by itself interesting and appealing for foreign tourists in general and for mainlanders in particular.

The issue of tourism development across the Strait is directly proportional with the level of rapprochement across the Taiwan Strait. After 2008 cross-Strait tourism became a significant “barometer” of the cross-Strait relations. Officially neither part considers cross-Strait travel as international travel. In 1987 the president Chiang Ching-kuo decided to lift the mutual travel ban across the Taiwan Strait for certain category of people.¹¹⁰ Since the early 90’s and as an effect of “1992 compromise” Taiwanese were allowed to travel Mainland China for tourism purposes. Since 2008 after signing the ECFA and the further rapprochement across the Taiwan Strait promoted by the KMT government tourists from Mainland China were allowed to visit Taiwan initially only in organized groups and from July 2011 as individuals.¹¹¹ The interests and fascination for Taiwan from the Chinese mainlanders is expressed by a spectacular increase of Mainland visitors in the first years after 2008. Though this impressive grow was dependent not only by the “cultural interests” but also the will of the Mainland government to issue travel permits, the grow in the material affluence in Mainland China and the availability and affordability of cross-Strait direct air travel. In Taipei was set up an office of the *Cross-Strait Tourist Exchange Association* (Mainland China based) while in Beijing was set up its Taiwanese counterpart *Taiwan Strait Tourism Association*.¹¹²

In Europe former Cold War or battle ground place becomes places of remembrance and reconciliation. Such a place in the case of Taiwan is considered the Kinmen country and in particular the Cold War military installations located in the islands of Erdan and Dadan both

¹⁰⁹ Ibidem.

¹¹⁰ Kerry Brown, Justin Hempson-Jones and Jessica Pennisi. “Investment across the Taiwan Strait How Taiwan’s Relationship with China Affects its Position in the Global Economy”, Chatham House, November 2010, p.5: https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Asia/1110pp_taiwan.pdf, accessed 3 of December 2020.

¹¹¹ BBC News. “China to stop issuing individual travel permits to Taiwan” 31 July 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-49178314>, accessed 30 of November 2020.

¹¹² Taiwan Today News, “Beijing opens tourism office in Taipei”, *Taiwan Today*, on line edition from May 10, 2010: <https://taiwantoday.tw/news.php?unit=2&post=1167>, accessed 3 of December 2020. On the same issue Shelley Shan, “China, Taiwan to open tourist offices across the Strait”, *Taipei Times*, on line edition from Tue, Jul 21, 2009 page3: <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2009/07/21/2003449179>, accessed 3 of December 2020.

facing the city of Xiamen.¹¹³ This kind of historical sites if properly valorized and presented have the potential to help tourists from both parts of the Strait to learn about the importance of peace, dialogue and understanding.¹¹⁴

Cultural tourism as a cultural industry properly done by professionals may also avoid the question of who has the power to define Taiwan's culture as in a competitive environment and market driven economy businesses play the "language of money" and not the "language of politics". Worth to mention than the business oriented cultural tour operators need the intervention and advise of culture professionals (muzeografs, archeologists, specialized architects, art historians etc.), as the clientele became more and more culturally educated and demanding for authentic experiences. Also, a cultural discourse in which traditional Chinese culture is emphasized is more likely to be well received in Mainland China contributing a step further at the process of reconciliation.

Some observers consider that the tour organizers in Taiwan need to make some adjustments to their programs and to realize that cultural tourism is not necessarily about "marathons" through museums, temples, festivals and souvenir shops but rather about experiencing the local culture, the local dally life involving more direct contacts with the locals. A general shift from pure "cultural tourism" to new and more entertaining varieties of cultural tourism such as "creative tourism" may be desirable and is already noticeable as some tour operators are offering local cooking lessons, experience traditional papermaking skills, invite tourists to take part in the fabrication process of traditional ceramics and other crafts.

Contemporary Taiwan with its modern cultural scene is not to be avoided by a cultural tourism program. Already, Taiwan's *Pop culture* is appreciated in Mainland China so it may appeal to a wider age group of tourists. The *Council of Cultural Affairs* from Taiwan has even developed a program specifically designed to encourage the tourists to live with local families and then to describe their experience on various social media sites an interesting strategy for promotion of tourism considering the high level of visibility and trust social media sites have and their tendency

¹¹³ Taiwan Ministry of Culture. 2016-05-29 https://www.moc.gov.tw/en/information_254_77453.html, accessed 7 of December 2020.

¹¹⁴ Ibidem.

to auto create content at virtually no costs.¹¹⁵ This strategy is not new and it was already successfully applied in many other places.

Cultural tourism in Taiwan is effective especially when as a cultural industry is a purely economic and profit driven endeavor. By definition the Taiwanese tour operators organizing trips in Taiwan for mainlanders have to play the polite careful host (a simple universally recipe in which the “brown bears” as “hosts” need to “pamper” the “panda bears” as “guests”). As commercial endeavors the cultural tours put on “display” a commercial cultural story showing what the mainlanders want to see or hear or what is pleasant to their ears or ego. Most visitors from the Mainland are expecting to find in Taiwan the “lost traditional China” in terms of customs, food, architecture, cultural relics and the organizers are doing their best to offer what the clients demand. The tour organizers are careful to avoid controversial or sensitive subjects in their presentations. Some observers also noticed the polite language and expressions toward the Mainland clients such as: “we the Chinese”, “our common cultural heritage” etc.¹¹⁶

Tourism appears as a good “barometer” for the cross-Strait relations. It was booming between 2008 and 2015 the impressive increase in those seven years being doubled by trade agreements and new direct cross-Strait flights. In those years an entire tourism infrastructure was built in Taiwan aiming at an ever increased number of potential affluent clients from Mainland China. This entire endeavor is highly dependent on the general political relations across the Strait as seen after 2015.

Industrial design as a cross-Strait cultural industry

Technology as such can be an act of culture. The humans in general humanize their surrounding environment with artefacts whose aim go well beyond just food and shelter. The practical tools regardless their utilizations contain esthetics and symbols reflecting traditions and

¹¹⁵ Interview taken in December 2020 with an employee of the *Council for Cultural Affairs*.

¹¹⁶ Ian Rowen. “Tourism as a territorial strategy: The case of China and Taiwan”, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 18 March 2014, p.67.

cultural particularities of a certain group. This approach involves adopting a certain definition for culture and the cultural act as such which in this case equals the concept “civilization” which obviously include the technology. The Romanian philosopher Lucian Blaga, in his book *Trilogy of Culture* argues how humans are fundamentally cultural beings just as the material values created by them.¹¹⁷ In conclusion, industrial design cannot be separated from technology, engineering, art, but neither from sociology, environmental psychology and human psychology.

And here came the question for this research. How to translate cultural features into modern desirable products and how those products used in their daily life may create further bridges of communication across the Taiwan Strait? The Chinese culture is the cultural background across the Strait, for instance its traditional design principles is expected to be followed. What would be the traditional Chinese elements, suitable to be used for modern industrial design (especially hi-tech products)?

From the beginning can be noticed that the shift of manufacturing from Taiwan to the Mainland China occurring in the last three decades is a driving force for the Taiwanese entrepreneurs to find new sources of added value and competitively for the local industries. One source would be the increased technical innovation and performance while another would be the design. Taiwan is already recognized as one of the world leading source (often via Mainland China manufacturing plants) of 3C units. They may need further enhancements in design to compete with their South Korean, US or Mainland competitors. 3C technology became a “way of life” in the age of internet and communication. Many people are connected to their gadgets not only because of their performance but also in terms of cultural dimension and lifestyle expressed by their design. The fans of Apple products belong to a certain culture admiring cutting edge innovation combined with a certain design expressed in “iStyle”. These are evolutions pushing Taiwanese or Mainland Chinese manufacturers to search for and valorize native elements in the design of their products. However, is not an easy mission to integrate, to find the right balance between the traditional and contemporary design. Those efforts are visible everywhere from the 3C gadgets to the new architecture, interior design and fashion. When talking about industrial design, color, material and form regarded by Chinese themselves and by foreigners as

¹¹⁷ Lucian Blaga, “Trilogia Culturii”, Hummanitas, 2018, second edition, Bucharest.

Chinese, is taken into account. Chinese traditional elements invoking harmony with the nature and balance are principles rooted into the Confucianism and Taoism.¹¹⁸ The same harmony and balance in terms of form, color, and material is pursued in the modern industrial design across the Taiwan Strait. What are the traditional Chinese forms and how those forms and materials can be converted into contemporary design? The usual Chinese motifs considered by various authors to be suitable for use in the industrial design may be: *double happiness, clouds, Chinese section, Kirin, Fu, carp, calligraphy and seal, zodiacal signs, circle and square, Ying and Yang, Chinese lantern.*¹¹⁹ Among the most cultural Chinese materials are *bamboo wood, jade, porcelain, bronze.*¹²⁰

An additional challenge may be related to the fact that what the buyer want in terms of design may not be economically feasible for mass production or at least for the production which goes beyond the show rooms.

Asus and *Acer* are two of the most renowned Taiwanese PC/Notebooks manufacturers (in the last years they being also producers of smartphones) in the last years were doing their best to increase their prestige and market share thorough improved design. *Asus* “Zen” collection and *Acer* “Liquid Jade” shows the preference for particular shapes, forms and combination of color may be considered as an interpretation of traditional Chinese symbolism and esthetic features into contemporary design. *Acer* designers were trying to obtain the same cultural effect with its color effects like “Mist Green”, a color chosen to reflect the morning fog and mist from the forestry area in order to induce the close relationship with the nature, the green forest ant the mist, a very familiar atmosphere in the Chinese traditional

¹¹⁸ Chun-Chien Huang, “Man and nature in the Confucian tradition: some reflections in the twenty-first century”, *TD: The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa*, Vol. 2 no. 2, December 2006, pp. 311-330, available on line:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/48180928_Man_and_nature_in_the_Confucian_tradition_some_reflection_s_in_the_twenty-first_century/link/0e5f7135f0c4c08778fcc1b9/download, accessed 7 of December 2020.

¹¹⁹ Nan Li. “The Application of Chinese Traditional Elements Design in Industrial Design”, *Advances in Intelligent Systems Research*, volume 130, 6th International Conference on Mechatronics, Computer and Education Informationization (MCEI 2016), pp.1- 4, published by Atlantis Press, available on line: <https://download.atlantispress.com/article/25867698.pdf>, accessed 5 of October 2020.

¹²⁰ Wu, X., Xie, J., & Mao, Y. “The Application of Chinese Elements in the Product Design”, *Asian Social Science*, 4(8), 2008, pp. 109-111.

culture and esthetics.¹²¹ In 2001 Asus established its own design center which in the last two decades received more than 325 international awards.¹²² Other Taiwanese computer manufacturers like BenQ or MSI with its symbol “The Dragon” also contributed to the new above mentioned industrial design trend with good results in terms of world market share.¹²³

Technology with a cultural content have the advantage of been apolitical. HTC, Asus, Acer with their specific design, innovation and ingenuity are “Chinese enough” to find in Mainland China a lucrative market. The vast majority of Europeans know Taiwan only through his hi-end, hi-tech brands namely Asus, Acer, HTC, MSI, Benq most of those products being present in their daily life and identified as Chinese/Taiwanese. Can be noticed an exponential increase in the *de facto* branding capabilities offered by the mentioned companies and it is based not only in technological performance but also in the cultural symbolism inoculated by the design divisions of those companies. In fact, things seems to be more complex. From a branding point of view the “marriage” with top western products seems to have been the key to success and access to the first league of hi-tech products. In addition to technology, Lenovo has taken over IBM's brand image. Huawei took off on the smart phone market from the front line of performance only after the “marriage” with the prestigious German brand Leica taking a part of its brand prestige, performance and of course the price. The top models of Taiwanese laptop manufacturers Acer and Asus were "Acer Ferrari" and "Asus Lamborghini" (in collaboration with the design divisions of the two Italian companies).¹²⁴ In the case of Acer Aspire models is also worth to mention the collaboration with the German car manufacturer BMW design division in 2007 in order to obtain a cutting edge design with curvy and sleek case resembling the latest trends in the prestige western car industry.¹²⁵ In this case the association with leading European technology products, a symbol

¹²¹ Information retrieved from Acer official web site available at: <https://www.acer.com/ac/en/US/content/acerdesign-2020-color-debut>, accessed 7 of November 2020.

¹²² Asus.com 2020 (official web site), accessed 20 of November 2020.

¹²³ Min-Hua Chiang and Bernard Gerbier. “Cross-Strait Economic Relations: Recent Development and Implications for Taiwan », *Revue de la régulation Capitalisme, institutions, pouvoirs*, 1st semester Springht 2013, Maison des Sciences de l'Homme - Paris Nord, <https://journals.openedition.org/regulation/10177?lang=en>, accessed 4 Dec 2020.

¹²⁴ Dan Nystedt. “Lamborghini, Intel set to race Ferrari, AMD”, *COMPUTERWORLD*, March 8, 2006 available on line at: <https://www.computerworld.com/article/2562639/lamborghini--intel-set-to-race-ferrari--amd.html>, accessed 8 of December 2020.

¹²⁵ Dan Nystedt. “Acer teams with BMW on latest consumer laptop design - Laptops with curvy design and sleek black case” *COMPUTERWORLD*, May 2, 2007, available on line <https://www.computerworld.com/article/2544838/acer-teams-with-bmw-on-latest-consumer-laptop-design.html>, accessed 5 of Dec 2020.

of performance, luxury and style is a clear sign that the West and especially "Old Europe" still have something to say culturally and technologically when it came to the brand factor in both Taiwan and Mainland China.

Architecture and Interior design as cross–Strait cultural industries

In the last years in both Mainland China and Taiwan is noticeable a constant preoccupation for valorization of traditional techniques, materials, forms and shapes in both the design of new houses and interior design. A new legislation in Mainland China is more sensitive to heritage, and historical urban contexts.¹²⁶ This new trend among Mainland Chinese and Taiwanese architecture studios involve a new valorization of traditional things such as: *the traditional Chinese courtyard, the opens to the nature, materials and building techniques such as bamboo, wood and bricks.*¹²⁷ I noticed an entire conception which considers “modern” and “trendy” what incorporates traditional motifs and materials in the contemporary architectural design.¹²⁸ In both Mainland China and Taiwan the new architectural trend is sensitive to Fengshui.¹²⁹ The harmony among the things is meant not only for esthetic principles but also to favor energy flows, health and happiness. It applies also for the interior design in the manner of arranging objects, the materials used, the plants etc.

The most iconic modern building in Taipei, namely the World renowned “Taipei 101” is an architectural commitment to the application of traditional Chinese symbolism and Fengshui into the ultra-modern building design.¹³⁰ For few years it was the tallest building in the World,

¹²⁶ Sophie Kalkreuth, “Chinese contemporary architecture: Reinterpreting traditional designs in the modern, urban China”, LUXUO, Jun 04, 2017, available on line: <https://www.luxuo.com/properties/interiors/chinese-contemporary-architecture-reinterpreting-traditional-designs-in-the-modern-urban-china.html>, accessed 8 of December 2020.

¹²⁷ Ibidem.

¹²⁸ Dr. Razak Basri, (2010), Investigation on the influence of Chinese traditional elements in contemporary building design by Western architects in China, Munich, GRIN Verlag, <https://www.grin.com/document/176493>

¹²⁹ An ancient philosophy derivate from Taoist principle of harmony which provide some rules regarding how to build, locate, or orient a building with respect to various forms of nature (sky, water, forest, and mountain, the north – south axis, a view to a cultivated field etc.).

¹³⁰ Duncan Deaeth, (2019), Taipei 101 named among 50 most influential skyscrapers in world, Taiwan news, 20 Oct 2019, available on line at: <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3806487>, accessed 7 of December 2020.

build on purpose to be in harmony with the nature.¹³¹ It is also one of the skyscrapers which was carefully designed to reflect the local traditional culture and originality. Being ultramodern or even post-modern while preserving the traditional culture and the concern towards the environment may be very challenging but “Taipei 101” demonstrate that “where is a will, there is a way”. The entire structure was design by the architect C.Y. Lee to resemble eight stylized pagoda one in top of the other like an old traditional Buddhist temple, the number “eight” as such in the Chinese tradition resembling richness and luck.¹³² The entire structure as such also resemble a bamboo stick.¹³³ The structure also incorporates a carefully chosen alternance of squares, circles and other various shapes in order to reach the right balance between Yin and Yang.¹³⁴ In the entire structure as such as well as on the interior design there is a consideration for the Traditional Chinese lucky numbers, shapes, materials.¹³⁵

Fashion as a cultural industry

Fashion industry is growing hand in hand with a greater affluence in both Taiwan and Mainland China. Some Taiwanese are studying fashion overseas and at return are trying to lunch new trends involving a blend between the latest western fashion trends and the local traditional motifs in order to achieve not only the originality (any fashion designer is looking for) but also functionality and adaptation to the local needs and taste.¹³⁶ A fashion designer from Taiwan has to be also business oriented in order to succeed and the closest and biggest market potentially sensitive to a modern interpretation of the Chinese traditional clothing would be Mainland

¹³¹ Ibidem.

¹³² Ian Morley. “Taiwan on top”, *Architectureweek*, 2 March 2005, available on line http://www.architectureweek.com/2005/0302/building_1-2.html, accessed 7 of December 2020.

¹³³ Abby Rogers. “A Look Inside The World's Most Expensive Building” , *Business insider*, Jan 9, 2012, available on line at: <https://www.businessinsider.com/taipei-101-worlds-most-expensive-building-2012-1#the-building-is-so-tall-it-boasts-two-observation-decks-an-indoor-viewing-area-sits-on-the-89th-floor-while-the-91st-floor-holds-the-outdoor-viewing-area-5>, accessed 8 of December 2020.

¹³⁴ Ibidem.

¹³⁵ Ibidem.

¹³⁶ Taiwan Today, “Mixing Business with Culture”, Publication Date: May 01, 2004, available on line at: <https://taiwantoday.tw/news.php?post=12692&unit=8,29,32,45>, accessed 8 of December 2020.

China.¹³⁷ In Taiwan apart from the re-interpretation of the traditional Chinese clothing features can be noticed the interest for rediscovery and valorization of the island indigenous culture in the materials used, the use of indigenous geometric patterns, plants and insects.¹³⁸ In Asia so far the most successful design style who triggered a World trend was the Japanese “Minimalist” style (elegance through clean sharp line and simplicity).¹³⁹ It was so successful because it succeeded to express the Japanese state of mind.¹⁴⁰ The designers from Mainland China and Taiwan have as a mission to self-reflect upon their own “state of mind” and the possibility to translate it into a new world trend.

Conclusions

- Culture, cultural relations (institutionalized or *de facto*) and cultural industries plays an important mission when the cross–Strait relations are “cold” being a convenient channel of communication due to the common culture, heritage, economic interests, environment security threats etc. The same cultural industries and cultural agreements comes to strengthen economic agreements with a deeper and more sophisticated dimension.
- The need to avoid the “zero sum game” logic. “Win–Win” formulas are achievable.
- The need for achievable goals in the Taiwanese domestic politics regarding the cross-Strait relations, such as an increased market share in the Mainland China, increased number of culture minded tourists and a more “relaxed” political atmosphere.
- The need for changes in the way of reflecting disputed issues in textbooks and public discourse. The need for reflection in a multiperspectival manner presenting both parts points of view.

¹³⁷ Taiwan Today, “The Enduring Legacy Of The Chi Pao”_Publication Date: June 01, 1991, <https://taiwantoday.tw/news.php?post=22319&unit=12,20,29,33,35,45>, accessed 8 of December 2020.

¹³⁸ Taiwan Today, “Mixing Business with Culture”_ Publication Date: May 01, 2004, available on line at: <https://taiwantoday.tw/news.php?post=12692&unit=8,29,32,45>, accessed 8 of December 2020.

¹³⁹ René Chen, Nina Kong. “What China's changing design aesthetic tells us”, *Campaignasia*, May 23, 2019 on line edition available at: Read more at: <https://www.campaignasia.com/article/what-chinas-changing-design-aesthetic-tells-us/451764>, accessed 8 of December 2020.

¹⁴⁰ Ibidem.

- The need for “Erasmus like” program for students and academics in which Mainland Chinese students and students from top Taiwanese Universities would have the opportunity to study a semester at a partner university.
- “Top down” communication strategies must be replaced with communication strategies involving apolitical subjects, “people to people” dialogue and interactive communication.
- The excessive noise and some kind of ostentation characterizing some "theme parks", or exhibitions, makes them a less inspired form of cultural exposure. Those funds may be redirected towards good quality translations of representative literature works by an unobtrusive but permanent direct exposure of the foreign public to a particular culture one of the best case being the "Book corner" in commercial libraries (often connected with a cafeteria).
- Rehabilitation, reinterpretation of the elements of identity to the conditions of modern life may be the workable solution for quality cultural tourism programs but its implementation is difficult, requires additional funds (architect, landscaper, and interior design), expertise in traditional technologies, and design solutions. The state need to step in the “equation” with professional “know how” and financial incentives for the use of architectural solutions which are preserving the local cultural specificity.
- The causal relationship between cultural exchanges and the proven effect remain a sensitive issue as the public funds need to be justified and the private contractors need to be economically motivated. As I noticed in various reports often only the “output” indicators are mentioned, not the eventual “results”. The number of visitors in an exhibitions or the number of participants at a conference may have some relevance but tells little about “improved relations” or “image change”.
- *De facto* cultural presence through cultural industries can avoid the questions such "who is accredited or entitled" to define what is relevant for a certain location and for instance simplify things and cut costs.
- The capacity for cultural persuasion of *industries with a cultural content* seems to be stronger than the one of *cultural industries* as such, being generated by a world where economic interests and the “language of money” prevail the “language of politics”. They also seems to solve better the issues related with the “knowledge economy” such those

regarding the “accumulation of cultural capital” and its efficient production and distribution¹⁴¹.

- The citizens, (those who pay) must consider themselves culturally represented by a certain kind of interpretation of cultural values. I noticed that sometimes decision makers chose sophisticated postmodern art forms considering that the average tax payer is not “culturally literate” enough to be consulted.
- It is unrealistic to expect “miracle” results from cultural exchanges. The simple exposure of good quality culture or “art for art” without political expectation, just for the genuine pleasure of sharing cultural values may have a stronger reconciliatory effect.

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¹⁴¹ Pierre Bourdieu, “The forms of capital” in J. Richardson (Ed.) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* New York, Greenwood, 1986, pp. 241-258.

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