Cultural and educational exchanges in various forms have existed for millennia, but it was not until the twentieth century that the proliferation of formal exchange programs catapulted the issue to the forefront of public consciousness. Once accessible to only a select few, developments in transportation, communication, and information technologies have transformed exchanges into an activity that is feasible for an increasing percentage of the world’s population. The unprecedented human devastation of two world wars catalyzed a sense of urgency around the world, and a new era of cultural and educational exchange programs emerged in response as a means of easing tensions between rival states and societies. Today, exchanges are widely recognized not only as beneficial to those individuals and institutions involved but also as having the potential to influence relations between their societies more broadly.

In many academic studies and institutional texts discussing cultural and educational exchanges between rival societies, there is a strong tendency to focus on specific exchanges in isolation from the wider global context. Moreover, many studies on the issue seek to advocate such programs and thus emphasize the perceived positive impacts of those exchanges while overlooking or downplaying the negative impacts and potential risks. This book – as well as the graduate-level course called Global Trends in Education: Cultural and Educational Exchanges Between Rival Societies taught by the editors at National Chengchi University from which the book’s title is derived – is motivated by this need for more critical research that links to the broader context in this turbulent world. It aims to contribute to building a more comprehensive understanding of the issues at stake by gathering a diverse set of case studies of cultural and educational exchanges between rival states and societies and encouraging authors to consider not only the real or expected benefits of such exchanges but also the potentially negative impacts, challenges faced along the way, and broader impacts on the rival societies at large.

In Chap. 1, Spangler begins with an overview of the history of cultural and educational exchanges between rival societies, which he highlights as inspired by ideas of ancient origin, promoted by academic formalization, and adapted to modern institutional frameworks in the twentieth century. He then discusses the two faces of
such exchanges: their positive impacts, including their potential to reveal common humanity, reduce mistrust, challenge stereotypes, and inspire critical reflexivity, and their negative impacts, including their possibility to advance ulterior political motives, reinforce prejudices, miscalculate needs and impacts, encourage human capital imbalances, and threaten the availability of local employment opportunities.

In Chap. 2, Deardorff reviews some of the most prominent theories relevant to cultural and educational exchanges in rival states. By synthesizing concepts related to intercultural competence, conflict resolution, and peace education, she covers a wide range of influential research in order to set the academic foundation for the chapters that follow. She then concludes with a list of considerations for practitioners involved in the design and implementation of exchange programs between the individuals and institutions of rival societies.

In Chap. 3, Park and Bennett investigate the role of educational exchanges with North Korea as an alternative form of engagement that is independent of the political process. They explore how knowledge sharing through educational exchanges with individuals from and institutions in North Korea can serve as a means of soft power engagement, which has the potential to influence the country and its relations with the outside world more broadly. Taking the Knowledge Partnership Program—a successful long-term academic exchange program established by the University of British Columbia—as a case study, they shed light on several strategies for knowledge sharing engagement with North Korea learned through the experiences of the exchange program.

In Chap. 4, Clarke-Habibi takes an in-depth look at cultural and educational exchanges at the secondary school level in postwar Bosnia and Herzegovina. After having enjoyed relatively peaceful coexistence for many years, the collapse of Yugoslavia, genocide, displacement, and territorial disputes of the 1990s led to major demographic changes for the populations involved, including Croats, Serbs and Bosniaks, who are predominantly Catholic, Orthodox Christian, and Muslim, respectively. Postwar partitioning into the majority Serb Republika Srpska and Bosniak-Croat Federation has perpetuated tensions and rivalry between the groups. In this context, she assesses the positive and negative impacts of youths’ cultural and educational exchange experiences using the “4Rs” framework for sustainable and just peace, which includes recognition, redistribution, representation, and reconciliation. She concludes that further efforts must be made to incorporate all of these elements into exchange programs if they are to have a greater positive impact on relations among individuals and institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In Chap. 5, Artzi discusses the insights gained from a program in Cyprus that brings together Jewish-Israelis, Palestinians from the West Bank, and Palestinian citizens in Israel for cultural and educational exchanges. Through surveys of participants, he highlights the similarities and differences in the groups’ reasons for participation, the perceived impacts of the exchanges, and how the face-to-face interaction shapes perceptions about the identities of those involved. He concludes that, despite the modest goals of the program organizers, the exchanges had meaningful effects on participants’ feelings toward the other groups and opinions about
the conflict, but they did not always lead participants to be more optimistic about the future of intergroup relations.

In Chap. 6, Tripathi takes a look at the portrayal of India in Pakistani textbooks, arguing that, in lieu of people-to-people exchanges between Indians and Pakistanis, school textbooks serve as one of the primary means of cultural and educational knowledge exchange between them. Drawing on excerpts from textbooks, he argues that the Pakistani state has used education to promote a narrative that supports state interests but is historically inaccurate and has detrimental impacts on relations between the two societies. He then also reflects on how the presentation of Pakistan in Indian textbooks is inherently different for historical and political reasons, but Indian textbooks’ conspicuous avoidance of discussing Pakistan suggests that there remains substantial room for improvement.

In Chap. 7, Chou looks into the experiences of Chinese students studying in Taiwanese universities. With the contact hypothesis as a theoretical framework and inspired by past instances in which cultural exchange has enhanced mutual understanding between rival states, she assesses the extent to which its four conditions of equal status, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and institutional support are met in the context of cross-strait cultural and educational exchanges. Based on findings from survey data on individuals involved in the exchanges, she argues that these conditions are partially fulfilled and that exchanges have important impacts on those involved, having brought about more mutual understanding and respect among individuals despite the seemingly discriminatory policies related to Taiwan’s national security and labor market. That said, it is still too early to determine whether or not cross-strait educational exchanges have the potential to affect relations between the two sides at the diplomatic or policy level.

In Chap. 8, Spangler and Spangler examine how meteorology has served as a medium for exchanges between rival states. Even when diplomatic exchanges and other forms of engagement remained unfeasible, meteorological educational exchanges have been able to take place, which they attribute to the universal importance of meteorological data, the multilateral efforts required for data collection and monitoring, and the relatively apolitical nature of meteorological research. Based on personal communication and involvement in the exchanges, they reflect on the two case studies of Cuba–USA and China–Taiwan–USA meteorological educational exchanges that took place in recent decades despite ongoing diplomatic rivalry among the countries involved.

In Chap. 9, Henderson and Spangler bring together many of the lessons learned throughout the preceding chapters in the book. Their discussion first focuses on the challenges inherent to cultural and educational exchanges between the individuals and institutions of rival states and societies. Inspired by these case studies and other relevant research, they then offer some strategies for success in the implementation of such programs. In the end, they conclude that, despite the obstacles to exchanges between rival societies and the seemingly intransigent nature of such rivalries, conscientiously implemented cultural and educational exchanges have the potential to affect positive and lasting change not only for the individuals and institutions involved but also in their societies more broadly.
Throughout the book, the authors have been encouraged to consider both the positive and negative impacts of cultural and educational exchanges between rival societies in each context. Taken together, the chapters demonstrate that exchanges have observable impacts on the individuals and institutions involved. Moreover, exchanges have the capacity, in some cases, to affect broader social and political change at the family, community, society, or state level, but these impacts are indirect and typically require long-term concerted efforts among those involved. The use of exchange programs in the context of rival states and societies with the aim of creating lasting change remains a contentious issue and one that deserves greater attention from researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and participants alike. By bringing together a diversity of case studies of cultural and educational exchanges in rival societies, this volume aims to increase discussion on this complex issue, raise awareness of the potential positive and negative impacts of such exchange programs, and serve as a foundation for future research and program design in the years to come.

Taipei, Taiwan

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Jonathan Spangler
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Chapter 7
Reaching Across the Strait: Contact Hypothesis in the Context of Chinese University Students in Taiwan

Chuang Prudence Chou

Abstract Recent changes in the political atmosphere between China and Taiwan have allowed for the recruitment of Chinese university students in Taiwan. Since September 2011, thousands of Chinese degree-seeking students have been admitted to Taiwanese universities. While short-term cross-strait educational exchange programs began in the late 1990s and increased over the years, the enrollment of Chinese degree-seeking students marks a new milestone in the development of cross-strait relations. Despite the political and ideological rivalry between China and Taiwan, studies show that cross-strait educational exchanges have enhanced mutual understanding and changed attitudes of people on both sides. This chapter uses the four conditions of Allport’s contact hypothesis – equal status, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and support by authorities – as a theoretical lens for understanding the experiences of Chinese university students studying in Taiwan, focusing in particular on how the cultural and educational exchanges affect the individuals involved as well as their societies and cross-strait relations more broadly. It argues that the four conditions have each been met to varying extents and explores the ways in which the exchanges have and have not achieved this. It also finds that the exchanges have been influential for those involved but that they will have to continue for longer before their effects on policies or the political discourse on cross-strait relations will become apparent.

Introduction

Throughout history, conflict has often been a byproduct of misunderstandings and an inadequate exchange of ideas between societies. In many instances, tensions between societies in conflict have been improved through a better flow of ideas and people. In the case of relations between China and Taiwan, exchanges of any kind have been severely limited since the Chinese Civil War, which resulted in the

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Kuomintang-led government of the Republic of China (ROC) relocating to Taiwan and the establishment of the Communist-led People’s Republic of China (PRC) in mainland China in 1949. The first proposal to lift restrictions was made by Beijing in 1979. Known as the “three links” (三通), it proposed that Taiwan and China open each other’s borders to postal services, transportation, and trade, but this was firmly rebuffed by the ROC government under President Chiang Ching-kuo with its “three-nobes policy” (三不政策) of “no contact, no compromise, and no negotiation” with the communist government.

Today, political animosity continues to hinder cooperation and exchanges between the two rivals, but considerable progress has been made since educational and other forms of people-to-people exchanges began in the 1990s. This chapter argues that, in the cross-strait context, the four conditions for optimal contact stipulated by Allport (1954) and refined by many scholars since have been met to varying degrees. Although participants in cross-strait cultural and educational exchanges face many challenges and limitations, evidence suggests that Chinese students studying in Taiwanese universities have, on the whole, been satisfied by their exchange experiences. Chinese students in Taiwanese universities have been able to form positive relationships with their Taiwanese peers and professors, and through these experiences, they have gained clearer understandings of Taiwanese values and lifestyles and a deeper appreciation for the political realities that color cross-strait relations. These relationships and experiences lay the basic groundwork for improved relations between the two societies, but it is likely that much more time – perhaps decades – is needed before the impacts of these educational exchanges will become evident at the national policy level or in broader political discourse on cross-strait relations.

**Historical and Theoretical Context**

**Cross-Strait Relations and Early Exchanges**

Cross-strait relations have been highly politicized since the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949. Since then, the competing visions for the future of China and cross-strait relations, as embodied by the governments and people on each side, have been an ongoing obstacle to people-to-people and many other forms of exchanges. However, cultural and educational exchanges have made enormous progress since the 1990s as a result of changes in the cross-strait context and the forces of globalization. In Taiwan, the lifting of the martial law in 1987 served as a milestone in the process of advancing cross-strait relations and paved the way for its aging veterans to be granted permission to visit their hometowns in China. Although political and military rivalry continued, the cross-strait relationship entered an unprecedented era with regard to economic, cultural, and educational exchanges (Chou and Yang 2012).
With respect to cultural and educational exchange programs since November 1987, Taiwan also loosened its policy over Chinese visitors to Taiwan through such policies as the granting of visas to overseas distinguished professionals. As a result, many Chinese professionals in the fields of academia, culture, sports, media, and arts have visited Taiwan in the years since. From 1988 to 2009, more than 235,591 Chinese professionals in the cultural and educational sectors, out of a total of 2,712,572 Chinese visitors in 20 categories, traveled to Taiwan (Kao 2009). Exchange flows have increased not only in numbers but also in significance since Taiwan allowed Chinese graduate students to study in Taiwanese universities.

**Expansion of Cross–Strait Educational Exchanges**

Taiwan started to take on Chinese students and scholars in the early 1990s along with its policy of granting visas to Chinese tourists, but cultural and educational exchanges remained limited in duration and were highly regulated by the Taiwanese bureaucracy. In the fall of 2010, Taiwan passed a law that enabled its universities to admit students from coastal Chinese high schools and 41 recognized Chinese universities as degree seekers in Taiwan (Chou 2014). According to the Ministry of Education (MOE), only 823 Chinese students studied in short-term programs in Taiwan during the early 2000s, but that number increased to 41,981 full-time students in 2016 (MOE 2017). This is indicative of a momentous shift in both the numbers and type of exchanges taking place between the two societies and suggests that how the frequent contact Chinese students have had with Taiwanese individuals and institutions has affected their perceptions of Taiwan and cross-strait relations deserves investigation.

Recently, relevant academic research has begun to emerge. Lee (2015), for instance, examined whether the political tensions between Taiwan and China have impacted the interpersonal relationships between Chinese and Taiwanese students. It was found that political issues that characterize relations between China and Taiwan, particularly in regard to Taiwan’s political status, often created subtle tensions in interactions between Chinese and Taiwanese students, regardless of similarities in their cultural backgrounds. In another study, Shen (2014) examined the impacts of the frequency and duration of exchanges and the linguistic and cultural similarities between Chinese and Taiwanese students. It was found that the similarity in language and culture did not always lead to positive outcomes or eliminate the biases of individuals from the two groups. It also suggested that the relations between the youth of the two societies could be improved through true contact and more positive media coverage in Taiwan about Chinese students. Other studies have examined pull and push factors related to cross-strait educational exchanges and satisfaction among Chinese students in Taiwan between 2011 and 2016 (Chou 2017; Chou and Ching 2015). These studies found that the major reasons that Chinese students chose to study in Taiwan were the opportunities to travel and to experience Taiwanese life.