

Public Diplomacy in Central America: The Rise of the People's Republic of China

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Declaration of Authorship

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Any errors are mine and mine alone.

Abstract

This thesis contributes to the growing literature on public diplomacy by examining the role it plays in Chinese and Taiwanese relations with Central America. This is an innovative project given that most literature on the international affairs of Central America considers it either through the gaze of its colonial past or its relations with other parts of the Americas. As such, until now there has been no substantial published work, academic or otherwise, dedicated to Sino – Central American relations. Furthermore, by taking the public diplomacy approach, this research has expanded the boundaries of modern understanding of the term and the uses for which it can be deployed by a nation-state to help meet their domestic and international goals.

The research takes three neighbouring Central American Republics – Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala – and positions the public diplomacy practices being undertaken by the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Taiwan within these nation-states amidst wider political communications debates on public diplomacy and the troubled relationship between the PRC and Taiwan. Beyond mapping the variety of forms public diplomacy can take, this research has been able to document the various motivations for performing that nation-states have, in particular, public diplomacy's purpose beyond its engagement with foreign publics. The research is the result of observations and 33 interviews conducted in Central America with leading diplomats, civil servants, journalists and experts between 2010 and 2011.

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List of Acronyms

4CG - *Camara de Cooperacion y Comercio China – Guatemala* (China – Guatemala Chamber of Cooperation and Commerce)
ADB – Asian Development Bank
AFECC - Anhui Foreign Construction Company (PRC)
ALBA – *Alianza Bolivariana para los pueblos de nuestra America* (Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas)
AP – Associated Press
APEC – Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARENA – *Alianza Republica Nacionalista* (Republican National Alliance) (El Salvador)
ASAC - *Asociacion Salvadoreña de Amistad con China* (Association of El Salvadoran Friendship with China)
BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation
CA4 – Central America Four
CAFTA-DR – Central America and Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement
CCP – Chinese Communist Party
CCPIT - China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (PRC)
CIA – Central Intelligence Agency (USA)
CAN – Central News Agency (Taiwan)
CNN – Cable News Network (USA)
CPAFFC - Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (PRC)
CRI – China Radio International (PRC)
DPA – *Deutsche Presse Agentur*
DPP – Democratic Progressive Party (Taiwan)
ECFA – Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement
FMLN - *Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional* (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front) (El Salvador)
FTA – Free Trade Agreement
GDP – Gross Domestic Product
GIO – Government Information Office (Taiwan)
ICDF – International Cooperation and Development Fund (Taiwan)
JAICA – Japan International Cooperation Agency
KMT – *Kuomintang* (Chinese Nationalist Party) (Taiwan)
LSE – London School of Economics (UK)
MIDEPLAN - *Ministerio de Planificacion Nacional y Politica Economica* (Ministry of National Planning and Political Economy) (Costa Rica)
MMM – Mobile Medical Mission (Taiwan)
NCREE - National Centre for Research on Earthquake Engineering (Taiwan)
NED – National Endowment for Democracy (USA)
NGO – Non-governmental Organisation
OAS – Organisation of American States
PARLACEN – The Central American Parliament
PLN – *Partido de Liberacion Nacional* (National Liberation Party) (Costa Rica)
PRC – The People’s Republic of China
PROCOMER – *Promotora del Comercio Exterior de Costa Rica* (Foreign Trade Corporation of Costa Rica)
PWCA – Political Warfare Cadres Academy (Taiwan)
RECOPE – *Refinadora Costarricense de Petroleo* (Costa Rican Petroleum Refinery)
ROC – Republic of China

RTI – Radio Taiwan International
SDT – Seismic Design Technology
SEGEPLAN – *Secretaría de Planificación y Programación de la Presidencia* (Secretariat of Planning and Programming at the Office of the President) (Guatemala)
SICA – *Sistema de la Integración de Centroamericana* (Central American Integration System)
SINARTA - National Radio and Television System of Costa Rica
SOAS – School of Oriental and Asian Studies (UK)
TRMPC – Taiwan Roots Medical Peace Corps
UCR – *Universidad de Costa Rica* (University of Costa Rica)
UFC – United Fruit Company (USA)
UN – United Nations
UNCEH – United Nations *Comisión para el Esclarecimiento Histórico* (Commission for Historical Clarification) (Guatemala)
UNVCS – United Nations *Comisión de la Verdad para El Salvador* (Truth Commission for El Salvador)
USAID – United States Agency for International Development
USC – University of Southern California (USA)
USIA – United States Information Agency
WACL – World Anti-Communist League
WHO – World Health Organisation

Preface

At the end of World War II it was agreed that Japan would cede the island of Taiwan to the Republic of China (ROC), which resided in Beijing at that time. However, with Communist victory in the Chinese civil war in 1949, the ROC evacuated Beijing and were replaced by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The ROC relocated to Taiwan where they became a government in exile. To this day, the People's Republic of China (PRC) considers Taiwan to be a renegade province, and under its 'One China' policy seeks to integrate the island under a 'One Country, Two Systems' model. However, Taiwan's government and people have on the whole been resistant to such an amalgamation. Instead, Taiwan has developed a vibrant international profile based on trade, strong informal political relations with key actors, and enjoys formal diplomatic support from a number of smaller nation-states. This is despite the PRC's comparative size and power, and Beijing's 'One China' policy which insists that nation-states cannot have diplomatic ties with both countries at the same time. It is those nation-states which still have relations with Taiwan that are of interest to this thesis.

At present Taiwan receives formal diplomatic recognition from 23 countries around the world, with 11 of these located around the Caribbean basin. However, the PRC's increasing profile in Latin America since the turn of the century has brought the anomaly of this region's widespread support for Taiwan into sharper focus. What is more, in 2008 the PRC and Taiwan agreed a 'diplomatic truce' while the island and the mainland experienced a significant period of economic integration and cooperation. This was headlined by the signing of an Economic and Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) in Chongqing in 2010. The diplomatic truce has prevented countries from switching their recognition between Beijing and Taiwan and has added a further dynamic to the question of diplomatic recognition for those involved. However, it has also offered a period of relative stability for research into

the ongoing dispute, and with the re-election of President Ma Ying-jeou of the KMT for a second four-year term in January 2012, the agreement looks set to continue.

Introduction

The People's Republic of China (PRC) seeks the international isolation of the Republic of China (hereafter 'Taiwan') which it views as a renegade province to be reintegrated with the mainland. However, Taiwan's de-facto independence, profound economic development and heightened political legitimacy after democratic reforms during the 1980s and 1990s has resulted in a competition for diplomatic allies which has resulted in every country of the world being required to publicly announce their diplomatic allegiance at one time or another. Writing almost 50 years ago, political scientist George Yu stated: "Except for token artillery exchanges along the Fukien Coast today, the major theatre of conflict, between the Chinese Communists and the Chinese Nationalists, has been transferred from China soil onto foreign territory. The world now provides the arena in which two contenders compete for supremacy" (Yu, 1963: 439).

Since the mid 1950s therefore, the PRC and Taiwan have sought to influence the China policy of nation-states around the world for their betterment. Today however, there remain only 23 small and medium-sized territories located in Africa, Latin America and Oceania which continue to formally recognise Taiwan ahead of the PRC.¹ Indeed, while Taiwan has demonstrated greater flexibility since the end of the Cold War, the PRC has maintained its 'One China' policy that prohibits dual recognition of the PRC and Taiwan by a nation-state. Consequently, Taylor has observed that, "Large or ambitious states are highly unlikely to risk provoking Beijing and potentially put at risk millions of dollars-worth of trade deals and investments, as well as other resources that may come the way of well-placed elites. Currently it is those nations who are too small or too poverty-stricken to figure on the international stage [...] who are the most ready to engage in relations with the ROC" (Taylor, 2002: 130).

¹ Those nation-states in the Caribbean basin with formal relations with Taipei are Belize, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Given the international footprint of the PRC, Taylor's statement provides a degree of logic to the question of why any country would continue a diplomatic relationship with Taiwan given the opportunities relations with the PRC could bring. That said, since the end of the Cold War, all of Taiwan's remaining formal allies have made democratic reforms, alongside Taiwan itself. This has boosted political transparency and facilitated greater public involvement in politics. Thus Taiwan must convince an increasing number of people both at home and in each of its allies of the primacy of relations with Taiwan. A task made all the more difficult by a more powerful PRC.

As such, Taylor's reduction of the debate to what is commonly referred to as 'dollar' or 'chequebook' diplomacy appears to be at best over-simplified, at worst condescending, and certainly in need of further academic examination. However, there has been a tradition of this: Moller, for example, simply relegated the decision of underdeveloped countries to a bidding war of, "which of the two would offer more aid" (Moller, 1996: 55), without further investigation into the specifics of how Taiwan continued to uphold formal diplomatic relations despite the development of the PRC. Thus, it was clear that the scholarship on the competition for allies between Beijing and Taipei in the underdeveloped world required revision. Furthermore, because contemporary academic research has highlighted the progressive consciousness of Taiwan and the PRC surrounding the concept of public diplomacy – the performance of government-based activities aimed at foreign publics - it was logical for this concept to make-up the framework of this research (for example, D'Hooge, 2005 and 2007; Rawnsley, 2000 and 2009; Rockower, 2011; Wang, 2008; Zhu, 2010). What is more, Batora notes that, "for small and medium –sized states, public diplomacy represents an opportunity to gain influence and shape the international agenda in ways that go beyond their limited hard power resources" (Batora, 2006: 55).

It is an antithesis to this argument that public diplomacy is an equaliser between nation-states of vastly different resources, which forms the overall argument of this thesis on the PRC and Taiwan. In most cases Batora's argument will hold. However, if a nation-state is diplomatically isolated, then its public diplomacy becomes more a tool of statecraft and less about image promotion towards the public of the target nation-state. As such, public diplomacy is not an equaliser because the public diplomats in the isolated state are more limited than their counterparts in small or mid-sized nation-states which do not experience such isolation. In the case of Taiwan, this is because it uses public diplomacy, "not only as a means of promotion, but also as a means of ensuring its diplomatic survival" (Rockower, 2011: 109). This restricts public diplomacy's leash from government foreign policy, a leash that, as will be discussed later, is considerable slacker when such concerns are absent.

As such, this research will demonstrate that Taiwan's diplomats freely admit that everything they do has the PRC in mind, yet they appear unwilling to capitalise on the well-known frailties in the PRC's international image - lack of democracy, poor human rights record, unsafe and low paid working conditions etc. - primarily because of the international situation in which Taiwan finds itself. Instead, Taiwan has taken a somewhat benign approach to the PRC's increasing presence in Central America. The specifics of this can be split into international and domestic factors, namely: the current prosperity of cross-strait relations with the PRC; Taiwan's domestic political landscape; and the legacy of Taiwan's relations with Central America. Each of these is related to Taiwan's diplomatic isolation and all will be given attention in this introductory chapter in preparation for a more detailed look at Central America in the coming chapters.

Thus, the remainder of this chapter is tasked with further explain this main premise of the thesis. First, the chapter will provide some background information on the engagement of the PRC and Taiwan in Central America. Then there will be an

in-depth literature review and conceptual discussion of the term public diplomacy and its boundaries in relation to the issues that this thesis will highlight. Following this, China and Taiwan's historical and contemporary relations with Latin America and the under-developed world generally will be considered, as this offers the reader valuable context for the subsequent discussion on Central America. These discussions will then be brought together with the purpose of readdressing the theoretical framework in the specific context of Central America. In light of this, the chapter will finally explain the methodology and research methods that were used in the collect of data.

Central America in the Modern Era: 'Goodbye Uncle Sam, Hello Uncle Chang'?



Source: La Prensa (Panama), 1997

Traditionally referred to as 'America's Backyard' (Leogrande, 1998; Livingstone, 2009), Central America can be considered the United States' 'near abroad'. However, with the end of the Cold War and apparent 'Communist threat' from Central America, it can be said that US foreign policy has prioritised itself away from the region as it has engaged in wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. This deficit of

attention, combined with the emergence of the PRC as a major political and economic power over the past two decades, has somewhat lessened Washington's influence. Indeed, while there should be no doubt as to Washington's continuing regional prowess, its distraction with other security issues and the stagnation of the US economy in recent years has led to the nation-states of Central America investigating alternatives (Erikson, 2009; Hearn and Leon Manriquez, 2011; Zhu, 2010).

This has come in the form of the so-called 'pink tide' that has grown in Latin America under the direction of Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, Evo Morales of Bolivia, and President Lula of Brazil, their Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas gaining country membership across the continent as countries seek trade pacts that exclude the USA (ALBA, 2011).² With this has come a diversification in international partnerships and the increasing tendency of Latin American countries to look west across the Pacific for new markets for their products. Peru, Chile and most recently Costa Rica have all signed Free Trade Agreements (FTA) with the PRC as they seek to reduce their reliance on their stagnant traditional markets in North America and Europe (Zhu, 2010). However, standing in the way of access to the PRC's market for many nation-states of the Caribbean basin is their diplomatic recognition of Taiwan. Indeed, as will be seen in the chapters on El Salvador and Guatemala, the lack of diplomatic ties has proved problematic for these economies which are in great need of outside investment.

Since the advent of democratic reforms and Latin America's pink tide the issue of diplomatic recognition of the PRC or Taiwan has appeared with increased frequency in the Central American media. According to Siu Lok (2005), the first time

² The pink tide refers to the spate of left-leaning Presidents elected in Latin America since the mid 1990s (Painter, 2005). Of greatest notoriety are Chavez in Venezuela, Morales in Bolivia and Lula in Brazil, however the likes of Ortega in Nicaragua, Zelaya in Honduras and Funes in El Salvador are also examples. A common trend of the pink tide has been a rejection of the so-called 'Washington consensus' - the phrase first termed by the economist John Williamson in 1989 to describe the policy of open markets and privatisation of industry that the USA was pushing on Latin America (Williamson, 2004; Zhu, 2010) - and a diversification of their foreign relations and trade links.

the issue was raised by a national newspaper in Panama was in August 1997. A series of sketches entitled 'Goodbye Uncle Sam, Hello Uncle Chang', was run as part of a public debate on the forthcoming handover of the Panama Canal to Panamanian control, and in response to the PRC's claims that Panamanian trade with Hong Kong would be hindered following the handover of Hong Kong in July 1997 because of Panama's failure to diplomatically recognise the PRC (Biers, 2001; Siu, 2005). One of the sketches in the series, depicted at the start of this section, shows a Panamanian with two heads looking simultaneously at Chinese men at either end of a table. One of the Chinese men has a fist of dollars while the other holds a certificate presumably representing diplomatic recognition. At the same time each Chinese man is holding a saw under the table and is trying to cut the chair legs from his opponent.

According to Siu (2005), this was the first time that the issue of diplomatic recognition of China had been given serious public attention by any Central American Republic, although Nicaragua had briefly recognised the PRC between 1985 and 1990 while the left-wing Sandinistas were in power. Thus, from 1997 onwards, the growth in media attention and the attention given to the issue during successive Presidential election campaigns has likely lifted the issue into the public consciousness across the region.

Diplomatic Recognition

Contests for diplomatic recognition are generally associated with the Cold War politics of competing ideology, the PRC and Taiwan, East and West Germany and North and South Vietnam being some of the examples of divided countries who have competed internationally for diplomatic allies (see Gray, 2003; Sarotte, 2001). The latter two examples have now remerged as one nation-state, leaving only the PRC and Taiwan as today's prolific example. However, while Taiwan may be diplomatically isolated, it largely functions as a normal nation-state: it has a robust economy set around a recognised single currency, a military capacity to defend its

established territorial boundaries, an independent foreign policy, and a democratically elected government. Kolsto therefore refers to Taiwan as the 'extreme success story' (Kolsto, 2006: 728) of what are termed 'quasi-states' (Clapham, 1998: 144). Yet, barring a few exceptions, Taiwan is not permitted to participate in international organisations and forums, its segregation being assured by the power of the PRC veto. Peterson (1997) asserts that a paradox such as this is the result of a divergence between the constitutive doctrine of international law and the reality of international relations.

Those viewing [diplomatic recognition] as constitutive argued that a new state had no international legal personality in the eyes of another state until recognition, while those viewing it as declaratory argued that the legal personality existed as soon as the state existed and recognition was merely the recognising state's confirmation and pledge of respect. (Peterson, 1997: 22)

Such debates over the constitutive or declaratory recognition of nation-states can be traced to deeper theoretical underpinnings, where the institutions of a nation-state can either be considered the embodiment of human interaction within the territory or as abstract agencies in need of affirmation. Consequently, the international existence of a nation-state can either be thought of as de-facto should the jurisdictional operation of its government be a reality, or dependent on the judgement of other international actors. Discussing this issue during World War II, Brown stated:

It is a most able presentation of the theory that the act of recognition virtually constitutes the legal existence of the recognised state vis-a-vis the recognising state [...]. [Alternatively], the act of recognition is mainly declaratory in effect, a 'constatation' of an already existing international entity. (Brown, 1942: 106)

At the end of World War II the creation of the United Nations (UN) somewhat altered this quotation from Brown as it brought greater emphasis to constitutive recognition, membership of the organisation becoming synonymous with the affirmation of statehood. Thus, internationally at least, Taiwan's maintenance of formal diplomatic allies is motivated primarily by its desire to re-enter the UN, and by this logic results in their acceptance of the constitutive approach as being the overwhelming interpretation of international law on this matter (Hickey, 2007; Rockower, 2011).³ Furthermore, the PRC's use of its UN Security Council veto to block attempts by Taiwan to re-enter the UN comes from their insistence that the admission of Taiwan would in effect amount to its sovereign legitimacy. That said, international law remains contestable and Taiwan, like all nation-states, has a tendency to interpret diplomatic recognition as suits its national interests, with Taiwan's dependence on informal diplomatic relationships ensuring a dichotomous approach to diplomatic recognition.⁴

However, Rawnsley (2000 and 2003) has questioned Taiwan's need to maintain formal diplomatic relations given that they have performed adequately despite a profound lack of them for over sixty years. This may be true, however, while arguably not fatal to their political existence, the loss of formal diplomatic support would be detrimental to Taiwan's capacity to negotiate with the PRC, its bid for sovereign legitimacy, and would be domestically and internationally embarrassing for Taiwan's government (Hickey, 2007: 63). In addition, for public diplomacy it demonstrates that the audience is not necessarily overseas, but that public

³ Taiwan has not asked its formal diplomatic allies to raise the motion at the UN since the agreement of the diplomatic truce in 2008. This will be discussed in greater detail later. Taiwan currently participates in the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (APEC) under the designation 'Chinese Taipei'. It also has observer status at the World Health Organisation (WHO).

⁴ This was emphasised by Lin Kuo-chung from the Taipei Representative Office in London. During the interview Lin went to great lengths to explain that the office functioned exactly like an embassy and that the 'ambassador' was afforded similar diplomatic privileges as those from other countries. Lin also stated that Taiwan was in effect an independent country and should be seen as that under international law: "The Republic of China is an independent country, for example, we have a completely different legal system to the mainland. Our foreign policy decisions are to some extent made easier by China having consistency in theirs, the 'One China' principle. The best way for Taiwan to continue its sovereignty is to have a foreign policy geared towards keeping Taiwan strong, safe and prosperous" (Lin, 2011).

diplomacy can be performed to improve relations with people at home as well. As will be discussed in the following section, this is at odds with a lot of existing scholarship in this field.

Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy is said to be “the conduct of foreign policy through engagement with international publics” (Cull, 2008a: 19). Specifically, public diplomacy involves building relationships with foreigners that will ultimately benefit the source of such activities. This is commonly done both explicitly through the likes of international broadcasting, intercultural exchange and public rhetoric by notable individuals, and also implicitly through gestures of goodwill, incentives for economic integration and being seen to stand up for the perceived national interests of the recipient nation-state (Melissen, 2005; Snow and Taylor, 2009; Waller, 2007). Public diplomacy thereby plays a crucial role as nation-states try to improve their image and explain, justify and seek corroboration for their actions.

Focus on the term public diplomacy has grown exponentially over the last two decades. However, its premises are not new. The International Relations theorist Hans Morgenthau stated during the 1960s that, “psychological warfare or propaganda joins diplomacy and military force as the third instrument by which foreign policy tries to achieve its aims. Therefore, according to Morgenthau, regardless of the instrument employed, the ultimate aim of foreign policy is always the same: to promote one’s interests by changing the mind of the opponent” (Morgenthau, 1967: 324). As such, while not using the term, Morgenthau highlighted the importance of sound public diplomacy policy if a nation-state is to achieve its international ambitions. However, more importantly, Morgenthau is correct when he says that we should not focus so much on the ‘instruments employed’, but on the intent of the operator. Thus, it is from this perspective that public diplomacy activities should be determined, not at the institutional level where it is often the

case that delineations are purposefully made between government departments and cabinet or politburo posts that confuse our understanding. This point is fundamental to the argument being made here about public diplomacy.

The opening pages of this chapter briefly discussed the variable extent to which public diplomacy policy is allowed to stray from foreign policy. It is important to revisit and clarify this point before the discussion on public diplomacy progresses. Public diplomacy should always be thought of as an act of diplomacy. However, in recent years that crucial link has arguably deteriorated in many Western countries, with public diplomacy more resembling public relations, marketing and even so-called 'nation branding' (see Anholt, 2009). There is little doubt that this movement is partly the result of Western nation-states, and capitalist ideology as a whole, having no formidable challenge in post-Cold War international affairs. Without a defined rival with at least comparable military and economic power, these nation-states have been allowed to concentrate on generic image production rather than ensuring public diplomacy actively contributes to explicit foreign policy goals. As such, if foreign policy is more flexible, then public diplomacy also becomes more generic. The two are directly linked. Thus, it is fair to say that in more conflicting times national interests are pursued with more vigour than in periods of calm, and that national image, while still important, is relegated somewhat to make way for concerns about fundamental threats to the nation-state in question. As such, any divergence between foreign policy and public diplomacy becomes more explicit in times of hostility. Nevertheless, this research concedes that making fast distinctions between image and foreign policy is not appropriate as image is always a part of public diplomacy, and much of foreign policy in today's highly mediated world concerns the projection of image overseas, particularly when under attack. Therefore, the central argument here is that, with Taiwan having such an overwhelming, explicit and single-purpose foreign policy in Central America,

Taiwan's national interests must come first and this has the potential to make image cultivation towards the Central American public secondary.

The term 'public diplomacy' entered contemporary usage as part of an attempt by US diplomats to distance themselves from 'propaganda' and their country's international communications tasks during the Cold War. While not an overly negative concept at its inception, after two World Wars 'propaganda' came to be recognised as something that the 'enemy' did. This made it synonymous with misinformation and deceit, which in turn made it a derogatory term for future generations (Cull, 2008b; Taylor, 2003; Manheim, 1994). Hence, US diplomats coined a new term that sought to legitimise the international communications role that the likes of the United States Information Agency (USIA) would play in broadcasting overseas to their friends and foes. However, the difference between the terms was largely semantic.

Both public diplomacy and propaganda are concerned with building relationships through mass communications with target audiences and as such should be considered value neutral terms, for it is the intent of the operative that is of importance. It just so happens that to describe one's activities as propaganda would be to discredit oneself or one's institution given that it invokes linkages to deceit, deception and in some cases outright lying. Thus, for those American public diplomats, where propaganda was about lying, public diplomacy was only concerned with truth, and where propaganda deceived, public diplomacy would inform (Cull, 2008b; Taylor, 2003).

Although normally used in a political context, the performance of propaganda is by no means limited to politics. Indeed, Morgenthau simply describes it as, "the use and creation of intellectual convictions, moral valuations, and emotional preferences in support of one's own interests" (Morgenthau, 1967: 325). As such, individuals, governments, corporations, militaries, and non-governmental

organisations (NGOs) are all regularly engaged in propaganda, they just prefer to call it public relations, advertising, marketing, psychological operations, or another euphemism. In contrast, while not restricted to governments, public diplomacy is a distinctly more government-oriented concept. Yet I argue that we must look beyond explicit communications when defining both public diplomacy and propaganda, for, while less obvious and quantifiable, it is often that which is undertaken with implicit meaning that has the most success. This is a reflection of the sometimes overlooked premise that public diplomacy is an act of diplomacy. Hamilton and Langhorne define diplomacy as: “the peaceful conduct of relations amongst political entities, their principals and accredited agents” (Hamilton and Langhorne, 1995: 1), although I would argue that diplomacy is also an essential part of conflict resolution and so can be used amidst non-peaceful actions (as can public diplomacy). Diplomacy remains the prerogative of governments and relations occur at their facilitation or orchestration. Thus, despite increasing international corporate and individual interaction as a result of advances in communications and transport technology, the nation-state remains the primary facilitator on the international stage. Consequently, for an act to be considered public diplomacy it must originate from government directives and involve engagement with foreign publics. Beyond this however, the methods by which public diplomacy can be carried are open to interpretation by the state in question.

One of those involved in the formulation of United States public diplomacy policy was Edmond Gullion from The Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy at Tufts University. His definition of the term remains the best and is still widely quoted:

Public diplomacy... deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with another; the reporting of foreign

affairs and its impact on the policy; communications between those whose job is communication, as diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the process of intercultural communications (Gullion, 1965).

This definition highlights the governmental and non-governmental possibilities that public diplomacy has to engage and is necessarily broad in its spectrum so as to allow for divergence between the explicit and the implicit. However, it has been the reality for researchers that it is the areas where a government extends greatest control and which are most explicit that are easier to research because of the laws governing public transparency which are not found in the interaction of non-governmental actors. Thus, where a government works with a subsidiary agency there is less guarantee of such access, and where public diplomacy is implicit the intent is less easy to define. What is more, public diplomacy has come to be identified by academics and practitioners alike as the prerogative of the government institutions responsible for international communications, education and cultural diplomacy, rather than assessing activities from the recipients' point of view.

Applying what is effectively an American term with predominantly American-based scholarship to the international affairs of the PRC and Taiwan is somewhat complex, not least because clear conceptual boundaries have already been established by those who have performed research. Indeed as was demonstrated before, the majority of renowned studies in this field concern the policies of the United States (for example, Cull, 2008b; Manheim, 1994; McEvoy-Levy, 2001; Tuch, 1990), with public diplomacy being indefatigably associated with international broadcasting and cultural diplomacy because this has been the most accessible parts of US government methodology for researchers. Moreover, studies which have sought to broaden research to other regions of the world have consistently portrayed the US-style as the yardstick to measure others (on East Asia see, d'Hooghe, 2005 and 2008; Wang, 2008). While this is not necessarily problematic, as McEvoy-Levy (2001) discusses, the US method of performing public diplomacy is very much a

product of 'American exceptionalism' and not best suited to replication. Therefore, beyond concerns over the rationale of practitioners who follow such an approach, analysis under such criterion limits the conceptual progression of public diplomacy as it fails to take into account cultural differences in practice, and risks not evaluating activities that a nation-state performs simply because they are alternative to familiar methods that have been documented elsewhere.

In part, this deficiency has been the outcome of a preference to research defined public diplomacy institutions, what Li calls the "resource-based approach" (Li, 2009: 4), rather than examining activities in target countries which fit the definition of public diplomacy, or what can be called the objective-based approach. The impact of the resource-based approach's dominance on public diplomacy research is best explained through the analogy of the United States' Agency for International Development (USAID) who were outside the recognised US 'public diplomacy system' until 2003 (Waller, 2007). Edward Djerejian, Chairman of an independent panel tasked with investigating USAID, stated:

When we asked the Administrator [of USAID] how much of his budget of US\$13billion goes to public diplomacy, he answered, "Almost none." He explained that AID is generally prohibited from using program funds to disseminate information about its activities [...]. But, in a broad sense, a great deal of AID's work is public diplomacy at its best. AID's programs, in the words of one of its top officials, are "American values in action" (Djerejian [2003], cited in Waller, 2007: 203).

Thus, USAID did not consider their tasks to be public diplomacy because their organisation sat outside what the US government had classified as its public diplomacy apparatus (resources largely focuses on information provision and cultural diplomacy), and this in turn limited the conceptualisation of public diplomacy by USAID staff. However, as Djerejian underlines, if one looks at it from

the objective-based approach, the contribution of USAID is very valuable given the opportunity its activities present to implicitly build sentiment with foreign publics. Thus, an overly-institutional focus can result in a fictional demarcation of public diplomacy activities which fails to consider public diplomacy from the recipients' points-of-view.

Of greater significance is that academia has made little attempt to challenge this approach. Thus, while research into institutions is of course important to furthering our understanding of public diplomacy's relationship with the political establishment and beyond, it is by research at 'point of reception' in target countries that one has the clearest visibility of the objectives and therefore the best overall picture of the techniques being used by the source to execute strategy. This is especially important if explicit and implicit communication is considered to be public diplomacy. Hence, it is from this point of reception that the decision as to what is and what is not public diplomacy should be made. As such, this thesis has gone beyond public diplomacy's most common research method and used ethnographic methods when travelling to numerous countries to analyse the work of public diplomats on the ground.

Consequently, it can be argued that public diplomacy should be seen as an umbrella term inclusive of any activity that fits the criteria of having been instigated by a foreign government, directed towards a foreign public, and affiliated to the foreign policy of the source. It is not therefore fitting to classify activities as public diplomacy in an outright sense, as one must look at the specifics of it to make this determination. What is more, activities that are frequently referred to as economic diplomacy or military diplomacy can also be classified as public diplomacy, because, while bespoke to certain social groups, they can still involve government orchestrated activities closely linked to foreign policy and engaging with parts of a foreign public. The best example of this, in the context of Central America, is the illustration Djerejian gave earlier regarding development assistance. Most

governments separate their development assistance ministries from their foreign offices (personnel, budget and office location), and would have their publics believe that clear distinctions are made in the policies and priorities of each. As such, development assistance is rarely considered to be public diplomacy such is the institutional focus of research in this field. Yet some development assistance most certainly fits the definition of public diplomacy, and should be considered in an analysis. This is particularly the case when analysing developed world public diplomacy to the underdeveloped world.

On studying the role of the PRC in Africa, Brautigam writes that, “China gives aid for three reasons: strategic diplomacy, commercial benefit, and as a reflection of its society’s ideologies and values [...]. The broad brushstrokes of foreign aid policy are set by political leaders who shape aid as one of many instruments of foreign policy” (Brautigam, 2009: 15). Thus we see clearly that development assistance activities have the potential to be classified as public diplomacy. However, they have to be government orchestrated, involve engagement with a foreign public in some capacity, and broadly follow the lines of foreign policy of the source government. As we will see in the case of the PRC and Taiwan in Central America, almost all of the development assistance can be classified as public diplomacy. For Taiwan, this is confirmed by the fact that the Taiwanese government’s entire presence in the region is based on diplomatic interests. Whereas on the PRC Brautigam writes:

Compared with the West and even Japan, societal interest groups figure much less as a factor in shaping China’s aid. Private and semi-private commercial interests are a growing factor in the determination of Chinese assistance, particularly at the provincial levels. However, in China, state interests overwhelm the social influences on aid (Brautigam, 2009: 16).

This again confirms the strategic international political focus of development assistance activities, and it is something that the chapter will return to in the section on the PRC and Taiwan in Africa.

Moving the discussion forward, Szalay explains that there are problems of “semantic and psycho-cultural differences” in understandings of terminology (Szalay, 1981: 134). This can be applied to public diplomacy’s heritage as an alternative term for propaganda. While in the English language the need for the term public diplomacy grew from the negative connotations that came to discredit propaganda, in Mandarin this has not occurred. Brady and Wang (2009) assert that the closest English term to the Chinese understanding of propaganda (*xuanchuan*) is publicity, and that the word does not have the same negative connotations in Mandarin as it does in English. However, as Zappone (2012) rightly points out, this difference is more cultural than linguistic, with propaganda being a more accepted part of Communist societies. What is more, public diplomacy (*gongzhong waijiao*) is a new concept for Chinese political science with a heavily disputed interpretation which is partly the result of its importation from the West, but also the lack of need for a differentiator from propaganda (see Zappone, 2012).

Related to this is the tendency to consider public diplomacy solely as international communications, when the line between what is domestic and what is international has become increasingly blurred. As such, there is a small but growing band of literature which considers public diplomacy to have a domestic and an international focus (see Barr, 2012; Batora, 2006; Heselton, 2011; Vickers, 2004). This however represents a break from the conceptualisation of public diplomacy adhered to by the majority of mainly Anglo-American scholars who tend to emphasis only its international role (Cull, 2008b; Manheim, 1994; McEvoy – Levy; 2001; Tuch, 1990). For them, these assertions are confirmed by the likes of the Smith-Mundt Act of 1948 in the USA which has historically prevented, “transparency, oversight, and accountability of U.S. international broadcasting and public diplomacy by the public

and Congress" (Armstrong, 2012), and the institutional, financial and formerly geographical separation of the BBC World Service at Bush House in Central London from the rest of the BBC at Television Centre in Wood Lane. Thus, whether intentional or not, efforts have been made in some countries to limit the public's ability to observe the government's public diplomacy overseas.

Conversely, it can be argued that the Chinese and Taiwanese practice of public diplomacy incorporates the domestic audience as well as the one abroad. In the case of the PRC, Zhao states:

How to restore the legitimacy of the communist regime and build a broadly based national support became the most serious challenge to the post-Tiananmen leadership. The instrumentality of nationalism was discovered. Deng Xiaoping and his successors, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, began to wrap themselves in the banner of nationalism, which, they found, remained a most reliable claim to the Chinese people's loyalty and the only important value shared by both the regime and its critics [...]. Its nationalist credential has been bolstered in the fighting against Western sanctions and for China's entry into the WTO, stopping Taiwan independence, and winning the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing (Zhao, 2008: 4).

Thus, such key public diplomacy events as the Olympic Games have also been attempts by the government to generate approval from their own people and increase the confidence of the public via the utilisation of nationalism. Indeed, as the quotation suggests, if we are to trace the origins of the CCP's contemporary attempts to nurture better foreign and domestic relations then we should start with the quashing of protesters at Tiananmen Square in Beijing during June 1989, and the iconic images that appeared around the world in the aftermath (Zhu, 2010: 1). After considerable international optimism during the late 1970s and 1980s that the PRC was finally coming out of its self-imposed exile, the widespread international

condemnation and sanctions that the Tiananmen Square incident drew were indicative of the caution with which nation-states needed to approach a still potentially volatile PRC (Naisbitt and Naisbitt, 2010). Thus, the events at Tiananmen Square served to convince the Chinese government that incidents like this should be avoided at all costs in the future. As Zhu notes, if the PRC wanted to, “secure energy and commodity resources, to search for new markets for Chinese exports and investment, to isolate Taiwan internationally and to project China’s image as a responsible and peaceful power” (Zhu, 2010: 6) (the four pillars of the PRC’s foreign policy) then incidents like Tiananmen Square could not be allowed to happen again. Hence, in the years following 1989 many of the older members of the CCP’s politburo would be retired and replaced by a younger and more image-conscious generation of politicians, thus beginning the PRC’s drive towards domestic and international credibility.

The domestic result of this was that the term ‘soft power’ became “one of the most frequently used phrases among political leaders, leading academics, and journalists” (Li, 2010: 1), and it can be said that this produced in the Chinese public a consciousness of the need to promote a positive image of their country to the rest of the world (Leonard, 2008; Wang, 2011). The Chinese have become deeply enamoured with the term in the belief that it complements the values of ‘peaceful coexistence’ that the PRC should project as it develops into a world power (Kurlantzick, 2007; Li, 2009; Wang, 2008). Therefore, while the emphasis on the phrase initially came from the establishment, efforts to improve Chinese soft power have been met with widespread approval by the public because they form part of the drive to re-establish the power and national self-confidence of China that had deteriorated after centuries of foreign occupation and misguided home rule (Leonard, 2008; Naisbitt and Naisbitt, 2010; Wang, 2008). Wang Jian offers valuable insight on this issue:

China's international image is a key anchor of contemporary Chinese national identity. Nowadays, the Chinese public are paying greater attention to how their country is perceived and judged overseas. For them, it is question of collective identity, and arguably China's "face". How the Chinese leadership handles China's image abroad has serious consequences for its credibility and legitimacy at home (Wang, 2011).

Perhaps, nowhere else in the world has soft power been as widely discussed, embraced, and appropriated as in the PRC. Its domestic dimension is manifested by the inclusion in this endeavour of not only cultural development within the country, but also the home public as evaluators of international conduct. Some academics studying the PRC have therefore spoken not of China's soft power but of its 'soft use of power' as the favoured interpretation of its statesmen (Li, 2009; Kurlantzick, 2009). Thus, the PRC's soft use of power reflects both its domestic and international ambitions, and therefore also public diplomacy's domestic role.⁵

The domestic role of public diplomacy can also be seen in Taiwan where the government has concerns over its domestic and international legitimacy. Rockower's statement that Taiwan must "conduct public diplomacy not only as a means of promotion, but also as a means of ensuring its diplomatic survival" (Rockower, 2011: 109) was noted at the beginning of the chapter. So while on one level Rawnsley (2000) is correct when he writes that Taiwan's formal diplomatic relations have become somewhat unnecessary, perhaps the full value of its public diplomacy can be seen when we examine the social contract between government and citizen in Taiwan. As an island on the edge of a major ocean, Taiwan has been exposed to more widespread foreign influence than the mainland, resulting in concerns over

⁵ It is important to note the differentiation between the terms soft power and public diplomacy. Soft power is a rather vague catch-all term that can mean anything that is not 'hard power' (military power, economic sanctions etc.) in international relations. Soft power is also not a term specific to political communications as it can be bestowed upon a benign entity. Public diplomacy is therefore one method by which a government can proactively seek to gain more soft power, yet public diplomacy should not be thought of as exclusively a tool for soft power generation.

national self-confidence originating not so much from the legacy of foreign rule and dynastic ineffectiveness as it has in the PRC (although this undoubtedly plays a part), but from the more modern predicament of cross-strait tensions, exclusion from most international governmental organisations, the legacy of martial law under KMT authoritarian rule, and the inability of the exiled population to return permanently to their ancestral homes on the mainland (Jacobs, 2005). As such, to understand how and why Taiwan's public diplomats present their country abroad in the manner that they do, one must look to the domestic political situation in Taiwan, and its relations with the PRC, for answers.

The relationship between government and citizen in Taiwan is illustrated well by the way Taiwan trains its public diplomats. Constructed around founder of the ROC Sun Yat-sen's guiding philosophy of, "only if we rescue the weak and lift up the fallen will we be carrying out the divine obligation of our nation" (Sun, 1924, cited in Ansprenger, 1989: 304), both the KMT, and DPP when in power, have emphasised Taiwan's moral obligation to assist the needy abroad (Mattlin, 2011). Additionally, Sun's famous phrase was cited by many of the Taiwanese interviewees for this research as both a national and personal ideology behind their work in Central America. However, it can be argued that the emphasis on this in training for the diplomatic corps is more about Taiwan's bid to be domestically seen as a responsible international actor than it is a genuine desire to assist worse off foreigners. This use of propaganda also tells us a lot about the relationship between Taipei and its own diplomats.

However, we should not consider the PRC or Taiwan to be standout examples of this practice, for a government's utilisation of the curious and the compassionate amongst its citizens as informal public diplomats has a long history. On the PRC in Africa, Brautigam writes:

They bring aid workers: vocational teachers, agricultural specialists, water engineers, youth volunteers and others who have come, as so many from the West have done, out of curiosity, a sense of adventure, or a desire to help the poor (Brautigam, 2009: 310).

As such, when considering the work of the PRC and Taiwan in Central America, we should always do so within in the broad spectrum of public diplomacy worldwide and not see their engagement as anything other than a part of the main foreign policy framework, despite the use of doubtlessly compassionate individuals to undertake tasks. The work of the PRC and Taiwan in Africa is engaged with in more detail later in this chapter.

Thus, in both the case of the PRC and of Taiwan, we see governments performing public diplomacy while major traumas from the nation-state's modern history remain at least partly unresolved. This strains the social contract between government and citizen to the point that the regime is tolerated as standards of living improve but such toleration can easily be revoked if the country falls on harder times. Compare this to the countries of North America or Western Europe where, while the people may protest over certain issues, the government's fundamental right to rule is rarely an issue. As such, we see public diplomacy as part of a government's attempt to build legitimacy with its own people.

Finally, this discussion of public diplomacy and the domestic audience engages the work of theorists of cross-cultural dialogue. Cohen (1997), Hall (1989) and Holfstede (2001) highlight a heightened use of nonverbal and implicit communication in so called 'high-context' societies such as those found in China and Taiwan. As Cohen states, "where as the burden of meaning in low-context cultures is transmitted through the medium of words, high-context cultures are particularly sensitive to sign and symbol" (Cohen, 1997: 154). While the delineation between the two cultures is perhaps not as clear-cut in practice as Cohen proclaims, that it is the

intent of the Chinese and Taiwanese governments to communicate in such a way remains a viable argument. That said, given that public diplomacy deals with communications to audiences of potentially different inclinations, we must consider this argument limited in scope. Furthermore, it is the belief of this research that, rather than cultural heritage, it is the circumstances that the nation-state finds itself in internationally and domestically that are most likely to determine foreign policy output.

Nevertheless, given that this thesis considers public diplomacy to also have a domestic angle, the chapters which follow make the distinction between implicit and explicit styles of communication, and an attempt has been made to highlight the potential for domestic consumption where plausible. Thus, to reach foreigners the PRC and Taiwan have been using more explicit styles of communication such as international broadcasting since the 1960s (Gilbert, 1963; Strauss, 2009; Taylor, 2009b; Yu, 1963), and in recent years have developed increasingly sophisticated practices of international dialogue as international image has become more important (Rawnsley, 2009; Zhu, 2010). However, ultimately it is in the more implicit styles such as development assistance and medical diplomacy that some of the deductions regarding domestic consumption can be made.

In conclusion to this section, public diplomacy sits amongst a plethora of other mass communications terms, all of which mean approximately the same thing. Namely, to intentionally manipulate the audience to behave in a desired way. That such a surplus of terms has emerged reflects the extent to which organisations and individuals have gone to mask that they are involved in the propaganda industry, such are the negative connotations associated with the word. Public diplomacy is an umbrella term that describes a government's engagement with foreign publics in line with its larger foreign policy goals. As such, public diplomacy is a term without portfolio: activities should not be thought of as public diplomacy activities in their own right but as potential contributors to the public diplomacy agenda of the source

should their conduct satisfy the criteria. Therefore, public diplomacy can involve elements of cultural, economic, educational, environmental, medical, military, political and other kinds of diplomacy, the crucial factor being the ability to highlight the public aspect of the activity in question. This is best determined at point-of-reception in foreign countries rather than in the corridors of power in the source country's capital city. Finally, how public diplomacy behaves towards foreign publics is largely determined by the foreign policy of the source. Indeed, while intercultural communications scholars insist that pronounced differences exist in how communications are used across regions, the use of implicit and explicit methods being one such variance, this is perhaps not as discernible as they make out. As the case of the PRC and Taiwan will go on to demonstrate, one must look more at the specific issues encountered by a country's international relations and also its domestic experiences to explain its public diplomacy policy.

The PRC and Taiwan in Africa

Part of the reason for this thesis is the dearth of information on China – Central America relations. However, the extensive amount that does exist on China – Africa relations is valuable as it helps to position the work of the PRC and Taiwan in Central America in global context, but also allows greater depth to conclusions on the significance of such actions for these countries (on Africa see Alden et al, 2008; Ampiah and Naidu, 2008; Brautigam, 2009; Le Pere, 2008; Strauss 2009; Taylor 1998, 2002 and 2009). As a result, the inclusion of Africa literature adds weight to the overall argument of the thesis regarding the role of public diplomacy in PRC – Taiwan relations generally, as it takes the evidence beyond the confines of Central America where the Taiwan factor is of elevated prominence to the PRC's foreign policy.⁶ Therefore, this section documents some of the major issues discussed by the

⁶ in Africa the PRC is the incumbent in all but four nation-states – Burkina Faso, San Tome and Principe, Swaziland, and The Gambia.

academic literature on China – Africa relations and provides information on how they will assist the thesis moving forward.

On Africa, Alden et al write that, “China’s relations with Africa are the most important dynamic of the continent since the end of the Cold War” (Alden et al, 2008: 1). They go on to say:

The ideological disagreements of the Cold War have been superseded by economic competition and political differences, as China participates in the global economy and pursues better trade terms rather than an alternative socialist vision [...]. Beijing’s engagement appears to be predicated upon a longer term timeframe and driven by economic diplomacy rather than the ambitious ideology of the past (Alden et al, 2008: 6).

Thus, what motivates the PRC to be in Africa has changed as the PRC has become an altogether different international player since Deng Xiaoping’s reforms, although as we will come to see, how it conducts itself is not so different from the pre-Deng era. What is more, while economics may be the biggest factor in determining the PRC’s activities in Africa now, Brautigam (2009) claims that the PRC’s initial post-Cold War surge in Africa was more for political reasons than economic ones. She notes that the PRC’s international aid rose by 68% in 1990, according to official sources, with much of this attributed to Africa (Brautigam, 2009: 67). This was in reaction to the international fallout from the Tiananmen Square massacre of June 1989, after which several states from Africa, Oceania, Latin America and the Caribbean derecognised Beijing in favour of diplomatic relations with Taipei.⁷ As I argue in the Costa Rica chapter, domestic factors and lobbying from the opposition in Taiwan must be taken into consideration when discussing a nation-state’s decision to move its embassy across the Taiwan Strait. However, for

⁷ Bahamas (1989), Central African Republic (1991), Grenada (1989), Guinea-Bissau (1990), Lesotho (1990), Liberia (1989), and Nicaragua (1990).

such a swing to occur so soon after this critical event in modern Chinese history, the extent of its influence should not be under-estimated.

The PRC and Taiwan began development assistance projects to Africa in the mid-1950s. Le Pere (2008) writes that it was the Bandung Conference in Indonesia in 1955 between a host of Asian and newly-independent African states that instigated the push by the PRC (and shortly after, Taiwan) towards the continent. This was largely part of Beijing's attempt to join the UN but it also reflected Beijing's desire to become the leader of the non-aligned group of states that was developing during the Cold War. Le Pere writes that Beijing's engagement consisted of,

[...] agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries, textiles and other light industries, energy, transportation, broadcasting and communication, water conservation, public and civil construction, education and health. Some of the flagship projects included the 1860km Tanzania – Zambia Railway (TAZARA), the Port of the Friendship in Mauritania, the 122km Canal of Friendship in Tunisia, the International Convention Centre in Cairo, and an 80,000 capacity stadium in Kinshasa [...]

While its military programme remains controversial and functions under a penumbra of secrecy, starting in the 1980s and then accelerating in the 1990s, China has also provided non-military technical assistance, financial aid and training to many countries (Le Pere, 2008: 23).

What will become striking to the reader as they move through the thesis is the consistency in the engagement of the PRC and Taiwan with the underdeveloped world over time. As such, all of the activities that will be discussed in the context of the PRC and Taiwan in Central America can also be found in Africa. As such, while the PRC's role in the world has changed substantially as it has risen to superpower status, and Taiwan has had to deal with this, the activities that they perform and the rhetoric that is disseminated has maintained many consistencies (Strauss, 2009).

Taiwan's activities in Africa can be traced to 1961 and the inauguration of Operation Vanguard. Taiwanese historian Hsieh Chiao-Chiao provides some interesting information: "[Operation Vanguard] consisted of helping the rural population to increase their agricultural production, to work to improve their lot and to build up their self-confidence through self-reliance" (Hsieh, 1985: 181). "For instance, model villages financed by Taiwan were established to help local peasants start a new life as settled farmers working small land-holdings under the supervision of technicians from Taiwan, not only for self-sufficiency but also to produce surplus for sale" (Hsieh, 1985: 187). Thus, we can see an element of capitalist agenda in the workings of Taiwan, as they sought to stave off a communist challenge in Africa and other parts of the underdeveloped world. This is made all the more apparent by their choice of the word 'vanguard': a military term meaning to be at the front of an attack against an enemy. Moreover, Anderson and Anderson write that, "the much-hailed Taiwanese missions to Africa to teach farmers better agricultural practices were actually an American program, paid for by Counterpart funds in the American Embassy [in Taipei]" (Anderson and Anderson, 1986: 55). Complementing this development assistance work was international broadcasting and military exchanges (Gilbert, 1965; Yu, 1965). Therefore, Taiwan's activities in Africa were part of its statecraft and were part of a strategic international alliance against Communism. That these development assistance projects were so entwined with Taiwan's foreign policy adds weight to the decision to use the public diplomacy frame for these activities and this thesis. Taiwan's strategic international alliance against Communism will be revisited in the chapters on El Salvador and Guatemala.

Today, the legacy of Operation Vanguard remains steadfast. The modern Taiwan International Cooperation Development Fund (ICDF) as it is now known has expanded Taiwan's public diplomacy operations from mainly agriculture to also include medical missions, aquaculture (the farming of marine life for human

consumption) and handicrafts. What is more, as this research will attest, Taiwan has moved away from its focus on the peasantry and today spends the majority of its time helping commercial farmers and business owners grow their profits. One can argue that this is the result of the dissipation of the perceived communist threat from the peasantry of the underdeveloped world.

However, it was Japan that was the forbearer of the kind of development assistance we see from the PRC and Taiwan today. In recent years both the PRC and Taiwan have taken many of the methods used by Japan in the underdeveloped world for decades and implemented their own version. In the case of Taiwan, this is most visible in the style of its agricultural and fish farming assistance, the merits of which will be discussed at length in the chapters on El Salvador and Guatemala. Whereas for the PRC it has come in the form of the so-called 'win-win' approach, as Brautigam explains in length:

China's use of Huawei Telecoms (state-owned) and loans from Eximbank (also state-owned) are a similar system to the request-based aid system developed decades ago by Japan (Brautigam, 2009: 140).

[The PRC's] novel approach in Angola, the Congo, and elsewhere applies the system China learned from Japan: using very large credits, at competitive market rates, tied to Chinese machinery, equipment and construction services, with repayment in oil, or other resources. This is the essence of the win-win approach (Brautigam, 2009: 307).

Thus, while the PRC and Taiwan have been innovative to some extent, much of what they do now is copied from elsewhere, mainly, but not exclusively from their Asian neighbour.

However, while there have always been similarities in the project areas covered by Taiwan and the PRC due to the needs of Africa after the colonial vacuum, during the Cold War their emphases were markedly different, with much of this down to

ideological stance. However, in recent years it is fair to say that their approaches have become more similar and there are three related factors to this: the first is the use of Japan as a role model; the second is that Beijing is now completely dominant in Africa where Taiwan is only diplomatically recognised by four very small nation-states. With the Taiwan threat having dissipated, both can allow more flexibility to do what works best for themselves and for their respective allies, without the distraction of the other; the third and final related point is that what both perceive Africa to need (and what they are prepared to give) has become similar. This is primarily due to Beijing's changing emphasis.

Beyond this, Alden et al (2008) state that in Africa at least, part of the PRC's presence on the continent is its larger strategic competition with Japan. They cite Beijing's opposition to Japan's bid to become a UN Security Council member as the primary motivation and highlight their lobbying against the Japan vote at the 2005 Asia – Africa Summit as evidence of this (Alden et al, 2008: 8). Thus, adoption of Japanese methods may well be part of growing PRC – Japan competition in Africa such has been Taiwan's declining importance. This fits with academic literature from the southern cone of Latin America where Japan has also had considerable development assistance presence (Dosch, 2010; Ellis, 2009). As such, while in Central America it is the Taiwan factor that primarily motivates the PRC, where possible this research has noted the presence of Japan in the case studies. For it may be that if the Taiwan issue dissipates then other rivals, including Japan and the USA, may come to motivate the PRC's Central American presence in the future.

Much of the literature on China-Africa relations asks the question of whether the PRC's growing engagement with the underdeveloped world will be positive or negative for those countries. Positive in the sense that the PRC is a partner to the alleviation of poverty, or negative in the sense that the PRC is a new coloniser or even a competitor to these countries as both look to export their products (for a good overview of this debate see Ampiah and Naidu, 2008). This debate is not really of

interest to the thesis as it is mainly concerned with understanding what the events to be discussed mean for the PRC and Taiwan as opposed to their recipients.

Nevertheless, it is worthwhile my noting of the work of Habib on Africa, who writes that, "Ultimately, it would prudent for advocates of African development (from all sides) to recognise that all countries involved in Africa are here to advance their own national interests, and any harbouring of contrary illusions can only result in future disappointment" (Habib, 2008: 268). This quotation has been cited for two reasons: firstly, because it is important to distinguish that when this thesis evaluates public diplomacy performance in the coming chapters, it is not in the sense that the public diplomacy has a noble cause or has worked to the betterment of the recipient state, but that public diplomacy has ultimately served the interests of the source well. As was made clear before in the section on public diplomacy, it is my believe, as it clearly would be of Habib too, that public diplomacy is always ultimately concerned with the prosperity of its source, beyond that of its recipient, and should not be separated from the rest of a nation-state's diplomatic conduct and foreign policy; and secondly, because some interviewees for this research stated that they were motivated to come to Central America and other underdeveloped countries by compassion for the poor and the alleviation of poverty. Indeed, while there should be little doubt as to their altruism, we must recognise that they are also the recipients of their government's public diplomacy.

This brings the literature on China – Africa relations to its final point, that of poverty reduction. As discussed above, much of the academic literature on this topic poses the question of whether or not the PRC's activities in Africa will lead to poverty reduction on the continent. In so doing, many of the texts address the issue with comparisons to the actions of Western countries both colonially and post-colonially, which the majority see as having been wholly negative (Habib, 2008: 267). This thesis poses no such question, and considers the concept of 'poverty reduction' to be fundamentally flawed. For this researcher poverty is found not so much in

statistics but in the mind. As such, it is a term that has been defined by those who have 'wealth', poverty's antonym, and consider others to be poor. The terms are relative to one another and thus to speak of poverty reduction one must also speak of wealth reduction, for one is only in poverty if another has wealth. It is therefore double-speak for the government of a wealthy country to speak of poverty reduction while simultaneously seeking exponential growth for itself against its main economic rivals. On this topic Brautigam writes, "China's rise in Africa is cause for some concern, but it need not evoke the level of fear and alarm raised by some who have condemned China's aid and engagement as destabilising, bad for governance and unlikely to end poverty" (Brautigam, 2009: 307). Thus, to speak of an end to poverty in Africa or anywhere else is to fail to understand the term.

Instead, while much of the chapters of this thesis are concerned with projects commonly associated with poverty reduction, for example development assistance, my analysis will not discuss the projects within this frame. This is because the application of a public diplomacy framework re-evaluates the projects as tools of statecraft and therefore primarily concerned with the fortunes of the source government. This is inline with the previous discussion on public diplomacy. Beyond this section on China – Africa relations, literature and examples of Taiwan and the PRC's activities in Africa will be used throughout the chapters to provide perspective and to contextualise the activities that are being discussed in Central America. As a result, it will be demonstrated that although the Taiwan factor is elevated in Central America, both the PRC and Taiwan are behaving in ways not dissimilar to their actions in other parts of the underdeveloped world. As such, many of the reasons for why they behave in such a way can be found in the social, economic and political histories of these countries, rather than as a consequence of any needs analysis of the underdeveloped world.

Central America, China and its Public Diplomacy: A History

It is worthwhile spending some time discussing the somewhat limited history of Chinese engagement with Latin America and the Caribbean basin in particular. This will allow a reader lacking familiarity with Central America greater perspective on the events to be discussed in each chapter. In doing so, more extensive coverage will be given to events from 1882 onwards as the Chinese Exclusion Act of that year in the USA led to the dilution of the Chinese populations from northern Mexico and Cuba (Mao et al, 2011; Romero, 2010). Thus, instead of trying to gain entry to the USA, Latin America saw an increase in permanent Chinese communities in the years that followed.

China in Latin America

Aside from the rather sceptical claims of PRC politicians and the largely discredited Western historian Gavin Menzies (2002)⁸ that Admiral Zheng He landed in the Americas in 1421, seven decades before the voyage of Columbus, it is widely established that the first Chinese communities on the Americas landmass coincided with the trade of the Manila galleons (Hearn and Leon-Manriquez, 2011). As Julia Strauss notes however, the fascination of PRC leadership with the Zheng He story, and their selective blindness to its failure to stand up to critical examination, is part of a craving for recognition of China as a great nation. Writing on Chinese involvement in Africa, Strauss comments:

Accounts of the Zheng He voyages invariably distinguish the mutual curiosity, trade and impermanence of the Chinese voyagers who left Africa after a brief period, and European colonizers who arrived shortly afterwards and remained as colonial dominators. [...] These links are condensed into a

⁸ Historian Evelyn Hu-De Hart provides a somewhat satirical commentary on the assertions of Menzies: "I don't have any grand thesis about discoveries to rival Menzies' fertile and, some would say, fervid imagination. I will not succumb to flights of fancy as – given my occupation as a professional historian – I do not have the freedom to imagine and invent, to speculate freely and extrapolate as widely as others do." (Hu-De Hart, 2007: 114)

grand teleological march of the consolidation of international respectability and wider formal recognition of the PRC (Strauss, 2009: 781).

In addition, as part of his argument for El Salvador's recognition of the PRC, Manuel Flores, head of the Association of Salvadoran Friendship with China (AASC), stated: "you know, before Columbus came to the Americas, Chang Ho (Zheng He) came to the Americas to trade" (Flores, 2011). The focus of some interviewees on this was therefore an attempt to convey a degree of absurdity over Central America's lack of formal relations with the PRC. The reality however is that the events of this period, actual or fictitious, left no solid trace of influence on Central American society and it would not be until the late 19th century that the Chinese would leave a defined footprint on Central America. This period of history therefore requires no further discussion.

Late 19th and Early 20th Century Engagement

While signs of a Chinese presence were apparent in late 16th century Mexico as a result of the Manila – Acapulco trade route, at a sailing frequency of once or twice a year the extent of the interaction was limited.⁹ Indeed, the route was maintained from 1565 until 1815 when the Spanish territories of Latin America gained independence after the Iberian Peninsula War (1808 – 1814) (Chasteen, 2011). These galleons, mostly carrying silver from the vast deposits that were being mined in Latin America and returning with spices and textiles from the Orient do however represent the first meaningful engagement between Latin America and Eastern Asia (Dosch, 2010). That said, it was not until the California Gold Rush that the Chinese arrived in the Americas in any substantial numbers.

⁹ Romero documents how, as a result of this trade, a number of Chinese established themselves as merchants, barbers or fishermen in colonial Mexico (Romero, 2010: 12). So much so that the established barbers of Mexico City protested against the over-competitive zeal of their Chinese rivals in 1635 (Siu, 2005; Romero, 2010; Hu-De Hart, 2007)

With any mass human migration there are always 'push' and 'pull' factors. Indeed, it was rapid population growth, western imperialism, civic rebellion, land disputes and natural disaster, which pressurised many Chinese from Guangdong, Fujian and other areas of southern China to leave their homeland in search of opportunities overseas in the second half of the 19th century. Meanwhile, in the United States unhappiness at the continuation of the African slave trade, and its eventual abolition in 1865, had left a shortfall in the labour market.

Drawn by the allure of the California gold rush and employment opportunities in railroad construction, industry, and agriculture, one important stream of more than 300,000 Cantonese immigrants journeyed to the United States between the years of 1848 and 1882. Following passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which severely restricted Chinese immigration to the United States, many Chinese emigrants set their sights on Mexico as a new land of economic opportunity. (Romero, 2010: 28)

The goal for most of these early migrant workers was entry into the United States and so the greatest concentrations of Chinese were in northern Mexico and Cuba. However, with the gold rush and the subsequent need for maritime transportation to get around the USA's somewhat lawless centre, Chinese migrants made their way into Central America. Siu Lok, in her research on the history of Chinese diaspora in Panama, chronicles the first known instance of Chinese labourers in what was then the colony of New Granada, namely a group of 705 men who arrived to assist in the construction of the Panama trans-isthmian railroad in 1854 (Siu, 2005: 38).¹⁰ However, 500 would die in the first six months as a result of the harsh, disease-infested conditions of this then frontier land. Additionally, 800 Chinese immigrants arrived in Costa Rica around 1872 to work on the Atlantic

¹⁰ New Granada was the name of the Spanish Viceroyalty that stretched from the shores of Lake Nicaragua, through Costa Rica, Panama, and south into modern day Colombia and Venezuela. Its administrative capital was Bogota.

railroad, and this was on top of the 100 or so Chinese working on a plantation on the Pacific coast from 1855 onwards (Piedra, 2011).

Smaller numbers of Chinese would arrive from the 1870s onwards to work on the plantations of the United Fruit Company which, by the turn of the 20th century, had ports scattered up the Caribbean Coast from Panama to Guatemala (Kinzer and Schlesinger, 1999: 66; Siu, 2005: 39). However, it was the introduction of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 in the USA that dissipated this migrant population from the Mexican border and acted as a catalyst for Chinese presence in other areas of the Americas (Mon, cited in Siu, 2005: 219). From this year on, Chinese communities began to develop in most of the major cities of Central America, with the migrants focusing their enterprise towards restaurants, barbers shops, the grocery and convenience store industry, and mercantile importing from Asia, the legacy of which remains steadfast today.

This emergence of a Chinese Diaspora in Central America, and in particular their origin from Southern China, is of interest to this research. That they came from Guangdong, Fujian, Guangxi and even Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau is relevant because, as Siu (2005) argues, it continues to influence the ideology of the communities today. These southern provinces and territories, a considerable distance, and culturally and linguistically distinct from Beijing, have periodically sought varying degrees of secession from the capital (Marks, 1998). Thus, as will be seen in the chapter on Costa Rica, the PRC's attempted politicisation of the embassies relationship with the Diaspora has been met with some resistance from the community.

The Cold War Years and Beyond

The effects of the Chinese civil war not ending in the disintegration of one or the other side have been far reaching, for since this period, the government of almost every nation-state has been forced to make a decision on their China policy between

diplomatically recognising the People's Republic of China (PRC) or the Republic of China (ROC/Taiwan). In the 1950s and 1960s the priority for both Beijing and Taipei was to secure recognition from Asian states and the newly independent states of Africa (Alden, 2008; Ampiah and Naidu, 2008; Brautigam, 2009; Gilbert, 1963; Hsieh; 1985; Xu, 1994; Yu, 1963).

The proximity of Asia meant that it was a traditional sphere of influence for the PRC, whereas Africa continues to offer a plentiful supply of natural resources. Latin America on the other hand was considered a distant third in terms of developing world priorities because it was thought to contain comparatively little of the then known raw materials deposits that were abundant elsewhere (Zhu, 2010), and, aside from Cuba, the governments of Latin America were aligned with Washington for almost all of the Cold War (Livingstone, 2009). Such was the adherence to the Washington consensus in all but a handful of Latin American states (and even then nonconformity was temporary), the PRC made little headway in Latin America prior to its admission to the United Nations in 1971. Indeed, it was only the Allende government of Chile in 1970 and Castro's Cuba who had recognised the PRC, and even then the relationships were based more on ideological compassion rather than economic or social interaction (Ellis, 2009).

Although the admission of the PRC to the UN Security Council catalysed the diplomatic recognition process in favour of the PRC in Latin America, the regimes of Central America would remain strongly linked to Taiwan. That was until 1985 when the Sandinista government of Nicaragua asked the Taiwan Embassy in Managua to dissolve, in favour of diplomatic relations with the PRC (*New York Times*, 1985). Anderson and Anderson (1986) conclude that this was probably the result of acquired intelligence as to the subversive activities of the Taiwanese in Central America and the relationship – actual and ideological - that had developed between the Sandinistas and the PRC in the years prior to the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship in 1979 (Xu, 1994). However, such was the bond between the

Nicaraguan right-wing and Taiwan, Nicaragua re-recognised Taiwan once the Sandinistas relinquished power following their 1990 electoral defeat.¹¹ Prior to Costa Rica's recognition in 2007, Nicaragua's brief time as a PRC ally during the 1980s remains the only other time a Central American Republic has had diplomatic relations with the PRC.

Therefore, the influence of the PRC in Central America and many of the Caribbean islands prior to the conclusion of the Cold War was minimal, most support occurring from socialist groups who had gained political power one way or another (the notable examples being the Castro administration in Cuba, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and Maurice Bishop in Grenada). However, as several authors have discussed, while happy to further isolate Taiwan, Beijing was cautious not to affiliate too closely with guerrilla movements in this region until there was a real chance of their victory. The result was a lot of propaganda of encouragement but only sparing full endorsement or material support until success was achieved or imminent (Taylor, 2009; Van Ness, 1970; Xu, 1994).

As a result of their loss to the communists in 1949, the KMT government of the ROC evacuated to the island of Taiwan, and the one and a half million political refugees who moved with them imposed an authoritarian police state on the island's population (So, 2001; Marks, 1998; Anderson and Anderson, 1986; Hsieh, 1985; Gilbert; 1963; Yu, 1963). For the resident businessmen, intellectuals and politicians of Taiwan the 'White Terror' as it became known would result in their removal as a political, economic and social challenge to the absolute authority of the KMT (Kerr, 1976). Thus, the KMT ruled Taiwan as though a conquering army and this martial law remained in place until 1987 (Marks, 1998). Such was the formidable state security system employed by the KMT, particularly after the infamous clamp down

¹¹ Brautigam (2009) explains that the PRC was de-recognised by a host of nation-states following the Tiananmen Square massacre in June 1989. However, she does not give credit to the role of domestic politics in her explanation. Nicaragua is therefore a testimony to the need to understand changes in diplomatic recognition through both domestic and international affairs. This is a policy that I take forward in the following chapter when discussing Costa Rica's decision to move its embassy from Taipei to Beijing in 2007.

on dissent on 28th February 1947, now known as the 228 Massacre (see Kerr, 1976),¹² Taiwan's repressive model of governance became appealing to the ideologically similar authoritarian regimes in Central America who were keen to consolidate their own powerbase.¹³ Here began one of the least known but most well-matched international relationships in recent history. Lieutenant Colonel Domingo Monterrosa from the Atlacatl battalion of El Salvador's military implied just how influential Taiwan's political warfare and counterinsurgency training was on the El Salvador military:

What we really admired in Taiwan was the way the government was organized and the control they had over the people. It was like communism of this side. If we could have, from then on, organized a unit of political warfare in every field, we could have focused more objectively on the problems of the country and won against the expansion of communism. (Monterrosa [1978], cited in, Anderson and Anderson, 1986: 214).

Monterrosa's comments have a touch of irony given that this system of political warfare had been taught to the ROC by the Soviet Union. Yet very little is still known of Taiwan's involvement in the armed conflicts of Central America. Indeed, the fullest academic account of El Salvador's military history by Williams and Walter (1997) has not even one reference to the Taiwanese contribution, and Taiwan's ignoring of requests for information from the United Nations Commission for Historical Clarification in Guatemala (UNCEH, 1999) and Truth Commission for El Salvador (UNVCS, 1993) has not helped in lessening the ambiguity surrounding its

¹² The 228 incident or massacre as it came to be known was the beginning of a period where political dissent was severely punished in Taiwan. Until the lifting of martial law in 1987 it was estimated that around 140,000 perceived political dissenters were either arrested, beaten, executed or 'disappeared' (see Huang, 2005; Marks, 1998). Professor Lee Shiao-feng states that the reasons for such brutality were, "to strike down pro-Communists or left wing rhetoric and conduct; to crush Taiwanese independence movements and ideas; to purge the Aboriginal elite and to oppress dissenters within the democratic movement; in-fighting within the intelligence agencies; rhetoric used - whether privately or in public - that ran counter to the interests of authorities; and fabricated cases made up by secret agents solely for the purpose of competing for personal benefit" (Lee, cited in Huang, 2005).

¹³ The KMT system was based on the Soviet-Leninist model taught to them by the Russians at the Whampoa Military Academy on the Chinese mainland while the ROC was still based in Beijing (Marks, 1998; Hsieh, 1985).

role in the region. The most detailed accounts of what Zhu (2010: 91) calls 'military diplomacy' by Taiwan comes from journalists who covered Central America's various armed conflicts during the 1980s (see Anderson and Anderson, 1986; Danner, 2005). However, Central America's tradition of protest literature also makes some references to it.¹⁴ The following is an extract from the novel *Una Dia en la Vida* [One Day of Life] by El Salvador's Manlio Argueta. In this chapter a government soldier is writing a letter home to his family about the training he is receiving and he mentions a Taiwanese man.

And we have instructors in things you'd never imagine, for example, in the arts; yes, that's what they have called them, the martial arts. The [Taiwanese] man teaches the martial arts, even how you can gouge someone's eye out with your thumb. And another class called psychology, which is to say, how you can make people suffer by the mere use of words. (Argueta, 1983: 93)

Taiwan's military diplomacy like the rest of its diplomatic efforts was as much about the island's own strategy for survival vis-à-vis the PRC threat as it was a result of ideological compassion for other right-wing authoritarian regimes (Anderson and Anderson, 1986; Hsieh, 1985; Marks, 1998). However, on my visit in 2011 the legacy of this epoch appears to be dwindling. Sure enough, Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian received a 21 gun salute upon his arrival at San Salvador airport in 2007 and a reported standing ovation at the Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (ARENA) party conference that he attended (Ko, 2007),¹⁵ but the movement to competitive democracy that begun almost simultaneously in Taiwan and El Salvador in 1992 has resulted in at least a partial dissolution of political sentiment between the two countries as a newer generation of politicians with less ideological baggage from the Cold War move into decision-making roles. This was confirmed by Monica Wu from

¹⁴ For information on Central America's literary traditions involving political protest see Beverley and Zimmerman (1990) and Rowe (2000).

¹⁵ ARENA were the party in power during El Salvador's armed conflict.

the press office of the Taiwan Embassy in San Salvador when she admitted that, “it is difficult. But we have the diplomatic relationship so there is no change, and basically the relationship is stable with El Salvador, but it is difficult because we know that we are talking with different people. But all we can do is try to establish relations with them” (Wu, 2011).

The relationship that developed between the Taiwanese state and the authoritarian and military governments of Central America is of particular interest to the contemporary study of public diplomacy in Central America. Taiwan began to train the armed forces of Central America in political warfare, counterinsurgency, and information extraction techniques shortly after their diplomatic isolation was confirmed by their rejection from the UN, Guatemala leading the way in bringing in the Taiwanese (Anderson and Anderson, 1986: 170). Given the comparative transparency and deliberation required by US Congress to agree to support what were ideologically compatible yet morally suspect regimes in Central America, it was to Taiwan that these regimes turned, for Taiwan as a fellow authoritarian state need not publicly disclose its activities. Therefore, while there is information from innumerable academic and non-academic sources on the support that these regimes received from the US government (for example, Booth, 1982; Kinzer, 1991; Kinzer and Shlesinger, 1999; Webb, 1998; Williams and Walter, 1997), the Taiwan angle remains obscured.

That Taiwan trained a military that, in the case of Guatemala at least, committed genocide against the indigenous population (UNCEH, 1999), and then assisted the refugees is a somewhat haunting parable of the history of Taiwan’s engagement with Central America. However, while Taiwan trained the militaries of Central America, it also provided development assistance to the local populations, although this form of public diplomacy was largely overshadowed by other activities. As we have already seen, both the PRC and Taiwan initiated development assistance projects in Africa in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and similar projects

were established in Latin America and the Caribbean as the region grew in importance to the competition for allies (Hsieh, 1985). The section on Africa dealt with this at length and so it does not require revision here.

It is however worthwhile discussing the role of the United States in making up a diplomatic triangle between the three regions during the Cold War. Although courting both Democrats and Republicans, the pro-Taiwan lobby in the USA found greatest support in conservative politicians from the Republican Party such as Jesse Helms, Barry Goldwater, Strom Thurmond and Ronald Reagan during the latter 20th century. It was this same group of anti-communist, ultra-capitalists who also urged Capitol Hill to extend its assistance to Nicaraguan 'Contras' fighting the Sandinista government, to reject President Carter's Panama Canal Treaties during the 1970s, and to actively support the authoritarian regimes of Central America who were fighting guerrilla insurgencies within their territories (Weiner, 1994; Pastor, 1993). Indeed the KMT government of Taiwan, the group of US Senators, and heads of the military and government in various Central American Republics during this period are all linked via their affiliations to the World Anti-Communist League (WACL). For example, during the 1980s Senator Jesse Helms (R – NC) was close to a range of ARENA party officials in El Salvador including the ultra-right-wing Head of the El Salvador Armed Forces, Roberto D'Aubuisson, and the two were also in regular contact with CIA Deputy Director, Ray Cline, who was head of the bureau in Taiwan, and a personal friend of Chiang Ching-kuo (Anderson and Anderson, 1986: 56; Cline, 1989).¹⁶ Therefore, this intercontinental triangular relationship was influential in securing Central American diplomatic favouritism for Taiwan because of the ideological partisanship shared by each faction and developed by membership of the WACL.

¹⁶ Helms' staunch anti-communist views are well-known. Even during the 1980s after criticism of the WACL for its association with neo-Nazis and war criminals, Helms' aide John Carbaugh attended WACL conferences on his behalf (Anderson and Anderson, 1986). During this period Helms was also head of the pro-Taiwan lobby and was considered by the media and politicians alike to be a friend of Taiwan. In an obituary to him following his death in 2008, he was thanked for "helping Taiwanese people through the darkest days." (Chao, 2008)

Some studies of Central America have suggested a depolarisation from the period of armed conflict (see Lauria-Santiago and Binford, 2004; Kodrich, 2002). Although unquantifiable, this is probably correct given the concessions made by the guerrillas of the left after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the declared end to ideologically motivated violence by the ruling political right. However, it is undeniable that the left has made more concessions than the right. This is epitomised by the continuing principled dislike of the political left that seems commonplace amongst much of bourgeois Central America who, as Chasteen (2011) notes, view themselves more as part of an international capitalist class than belonging to one small Central American Republic or another.

In contrast to Taiwan's traditional support for the right-wing governments of Central America, the PRC, at least before the initiation of Deng Xiaoping's reforms in 1978, "was more interested in establishing ties with radical parties, organizations and groups according to their ideology, rather than activating close relations with established governments." (Taylor, 2009: 3; Xu, 1994: 151). However, even though the PRC assisted revolutionary groups in the underdeveloped world, it appeared cautious over publicly endorsing them until they had demonstrated real ability to rally mass support. Such caution from the early 1970s onwards was no doubt the combination of improving relations with capitalist countries, in particular the USA after Henry Kissinger's famous 'approach to China', and the international responsibility that comes with UN Security Council membership (see Kim, 1979; Kissinger, 1979; MacMillan, 2008; Medvedev, 1986).

This research can be positioned amongst the work of a growing band of academics looking at Latin America's ties with Asia, with much of the research focused on trade. As such, we see the greatest contemporary Chinese presence in the resource rich countries of the southern cone such as Chile and Peru, as well as the continent's two largest countries Argentina and Brazil, for it is these countries who provide much of the raw materials that the PRC requires to maintain its domestic

development (see Ellis, 2009; Hearn and Leon-Manriquez, 2011; Santiso, 2007). As Strauss notes:

In the past 15 years, China in particular has gone from having no presence to speak of in Latin America to being the first and second leading trade partner of such important economies as Brazil, Peru and Chile [...]. The overwhelming dominance of business and trade in the equation raises the question, what is the political nature of the relationship? (Strauss, 2012: 6)

Indeed, trade figures have a habit of misrepresenting social and political impact, or at least not reflecting the true extent of integration. As Armony highlights:

China's impact is uneven and poses very different challenges across the region. For the most part, Latin American visions of China are based on an "imported Orientalism" dominated by misrepresentations of Chinese society and culture. A combination of timeworn images of China as "mysterious" and the projection of Western beliefs and interests onto China have coloured Latin American conceptions of the East Asian country (Armony, 2012: 9).

Therefore, how the PRC overcomes obstacles such as those mentioned by Armony should be a key ongoing question for scholars. As such, this study will broaden the portfolio of academia into Latin American countries whose relations with the PRC have so far received less attention, while also trying to correct the deficit of research on issues other than trade.

The Diplomatic Truce

In 2008 a 'diplomatic truce' was agreed between the PRC and Taiwan while the most significant period of economic integration and cooperation was negotiated. It was eventually incorporated into the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) which was ratified by de-facto bodies of both countries governments in June 2010 after arguably the most meaningful public dialogue between the Kuomintang

(KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) since the '1992 Consensus' in Hong Kong. The Diplomatic Truce and ECFA are central to this research's argument regarding why the PRC and Taiwan act the way they do in Central America. Both prioritise the reconciliation with each other as far more important than relations with Central American Republics, and this is reflected in the public diplomacy of Taiwan in particular which neither directly confronts the issue of its rival nor seeks to exploit their perceived weaknesses. As such, Taiwan's diplomatic isolation and reconciliation with the PRC significantly limits the flexibility of its public diplomacy.

Beginning, publicly at least, after KMT leader Ma Ying-jeou's successful Taiwan Presidential election campaign in 2008, the ECFA negotiations sought to facilitate greater economic ties between the PRC and Taiwan, and would allow more exchange of information and technology, greater freedom of movement across the Taiwan Strait for both populations, and for semi-official delegations to be sent to each other's capital cities, with offices resembling consulates also being opened. The negotiations progressed from a prerequisite of respect for the status quo regarding the competition for diplomatic allies. In addition, in what can be interpreted as a demonstration of superiority, the PRC requested that Taiwan's formal allies not raise the issue of it rejoining the UN while the truce was in place.

The importance of the truce to the PRC and Taiwan, and to this research, was made clear in March 2010 when Chang Kao, vice-Chairman of the Mainland Affairs Council of Taiwan, told a seminar that El Salvador had tried to recognise the PRC at some point after the election of President Mauricio Funes in 2009, but that Beijing had turned them down stating that they, "did not want to hurt the cross-strait reconciliation" (Chang, cited in DPA, 2010).¹⁷ For both sides therefore, maintaining the status-quo is the overwhelming priority (*China Post*, 2008). This is important as it

¹⁷ In a batch of classified *Wikileaks* cables published in May 2011 originating from the US Embassy in Panama Ambassador Barbara Stephenson (2010) documents how the government of Panama approached the PRC regarding formal recognition in January 2009 but were told that it was not possible due to the diplomatic truce. However, crucially they were also told to 'remain calm', insinuating that if things were to change that it *would* be possible.

allows us to position the importance of relations with Central America in wider context, but it also provides a crucial part of the reasoning for the central argument of the thesis. Undoubtedly, both Taiwan and the PRC prioritise improved relations and integration with one another over tussling for smaller wins in Central America, and as such, neither is willing to make overly critical statements or antagonising gestures towards the other. This limits the content of both countries' public diplomacy, but with the PRC in ascendancy around the world, the impact of such restriction is much greater on Taiwan. As the chapters on El Salvador and Guatemala will discuss, Taiwan's accelerated economic integration with the PRC has placed it in a somewhat awkward position with its diplomatic allies. So as not to be seen as hypocritical, Taiwan has been forced to adopt a public position of indifference as their diplomatic allies explore the economic opportunities presented by the PRC's economic rise (Chen, 2011; Sun, 2011). Thus, while protected against the further loss of diplomatic allies, Taiwan is unwilling to stop the squeeze from below by the PRC, such is the value the KMT government places on the ECFA.

Beyond this, public diplomacy's importance has been heightened by the recent diplomatic truce. For Taiwan, it has provided considerable respite from the constant danger of clandestine talks between their diplomatic allies and the mainland resulting in the loss of an ally (Wu, 2011). However, PRC pressure does ensure that Taiwan must prove its worthiness as an ally ahead of the PRC on a near constant basis. As its cultural diplomacy in Central America and its relations with the domestic media in El Salvador in particular will demonstrate however, their strategy for this is far from refined.

Methodology, Questions and Research Design

This thesis has employed ethnography as its methodology, the specific details of which will be discussed later. Ethnography has a heritage of being rather light on preordained theory, as Scott Jones explains: "Ethnographers allow data, and thus

explanations, to emerge from the field experience and obtain an insight into lives as they are actually lived; rather than how the researcher thinks they are lived" (Scott Jones, 2010: 10). Thus, for this research to hypothesise, goes somewhat against the grain. However, as this research deals with the study of two subjects (Taiwan and the PRC) in a setting that is foreign to them (Central America), the level of variation allows us to form a systemic preconceived argument that can be subsequently tested.

Therefore, as was stated at the outset of the chapter, the central hypothesis of this thesis is that, if a nation-state is diplomatically isolated, then its public diplomacy becomes more a tool of statecraft and less about image promotion towards the public of the target nation-state. Thus, while the PRC's secure relationship with Costa Rica and dominant international position vis-à-vis Taiwan allows it to focus on image improvement with the public, Taiwan's public diplomacy output towards its formal allies is transfixed on the protection of the country's diplomatic relations, meaning that the public are of secondary concern. As the section on public diplomacy discussed at length, contemporary literature on the subject has consistently pointed towards public diplomacy becoming more a tool of state marketing, advertising, branding or public relations, rather than a tool of diplomacy closely aligned to specific foreign policy objectives. However, our case studies in Central America will demonstrate that, while the activities of the PRC and Taiwan may be similar, the intent is largely different with the PRC taking up the more familiar contemporary position and Taiwan the position more familiar during the Cold War. Thus, in the wider context, this thesis is a demonstration of the continued variation that can be seen in public diplomacy today. This feeds the central argument of the thesis regarding public diplomacy, that when a nation-state is internationally isolated public diplomacy cannot be the equaliser that scholars such as Batora (2006) claim it has the potential to be. This is because, with the fundamental of the nation-state's survival at stake, all political activities are performed with this overarching goal in mind.

Subsequently, a number of questions were identified as the thesis sought to test this argument.

- What public diplomacy is being conducted by the PRC and Taiwan in Central America?

- What are the objectives of the PRC and Taiwan in performing public diplomacy and are these objectives being achieved?

- How important is public diplomacy to the overall process of competing for diplomatic recognition?

- What does this tell us about relations between the PRC and Taiwan overall?

- What does this tell us about the different uses of public diplomacy?

These questions formed the basis of the inquiries made in Central America and provided focus to the researcher when structuring the research methods. The conclusion to each of the country chapters will address the central argument and provide answers to some of these questions, with the final chapter bringing together all of the wider discussions.

Research Design

This research selected the Central American Republics of Costa Rica, Guatemala, and El Salvador as case studies because each enlightens different aspects of the international relations of the PRC and Taiwan. The goal was for each case study to build on the next so that a clear picture of Central America's dynamics regarding the PRC and Taiwan could be understood. As such, each chapter should be read in turn, with the final concluding chapter presenting overall findings and analyses on public diplomacy, relations between the PRC and Taiwan, and Central America as a whole.

In June 2007 Costa Rica became the only Central American country to recognise the PRC, this justifying its inclusion. Meanwhile, Taiwan remains the incumbent in Panama, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and Belize. From the remaining states, Guatemala was chosen due to its relative size, regional influence, the unsurpassed brutality of the armed conflict during the latter 20th century (a conflict in which Taiwan played a considerable yet almost entirely undocumented role), and finally as a result of its seeming disinterest in abandoning Taiwan. As a countermeasure, the decision to include El Salvador was the result of its government's rhetoric regarding its intentions towards the PRC (Economist Magazine, 2009; Keegan, 2006c; Young, 2007a; Zhu, 2010). Key to understanding this is the victory for the former left-wing guerrilla group the *Frente Farabundo Marti por la Liberacion Nacional* (FMLN) in the 2009 Presidential election. Since the FMLN became a significant presence on El Salvador's political landscape during the mid-1960s they have had dialogue with the PRC, with Chairman Mao publicly endorsing their anti-imperialist campaign in the 1970s (Xu, 1994). As such, the rising 'pink tide' on El Salvador's political landscape is typical – if a little more pronounced – of political changes occurring in some of Taiwan's other diplomatic allies in Central America as these countries too become vibrant post-conflict democracies. Thus, the political extreme-right's relinquishing of their long-held monopoly on power in many Central American countries, from which Taiwan has traditionally relied for diplomatic support, reflects the need for renewed analysis of the activities being performed by the PRC and Taiwan in Central America.

In each country chapter the text has been divided to discuss the aspects of public diplomacy that the PRC and Taiwan have focused on. As the section on Africa discussed, both Taiwan and the PRC tend to use similar methods of engagement in the countries of the underdeveloped world where they have diplomatic incumbency, although the volume of activities being performed by the PRC appears to be increasing beyond that of Taiwan. The chapters begin with a

discussion on either the PRC or Taiwan's relations with the country of focus. This provides the context and understanding that is required for the reader to appreciate the public diplomacy being performed there. The chapters will then move to an in-depth discussion of the public diplomacy activities. These include infrastructure improvement, development assistance, medical diplomacy, education diplomacy and engagement with the Chinese Diaspora. Following this, there will be discussion and analysis of other factors within the country deemed relevant to the provision of a public diplomacy critique. The positioning of public diplomacy activities against the backdrop of other factors which might impact on its delivery is an essential part of the evaluation of public diplomacy in an ethnographic context, because to look at the activities of a nation-state in isolation tells us little about the fulfilment of foreign policy goals or of the overall image that the nation-state commands. In Costa Rica, for example, there is a discussion of the public backlash to the refusal to allow the Dalai Lama to enter the country. Whereas in El Salvador, we see pressure from the PRC in the form of economic diplomacy designed to disrupt Taiwan's diplomatic incumbency. The conclusion of each of the chapters addresses the questions discussed previously, while also discussing the contribution of the chapter to the overall argument of the thesis regarding the role of public diplomacy in PRC – Taiwan relations.

Methodology and Research Methods

Given the arguments posed by this introductory chapter, and what has been stated about the shortfalls of public diplomacy research in particular, this research chose ethnography as its methodology. On ethnography, Scott Jones writes: "Ethnographers strive to describe the field setting and actions that occur within it in as much detail as possible and with as much contextualisation as possible. This is called 'thick description' and, if done well, it not only recreates the field setting as accurately as possible but also affords sufficient context to allow understanding, in a phenomenological sense, to occur" (Scott Jones, 2010: 8). Thus, it is this 'thick

description' that the thesis wanted to achieve by its contextualisation of the field setting of public diplomacy.

Ethnography has traditionally been associated with studies of social anthropology. Most of these early studies were colonial in nature, where usually a Caucasian male of European origin observed a non-white group of people, perhaps a tribe, in their regular environment over a considerable period of time. However, ethnography is about much more than subject observation: field notes, photographs, artefacts, documents, interviews and close study of local media all help to create the 'thick description' that is desired. Therefore, ethnography is a methodology inclusive of many research methods, and as such, the ethnographer must allow themselves the flexibility to be led by the data rather than imposing preconditions that can be the result of personal ideology.

It is the widespread absence of ethnography on public diplomacy that is the most apparent research deficit on the subject. This was discussed in some detail in the section on public diplomacy and so does not require readdressing here. However, in discussing the benefits of ethnographic study, Scott Jones remarks that, "All researchers want to understand the social world they are researching, but often they do this by imposing an objective, distanced theoretical framework" (Scott Jones, 2010: 10). Scott Jones therefore implies that a failure to include ethnography in one's research on matters of social science has the potential to lead to interpretation through contentious prisms. This is similar to my argument on public diplomacy which noted how research on the subject has been overly-institutional in focus.

This ethnographic research has closely monitored local media websites in Central America, and to a certain extent in the PRC and Taiwan as well, for information on public diplomacy activities and the diplomatic relationships as a whole. Complementing this has been a close monitoring of government and other relevant websites for statistics and information on these activities. These close

readings began as the project began in September 2009 and carried on until my trip to Central America in early 2011. My two month trip to Central America involved qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviewing with the research subjects, as well as organisations and individuals close to or involved with the subjects. The research also observed the subjects perform public diplomacy and analysed supporting documentation provided by a range of sources in Central America. All of these methods are demonstrated throughout the chapters and work together to build the thick description that has facilitated the critical analysis of the PRC and Taiwan. Finally, it is worth reiterating here that the subjects of this thesis are the PRC and Taiwan governments, not Central American society. This reflects the overall argument of the thesis that deals with Chinese and Taiwanese public diplomacy rather than the government or societies of Central America.

Of the research methods used, interviews are the most prominent in the thesis text as they were the occasion when I had the opportunity to ask for explanations, motivations and logic behind the public diplomacy. Therefore, it is worth spending some time understanding how they were organised and structured.

Where possible, interviews were conducted face-to-face. This preference is the result of the understanding that the face-to-face format is the most likely environment for an open expression of comprehensive and coherent perspective, largely because it prevents against interviewee distraction and they are more inclined to provide longer answers to questions (see Flick, 2002: 74). However, while the face-to-face method was preferred, it was not essential to the overall success of the project. This is because the interviews had no comparative element to them, making consistency of format or questioning less important. As such, I was free to direct the interviews and explore different areas depending on the answers of the interviewee.

With the overall perceptions of relevant organisations of interest, interview questions were tactically worded to avoid receiving the personal opinion of the interviewee. Indeed, many of the interviewees were selected by their institution to be their representative, with the only prerequisite that the individual be Director, Senior Management or an equivalent level. This strategy was decided upon because the individual was to be, “integrated into the study not as a single case but representing a group of specific experts.” (Flick, 2002: 89) It was not therefore the individual’s personal opinions that were of interest but the information and opinions held by the group being represented. For example, when contacting the Taiwan embassy in El Salvador, the first conversation was with First Secretary Fernando Ding. It was he who advised that the most appropriate people to answer my questions would be Press Officer Monica Wu and Head of the Taiwan ICDF in El Salvador Carlos Lee. Lists of open-ended questions were prepared in advance, and these questions were ordered topically and prioritised to ensure that the topics deemed most important to the research were investigated without the shadow of time constraints. A sample question sheet is provided in Appendix A.

Institutions and interviewees were targeted prior to arrival in the case study country, their suitability being determined by the close monitoring of media, government and other institutional websites. However, on three occasions interviewees stated that they had a contact who could also offer information on the questions being asked of them. As such, there was a small degree of interview ‘snowballing’, although this was by no means a regular occurrence. Some also suggested that I get in touch with an organisation that had not previously been on my radar. This flexibility was to allow for the most comprehensive analysis possible of each country.

In the vast majority of cases interviews were carried out at the interviewee’s place of work, and were conducted in either English or Spanish depending on the ability of the interviewee to express themselves in English. All interviews were

audio recorded, transcribed and translated to English (when necessary) to ensure the accuracy of any quotations that might be used. A full list of interviewees and their positions within their organisation is provided in Appendix B.

Where the interviewee requested anonymity, either a pseudonym has been used as titular coverage or the word 'anonymous' has been written instead of the name when the interviewee exercised their right to this. The interviewee was informed of their rights via a printed participation consent form, which is available as Appendix C. Copies were made in both English and Spanish to ensure complete understanding, and interviewees were given ample time to ask questions if any arose before signing the form. In the case of the few telephone and email interviews that occurred, the interviewee was sent the participant consent form via email prior to the conversation and assurances were sought that they had both received it and that they were aware of their rights. By subsequently continuing with the interview process they had demonstrated their compliance with the conditions.

In addition, the interviewee was told of the preference for the interview to be audio recorded to ensure against misquotations. Nevertheless, ethically an option had to be given to refuse this. While the interviewer made detailed hand-written notes of all interviews regardless of audio recording, on the two occasions when permission to audio record was refused, the interviewee granted the interviewer permission to make detailed hand-written notes. On these occasions a transcript was made up after the interview from the hand-written notes and was subsequently emailed to the interviewee and their confirmation as to accuracy sought. This is what Scott Jones (2010: 9) calls the "active, participative ethics" of ethnography, where ethnographers allow for feedback and allow subjects to comment on completed studies. Several of the interviewees have requested that I inform them of any publication that is made and this is something I am happy to oblige.

Finally, the interviewees were informed of their right to stop the audio recording or indeed the interview itself at any time. This proved to be beneficial as a number of interviewees asked to speak 'off the record' when they wanted to discuss topics but did not want their name attributed to the statements. In this situation, the audio recorder was stopped and the interview proceeded on hand-written notes alone. Conversations conducted in this capacity did not become part of the overall transcript of the interview, but have been written up in such a manner that their affiliation is only the knowledge of those present at the time. Some of this information has been used in the thesis under the 'anonymous' name tag. All information gathered within the interview process remains in my possession and has not be copied, read or amended by anybody else.

It was initially estimated that approximately 30 to 40 interviews would be conducted, and for each one hour of the nominated interviewee's time was requested. Almost all of interviews utilised the full time allocation with some continuing over the hour at the grace of the interviewee. In total, thirty-four interviews were eventually conducted (see bibliography), with many more informal conversations occurring with relevant sources while in Central America. What is more, on two occasions permission was given to accompany the research's Taiwanese subjects as an observer while they undertook public diplomacy activities in the region. Further to this, a successful attempt was made to contact Central American students studying for university degrees in either the PRC or Taiwan. The purpose of this was to engage in general conversation regarding their experiences of their host country. Five of the sixteen students contacted via Facebook agreed to openly discuss this topic and their responses have been included in the text where appropriate.

The subsequent chapters have been arranged in the order of Costa Rica, El Salvador and finally Guatemala. They are best read in this order, as each chapter builds upon discussion from the previous country, bringing the reader comfortably

to the concluding chapter. Costa Rica offers the perspective of a country that has experienced public diplomacy from both the PRC and Taiwan in recent years, thus justifying its primary role. El Salvador and Guatemala both continue their relations with Taiwan but, as was explained, their differing political landscapes ensure that Taiwan approaches them in different ways. Each chapter will begin with an introductory overview and then progress to a thick description history of that country's engagement with the PRC and Taiwan. The main body of the chapters have been sub-divided into different public diplomacy activities. Finally, before concluding, some perspective will be offered as to the challenges that the PRC and Taiwan face in these Central American countries.

Costa Rica

Introduction

On Costa Rica, Stuart Corbridge has said:

Costa Rica [...] is an unusual country in many respects. It has had no army since 1948, a previous President, Dr. Oscar Arias, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987 for his work in brokering the Central American Peace Accords, and the country has long enjoyed gender equity and human development scores which are more favourable than simple GDP per capita figures would lead us to expect. Moreover, Costa Rica has been leading the way, not least when it was a UN Security Council Member in trying to mainstream environmental issues into our international diplomacy. Along with Norway, Bhutan and some other countries, Costa Rica aims to become one of the world's first carbon neutral countries. (Corbridge, 2011)

What is more, given its geographical position within a troubled region, Rockwell and Janus have described Costa Rica as, "the Switzerland of Central America – an enclave of peace, surrounded by tumult." (Rockwell and Janus, 2003: 108). Given its political stability therefore, Costa Rica provides the PRC with a solid platform to build greater regional presence. Indeed, commentators have remarked that PRC activities should be seen as both attempts to influence Costa Rica and those on Costa Rica's periphery (Brennan, 2008a; Herrera, 2007).

This chapter begins by discussing the background to the events of May and June 2007 when Taiwan abandoned its diplomatic mission in San Jose, shortly before formal diplomatic relations were announced between Costa Rica and the PRC. A strong understanding of these events is crucial to analysing the purpose of the PRC's public diplomacy in Costa Rica. By monitoring the Costa Rican media from the moment of PRC recognition in 2007 onwards this research has traced the PRC's

public diplomacy in Costa Rica as it has expanded into areas such as infrastructure, education, healthcare, integration with the Costa Rican media, and engagement with the local Chinese Diaspora. Thus, these five areas represent the most potent examples of PRC public diplomacy in the country, and therefore those most deserving of analysis.¹⁸ As such, analysis of each will include: detailed clarification of the events that have occurred; a positioning of the events within the context of PRC public diplomacy globally; comparative discussion of similar projects conducted by Taiwan while they held diplomatic incumbency in Costa Rica; and finally, an evaluation of the project as a performance of public diplomacy. This approach allows for the documentation of history in significant factual detail and thus the ‘thick description’ required for ethnography. However, more importantly, it will enable discussion of public diplomacy in ethnographic context.

Reflecting the extent to which Central America represents a battleground for the PRC and Taiwan, the section on the PRC’s public diplomacy will be followed by discussion of the continuing challenges that the PRC faces in Costa Rica. First however, the chapter will discuss the events surrounding the transition of Costa Rica’s diplomatic ties from Taipei to Beijing. This will provide the necessary context for understanding the link between public diplomacy and diplomatic recognition and facilitate greater perspective about their choice of activities and their intended purpose.

Costa Rica: Crossing the Taiwan Strait

Three factors help explain Taiwan’s loss of formal diplomatic status in Costa Rica: the increasing importance of the PRC to the world; changing foreign policy

¹⁸ In deciding this, a particularly prominent source of information was Costa Rica’s best-selling daily newspaper, *Nacion*. According to Rockwell and Janus (2003), *Nacion* is one of the most highly respected and integral newspapers in all of Latin America. What is more, all the PRC scholarship students who were interviewed declared *Nacion* website to be their default source of news on Costa Rica while living abroad.

priorities by the Costa Rican government; and the international strategy of Taiwan's DPP government (2000 – 2008).

Costa Rica's announcement of formal ties with the PRC in June 2007 ended an alliance with the island of Taiwan which had lasted since the late 1940s. This occurred during the DPP's second term in office under President Chen Shui-bian: a period that saw significant diplomatic instability with the loss of eight other formal diplomatic allies and the gaining of two,¹⁹ as the governing party's anti-China agenda resulted in a period of considerable hostility from Beijing, in which the PRC flexed its diplomatic muscles against Taiwan by recruited these new allies.

Historically, sentiment between the leaders of Taiwan and Costa Rica had developed as a consequence of the similarities in civil wars being fought simultaneously in both countries during the late 1940s (Castro Fernandez, 2011). Consequently, upon the nationalists' evacuation to Taiwan in 1949, Costa Rican President Jose Figueres Ferrer (1948 – 1949; 1953 – 1958; 1970 – 1974) immediately re-pledged Costa Rica's support to the KMT government of Chiang Kai-shek (Castro Fernandez, 2011).²⁰ Moreover, as a memento to his mentor, Figueres unveiled a statue of Chiang in the large concert hall adjoining the offices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in San Jose and gave the hall Chiang's name. With the subsequent renouncement of diplomatic ties with Taiwan in 2007, the name of the hall was changed to 'Julio Acosta', Costa Rican President between 1920 and 1924, thus suggesting Taiwan's demise in Costa Rica. Indeed, while levels of sentiment cannot be quantified, it is accurate to say that the personal relationship between Figueres and Chiang was crucial in cementing the bond between the two countries

¹⁹ In addition to Costa Rica, Taiwan lost Chad – 2006, Dominica – 2004, Grenada – 2005, Liberia – 2003, FYI Macedonia – 2001, Malawi – 2008, Senegal – 2005, and Vanuatu – 2004, although in the case of Vanuatu they gained and lost them again within a short period in 2004. They gained St. Lucia (2007) and regained Nauru (2005) after it had de-recognised them in 2002.

²⁰ Figueres is affectionately known as 'Don Pepe' and is widely considered the father of the nation such has been the legacy of his political decisions to abolish the army and give women and blacks the right to vote. For further reading see Ameringer (1978). Figueres is also the father of President Jose Maria Figueres, who is currently in self-imposed exile in Switzerland after several corruption scandals during his Presidency.

(Ameringer, 1978). Thus, when Figueres retired from frontline politics in 1974 and Chiang died the following year the personal friendship that had cemented the international relationship was lost. At the same time, Taiwan's growing international marginalisation, epitomised by its dismissal from the UN and the USA's 'approach to China' in the early 1970s, heaped more pressure on relations.

The relationship between Taiwan and Costa Rica after 1974 became increasingly symbolised by what is widely referred to as 'dollar' or 'cheque-book' diplomacy. Therefore, while Taiwanese diplomats attempted to boost their country's reputation by working with local government agencies on development assistance projects, the relationship was synonymous with – and continued largely as a consequence of – Taiwan's purchase of diplomatic loyalty. For example, it is common knowledge within the civil services of Central America that Taiwan continues to finance the upkeep of Central American embassies in Taipei, and has been known to provide finance to and pay staff wages within Ministries of Foreign Affairs throughout Central America (including Costa Rica before 2007) (Ko, 2004). This was confirmed by Costa Rican historian Ronald Castro Fernandez when he said, "My understanding is that the Taiwan Embassy, via the Taiwan Association, paid much of the wages of the Costa Rican diplomatic corps. I am friends with Oscar Alvares who was the Ambassador to Taiwan for many years and he informed me of this" (Castro Fernandez, 2011).²¹

However, incentivising state loyalty with finance must be differentiated from the acceptance of bribes by state officials. As such, the catalyst for Taiwan's downfall in Costa Rica arguably came in 2004 when accusations of corruption befell three former presidents. Rafael Angel Calderon (1990 – 1994), Jose Maria Figueres (1994 –

²¹ Ko (2004) states that this practice has gone on since at least 1986 although the lack of transparency makes it difficult to confirm. However, Saskia Rodriguez from MIDEPLAN confirmed when interviewed "that Taiwan provided every Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Central America with an amount of about US\$500,000. This is given direct to the Ministries" (Rodriguez, S., 2011). While there is some likelihood that the practice began before 1986, the diplomatic recognition of the PRC by the Sandinista government of Nicaragua in 1985 would have catalysed Taiwanese fears of a domino-effect across the region. The policies of paying for embassy upkeep in Taipei and contributing to the Foreign Affairs budgetary purse may have been a response to this.

1998) and Miguel Angel Rodriguez (1998 – 2002) have now all been convicted of corruption relating to bribes accepted as part of the award of national telecommunications contracts to French firm Alcatel-Lucent. Of greater pertinence to this research however, the public enquiry into their private finances conducted as part of the investigation revealed in 2006 that Rodriguez had received \$1.4 million dollars from the government of Taiwan; and that this money was paid into a bank account in Panama belonging to a company naming Rodriguez as majority shareholder (Segnini and Herrera, 2006; Arguedas, 2010). These embarrassing events led to a number of domestic outcomes, most notably the re-election of Dr. Oscar Arias (1986 – 1990; 2006 – 2010) on an anti-corruption manifesto at the 2006 Presidential election. Arias personally pursued formal diplomatic ties with the PRC, and when asked in 2007 why he had decided to recognise the PRC, stated that Taiwan was ‘muy pinche [too cheap]’ (Arias, cited in Holtz, 2010b), a satirical jibe relating to corrupt practices.

The revelation that ex-president Rodriguez had accepted money from Taiwan in exchange for his government’s loyalty should not be viewed as an anomaly but as an example of a regular mechanism used by Taiwan to ensure allegiance. Indeed, this practice of bribing heads of state, and other government officials, in return for diplomatic favouritism has followed Taiwan around Central America, another example being the revelation in 2005 that former Guatemalan President Alfonso Portillo (2000 – 2004) had accepted a US\$1.5 million payment from Taiwan (Guatemala Times, 2010; Erikson and Chen, 2007; *El Nuevo Diario*, 2005).²² As such, Taiwan’s use of bribery was widely suspected across Central America, but an appetite to expose the extent of these practices has only surfaced in the region in recent years. This, Erikson and Chen note, is a consequence of, “domestic pressures for openness and accountability stemming from both sides of the relationship [between Taiwan and Central America],” resulting in, “the networks of personal

²² This case will be discussed further in the chapter on Guatemala.

connections that held these ties together over decades [beginning] to strain.” (Erikson and Chen, 2007: 80) A significant factor in the demise of Taiwan in Costa Rica therefore is the redundancy of its traditional model of political engagement in the region.

That said, Costa Rica’s decision to recognise the PRC was far more complex than a simple moral stand against corrupt practices, the recognition of the growing importance of the PRC to the world, or a reflection of dwindling in whatever sentiment still exists towards Taiwan among Costa Rican political factions. Costa Rica was motivated by the allure of temporary membership of the UN Security Council. A veto from the PRC, a permanent member of the council, would have prevented the Arias government from taking its place at the 2008 – 2009 session; a seat that was subsequently confirmed on 16th October 2007, five months after the announcement of diplomatic ties with the PRC (*Reuters*, 2007).

What is more, while it had been on the agenda for more than a decade, the National Liberation Party (PLN) has made joining the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum a priority for Costa Rica since regaining power in the 2006 parliamentary elections (Leff, 2011). Key to their admission is the need to develop greater economic and political relations with the major incumbents of the APEC forum such as the PRC. Thus, according to PROCOMER – the Costa Rican government department responsible for the promotion of international trade – between 2000 and 2010 exports to Asia grew from US\$300 million in 2000 to US\$1.3 billion and imports from Asia grossed US\$2.2 billion in 2010 (PROCOMER, 2011).²³ In this regard, diplomatic recognition of the PRC was illustrative of a purposeful

²³ Trade figures, while important indicators of economic strength, must be critically appraised. Costa Rican exports to the PRC between 2000 and 2010 rose from US\$12 million to US\$286 million with the latter figure down from a high of US\$848 million in 2007. A caveat must however be placed over these numbers because Costa Rica is home to *Intel*’s semiconductor assembly and test plant. Consequently, consistently around 90% of all exports to the PRC are shipments of *Intel* products being sent to IT manufacturing sites within the PRC (PROCOMER, 2010). As such, it is misrepresentative to use these international trade figures as evidence of greater economic integration given that Intel is based in California, USA. For further reading on *Intel* in Costa Rica see the World Bank Report (2006).

shift away from Costa Rica's traditional markets in Europe and North and South America, towards greater association with the countries of East Asia (Brennan, 2008b).

As such, in a recent article Julia Strauss concisely summed up the PRC's attractiveness to countries like Costa Rica:

In a world in which US and European political institutions have been revealed as profoundly ill-equipped to deal with current economic challenges, it is entirely understandable that states and societies in both Asia and Latin America would find much of value in the other in political, social and economic terms, and much of common interest. For all their differences, most of the states in Asia and Latin America, with the exception of Japan, have directly experienced the humiliations of colonialism and protracted economic underdevelopment. Most identify with the developing world and have reasons to be sceptical of US hegemony (Strauss, 2012: 7).

Thus, as will be seen, particularly when this chapter analyses the PRC's media content in Costa Rica, Chinese diplomats have been keen to differentiate their approach and intentions from that of the United States. Therefore, in contrast to US policy advisors such as Erikson and Chen (2007: 80) and Taiwan's Foreign Minister James Huang (cited in Young, 2007b), who have claimed that pressure from the PRC and its Latin American allies has been successful in convincing other states to move away from Taiwan, Costa Rica made its decision as part of a larger strategy to increase its international influence. Indeed, Saskia Rodriguez confirmed to me that it was the private decision of Oscar Arias to recognise the PRC, and that only those very close to him knew of the negotiations (Rodriguez, 2011). Moreover, the Costa Rican Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Pilar Saborio, called the recognition of the PRC a "corrective measure", in the sense that Costa Rica had, "simply joined

about 162 countries which are members of the UN [in diplomatically recognising the PRC]" (Saborio, 2011).

Moreover, to conform to international consensus, the Arias administration also moved Costa Rica's Israeli embassy from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv in December 2006, aligning itself with those nation-states who consider Jerusalem to be a contested territory.²⁴ At the time Arias stated that it was, "time to rectify a historical error that damages us on the international level and deprives us of any friendship with the Arab world" (Arias, cited in Jerusalem Post, 2006). This movement in turn led to the diplomatic recognition of Palestine by Costa Rica on 5th February 2008 and a campaign by Costa Rica to further trade relations with the Arab world, a project implemented in tandem with its reduction of trade reliance on its traditional markets.

During her interview, Pilar Saborio (2011) commented on the priority that PLN Presidents Oscar Arias and Laura Chinchilla (2010 – Present) had given to technocracy and pragmatic decision-making since the party had been re-elected in 2006. Thus, the decision of the PLN leadership to recognise the PRC was in step with an on-going professionalization of the Costa Rican civil and diplomatic service, where appointments were now being made based on ability and experience rather than political patronage.

Question: What does the fact that you have no party affiliation demonstrate about Costa Rican foreign policy itself?

I think it was frankly in respect of Dr. Arias, he surrounded himself with technocrats. We are a very small population, and I, I was not the only one, he wanted to appoint people who he thought were good candidates for the job irrespective of whether they were close to the party elite. (Saborio, 2011)

²⁴ In 2006 the final two countries – Costa Rica and El Salvador – relocated their embassies to Tel Aviv (Jerusalem Post, 2006). El Salvador's decision will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

It is therefore sensible to conclude that the emphasis on pragmatism brought about a re-evaluation of the country's relationship with Taiwan. Furthermore, Taiwan's approach to diplomacy had become incompatible with Costa Rica's emphasis on political transparency. Indeed, in May 2007, immediately prior to the relinquishing of ties between Taiwan and Costa Rica, Taiwan Foreign Minister James Huang had privately complained to the American Institute in Taipei of his opposite number in Costa Rica, Bruno Stagno, being, "a young 35 – 36 year old [who] does not understand the seventy year friendship between Costa Rica and Taiwan, or the Republic of China [...] born in France and educated in the US, he has little attachment to Costa Rica. He served as Costa Rica's UN ambassador where he had lots of opportunity to liaise with PRC diplomats." (Huang, cited in, Young, 2007a)

This can be interpreted as Taiwanese frustration at Stagno being unswayable; a legitimate attitude given that Stagno was indeed the linchpin between the Costa Rica and PRC governments and had engineered private negotiations between the two during his tenure in New York. This included a secret meeting between Arias and PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing in September 2006 (Young, 2007b).²⁵

What should primarily be understood from these events is that Costa Rica's decision to recognise the PRC was not a simple case of Taiwan being outbid by the PRC in its quest to internationally isolate Taiwan. Such a claim would disregard Costa Rican ambition to refresh its diplomatic core, remove 'abnormalities' in foreign policy that it believed were restricting, and its strategic movement towards the APEC countries. Therefore, the crux of the strategy involved securing favour with the PRC. What is more, since 2007 Costa Rica and the PRC have on the whole

²⁵ A confidential cable released by *Wikileaks* and originally written by Peter Cianchette - the former US Ambassador to Costa Rica – reveals that it was Bruno Stagno – the Costa Rican Ambassador to the UN between 2002 and 2006 – who had informal dialogue with the PRC while in New York (Cianchette, 2008). As Foreign Minister during the subsequent presidency of Oscar Arias (2006-2010), Stagno then took the lead role in formalising relations. At no point was Taiwan privy to any of these activities and allegiance was continually pledged to Taipei by the Costa Rican government until the declaration of a relationship with the PRC at the beginning of June 2007 (Murillo, 2007).

appeared comfortable with the PRC's use of Costa Rica as a gateway to the rest of the region, such is the perceived benefit the new relationship brings.

Costa Rica had thereby reached a threshold where continued diplomatic recognition of Taiwan was not viable if it desired strategic international advancement. In an interview Daniel Chen, Third Secretary at the Taiwan Embassy in Guatemala, was asked whether there was a belief within Taiwan's diplomatic core that Costa Rican feelings of superiority to the rest of Central America had played a part in their decision. He replied, "I agree with you on the points you make about Costa Rica, it is not like other Central American countries, its socio-political history has been peaceful, and they try to position themselves politically, and in many cases believe, that they are different. For example, they have always refused to be part of PARLACEN" (Chen, 2011).

Given Taiwan's international marginalisation, its public diplomacy, like everything else it did in Costa Rica, was performed with the intention of securing its diplomatic incumbency. This is consistent with deductions that will be made from other Central American countries. However, when Taiwan left in 2007 they left very few visual indicators that there had ever been a Taiwanese diplomatic mission in the country at all. The most apparent Taiwanese landmark in Costa Rica is the *Puente la Amistad de Taiwan* (the Taiwan Friendship Bridge), a road bridge across the Tempisque River which separates the Nicoya Peninsula and the main landmass of Costa Rica on its northern Pacific coast. This engineering project, which was finished in 2003, was financed, designed and built by the Taiwanese with the participation of Costa Rican engineers and labourers. The bridge reportedly cost around US\$26million, and helped reduce travel time for the remote communities of the Nicoya Peninsula who had until then been dependent on unreliable and overcrowded ferries or long and dilapidated roads to reach other areas of the country (Baker, 2004; *Inside Costa Rica*, 2010). In the aftermath of Costa Rica and the PRC's announcement of formal diplomatic relations four years on from its opening,

the bridge was given the colloquial title of '*el puente de la apuñalada*' [the backstab bridge] by some of the Costa Rican media (*Inside Costa Rica*, 2010).

However, aside from the bridge, a concentration of Taiwanese owned fishing companies in the coastal city of Puntarenas²⁶, and a small Taiwan Friendship Park at the town of Juntas de la Abangares, very few remnants of Taiwan remain in Costa Rica. As previously discussed, the name of Chiang Kai-shek has been removed from the large hall at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, education scholarships have been terminated, the few inter-faculty relationships that had existed between academic institutions have ceased, and Taiwanese Mandarin teachers that were once part of the government public diplomacy apparatus have either left the country or continue to teach privately (Achio, 2011; Hu, 2011). Of greater importance to this research however is that Taiwan has made no known attempt to counteract PRC engagement with Costa Rica through propaganda or any other means. Indeed, one would be forgiven for thinking that the relationship had never existed. Therefore, from the evidence provided so far, and from that which is forthcoming, it seems unlikely that Costa Rica will become one of the so-called 'swing states' who move their embassy between Beijing and Taipei as is seen as politically and economically favourable (Rich, 2009; Taylor, 2002).

In addition, while the China Association in San Jose had been offering Mandarin language courses before 2011 (Lin, H., 2011), the Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF) began to send teachers to the University of Costa Rica (UCR) in 1980, and this programme continued until the relinquishing of diplomatic ties in 2007 (Achio, 2011). Given that the UCR instigated the partnership as part of its pursuit for international academic relationships (Rodriguez Holkemeyer, 2011), there is contention over whether this activity amounts to public

²⁶ These companies were the focus of a documentary in 2011 on the controversial trade in shark-fins. In response to criticism, the Costa Rican government imposed further legislation and restrictions on these companies. However, the issue was the most public criticism of Taiwan in Costa Rica since the corruption scandals of 2006 and has arguably allowed those in favour of a relationship with the PRC to receive vindication for their preference (see Alexander, 2011b; Sanchez, 2011).

diplomacy, because the relationship with UCR was not initially a product of Taiwanese strategy.

In conclusion, the most important of the three main factors in Costa Rica's decision to impart formal recognition on the PRC was the election and subsequent policy decisions of President Oscar Arias. His almost completely private decision was made as part of efforts to address perceived irregularities in Costa Rican foreign policy, irregularities that were considered a hindrance to the country's strategic progression. Of secondary importance is the rise in value of the PRC to world trade. Indeed, Costa Rica's decision was with both pragmatism and what Arias believed to be the national interest.

The least important factor of the three discussed is the relative inadequacy of Taiwan's foreign policy towards Costa Rica, yet this still requires discussion as it provides valuable context for the following chapters on El Salvador and Guatemala. While one can be critical of the Taiwanese for their use of corrupt practices to maintain diplomatic allies, their public diplomacy also appears to have lacked penetration with the Costa Rican public, and been too focused on building and maintaining relations with elites. In the wider context, it can be argued that their approach to public diplomacy in Costa Rica demonstrates that Taiwan's main concern is with its informal relations with the major powers of the world rather than its formal diplomatic relations. However, the extent to which underperformance by diplomats and a weak overall strategy played a part in the loss of Costa Rica must also be considered. This can be said largely from the conclusions to the other chapters will highlight in regards to Taiwan's diplomatic corps in Central America. That said, priority must still be given to factors beyond Taiwan's control.

The PRC's Public Diplomacy in Costa Rica

Since Costa Rica recognised Beijing in 2007 the nation-state has undergone a transformation in so much as the PRC has been quick to begin performing the public

diplomacy activities that we see from them elsewhere in the underdeveloped world. However, while in Africa, as elsewhere, it is natural resources that roughly dictate where the PRC engages, Costa Rica is light on natural resources and so there can be little doubt that the extent of the PRC's engagement here is primarily motivated by Taiwan's dominance in the region.

What is more, one can look to the PRC's acquisition of South Africa as a diplomatic ally in 1998 as a precursor to Costa Rica. As Naidu writes:

South Africa is perceived as a strategic ally, given its economic strength and position vis-à-vis the southern African region and the continent more broadly, its reputable international status, and not least because of its influence and position in advancing a multilateral global order aligned to Africa's reintegration into the global economy (Naidu, 2008: 167).

As such, if one substitutes South Africa and southern Africa and replaces the terms with Costa Rica and Central America, we find a not too dissimilar pattern emerging, where the PRC first embraces the country deemed to be the regional authority in the hope that this carries extra influence and legitimacy when it comes to engage with the region's less prominent neighbours.

What follows is an in depth analysis of the PRC's public diplomacy activities in Costa Rica since 2007. When appropriate, reference has been made to Taiwan's similar activities prior to 2007 so that the reader gains some comparative perspective. This section has ordered the more implicit communications ahead of explicit communications given the emphasis attached to them in the introduction to the thesis regarding their dual domestic and international role. Thus, that both forms are prevalent in Costa Rica demonstrates the versatility of the PRC approach to public diplomacy and the diversity of outcomes attached to such practices.

Improving Infrastructure - 'Stadium Diplomacy'

According to official sources, the PRC has constructed 85 sports facilities for its allies across Asia, Africa and Latin America since the inauguration of its foreign assistance programme in 1954 (Xinhua News Agency, 2011). This arm of public diplomacy, known as 'stadium diplomacy' (Will, 2011), has provided new or renovated dilapidated stadia for the citizens of countries as diverse as Zambia, Angola, Ghana, Grenada and Costa Rica. On stadium diplomacy Will has stated: "While stadiums are only a small component of China's greater foreign aid policy, the massive, modern structures are a tangible reminder of Chinese assistance for even the most marginal members of society" (Will, 2011). Thus, stadium diplomacy is an implicit way of engaging with the public as it signifies investment into both national infrastructure and the sporting prestige of the nation, and given the PRC's propensity to engage in public diplomacy by this method, 'stadium diplomacy' has become a prolifically Chinese way of engaging with foreign publics.

At a cost reportedly between US\$83 and US\$105 million to the PRC depending on sources (Williams, 2011; Leandro, 2009), the new 35,000 capacity, fully seated national stadium in La Sabana Park in San Jose cannot be missed by commuters entering the city from Escazú, San Jose's wealthy western suburb, or those recreational visitors to the city's largest park.²⁷ As an act of public diplomacy, the PRC's Ambassador to Costa Rica Li Changhua stated in an article written in *Nacion* newspaper in March 2011 that, "We can conclude that the Sino-Costa Rican friendship has surpassed the governmental level enlarging itself within all society to become the consensus of both publics [...]. The inauguration of the stadium is the most exciting example of this" (Li, 2011b).

Beyond stadium diplomacy, the PRC has made investment in Costa Rican sport a key part of its public diplomacy strategy. For example, in 2008 the PRC (via state-owned Huawei Telecommunications) sponsored Costa Rican athletes to participate

²⁷ It should also be noted that the current President of the Costa Rican Football Federation is Eduardo Li who comes from the Chinese Diaspora of Costa Rica.

at the Beijing Paralympics (MIDEPLAN, 2007), and on his maiden trip to Central America in November 2008, Hu Jintao distributed 1,000 mountain bikes and 10,000 footballs to young Costa Ricans (Murillo, 2008a; Brennan, 2008b). However, in terms of the PRC's public diplomacy through sport, the stadium in San Jose is by far the most recognised.

The stadium was constructed without Costa Rican input, and used only labour and materials imported from the PRC (Cozta Rica, 2010).²⁸ It was formally opened in March 2011 by a series of events including a football match between the Costa Rican national team and the PRC, a music concert from Latin American superstar Shakira (Williams, 2011), and a performance by an ethnic minority song and dance group from the PRC (Li, 2011b). However, it is the giant 'eternity knot' constructed above the stadium's main entrance that is the most lasting indication of PRC input. As a traditional Chinese symbol for luck, affection and union, this emblem suggests the creation of bond between the nations. These occurrences, and the prominence of the stadium in San Jose, serve as a powerful reminder to the people of Costa Rica of the new relationship between their country and the PRC.²⁹ That said, it is more than likely that the eternity knot is more symbolic for the Chinese audience at home than it is for Costa Ricans. Indeed, Ambassador Li, in one of his quarterly addresses to the Costa Rican people took the time to explain its significance (see Li, 2011b). Thus, at the stadium entrance there is also a large plaque written in Spanish telling those who read it that the stadium is a gift from the PRC and a sign of friendship between the

²⁸ At a talk by Costa Rican Foreign Minister Dr. Rene Castro Salazar at the London School of Economics (LSE) on 17th January 2011, Castro was passionately quizzed by a Costa Rican student on the apparent circumvention of Costa Rican labour laws and import tariffs in the construction of the stadium. Castro's response was simply that, "We are careful not to try and impose the Costa Rican standards to anybody because first of all the world would be a mess." (Castro Salazar, 2011)

²⁹ There has been criticism within Costa Rica of the stadium location, not least from former Minister for Culture, Guido Sáenz, who publicly stated that, "there's plenty of room for a stadium in other parts of San José that are not designated areas for a public park [...] Now there are going to be 35,000 people trying to get in to see a game in an already crowded part of town. It's a catastrophe." (Saenz, cited in Williams, 2011) Moreover, as John Holtz (2011) pointed out, there are only 200 parking spaces at the stadium resulting in the need to bus spectators in from suburbs. The extent to which the PRC requested its location to ensure maximum publicity remains unclear.

two peoples. This highlights the PRC's use of both implicit and explicit communications in explaining their motivation behind donating the stadium.

As an arena for sport, the stadium is unrivalled in the modernity of its facilities anywhere on the Central American isthmus (Williams, 2011). Thus, the stadium should be viewed as both an act of public diplomacy towards the people of Costa Rica and an attempt to influence those in Costa Rica's vicinity. This is supported by the statements by PRC diplomats who claim that their activities in Costa Rica are intended for publicity across the whole region (see Herrera, 2007). What is more, beyond this attempt by the PRC to say 'we can do more for your country than Taiwan can', the strategic decision to invest in sport is a worthwhile strategy given its positive correlation to 'national pride'. With the legacy of the Beijing Olympic Games still apparent, this correlation between sport and national pride is something that the CCP has considerable experience of orchestrating domestically (see Price, 2008). Thus, it is unsurprising that they have used the Olympic legacy as a key part of their public diplomacy. Finally, from general conversations and by monitoring the national media, there has been a general mood of appreciation among Costa Rican football fans for the PRC's donation given the dilapidation of the old national stadium in San Jose. However, those interviewed displayed a tendency to question what Costa Rica would be asked for in return.³⁰

As with any act of implicit communication, there is greater potential for a variance in interpretation than if the explicit method had been used. Therefore, at

³⁰ Several domestic and international media organisations tried to establish the mood of the audience at the opening of the stadium when Costa Rica played Argentina in a friendly football match. Feedback was generally positive, for example, "Yenia, a 27-year-old psychology student, said: "I'm delighted with what they've built. It's so important for our country's infrastructure and for Costa Rican sport." She had no qualms about paying the \$100 ticket price, despite predicting a 3-1 defeat for her team." There were also quotations of negativity however. "Not everyone was convinced by the gift. Jason, a 31-year-old laboratory technician, said he was "very proud of the stadium, which we could never build ourselves", but had reservations about his government's association with China. "I don't like the fact that we have relations with a Communist country. Though clearly there are many financial incentives China can offer that [others] can't." (Freedman, 2011) As with all media questioning of such ilk, the interview of spectators outside a stadium on the night of its opening must inevitably be skewed, as those in opposition to the PRCs role in its construction would be less likely to be in the vicinity. That said, such articles still offer a degree of insight into national debates.

this point it is worthwhile discussing the views of critical analysts on PRC stadium diplomacy. During his interview John Holtz, viewing the stadium as PRC self-glorification, somewhat cynically stated that, “when China really goes into a country they always build a monument to themselves, and it’s a public monument” (Holtz, 2011). Mauricio Delgado, a Costa Rican researcher at the London School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), stated in his interview that, “[the Costa Rican] people are interested in China for how quickly and efficiently they build big projects, because they went from bicycle to car very quickly and they’ve managed their infrastructure pretty well.” (Delgado, 2011) In this regard, Delgado hinted that the stadium, and the fledgling relationship itself, was an opportunity for Costa Rica to improve upon its own human capital. Finally, Rachel Will from the US-China Institute at the University of Southern California (USC) has studied how the recipient countries of these stadiums have been, “far from random”, with stadia construction following major diplomatic and economic agreements with the PRC (Will, 2011). This emphasises the extent to which these acts of public diplomacy are linked to the PRC’s foreign policy priorities whether political or economic.

Thus, while the stadium is officially a gift from the PRC to Costa Rica and formal linkages cannot be made to other political and economic occurrences, public diplomacy should be considered as part of a nation-state’s wider pattern of foreign engagement, and thus primarily concerned with the power of the source. We should therefore see the stadium as linked to the changes Costa Rica has made to its stance on a number of issues since beginning its relationship with Beijing, the most notable being when the Dalai Lama was refused entry in 2008. However, despite this, the PRC continues to claim a policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other governments (Hearn and Leon-Manriquez, 2011; Kurlantzick, 2007; Zhu, 2010).

It must also be noted that the stadium was at the centre of considerable controversy during and after its construction. Controversy emerged because of a lack of Costa Rican involvement in the construction process, the use of Chinese

migrant workers, and the apparent circumvention of Costa Rican labour laws and import tariffs (Holtz, 2010b). As a result, the stadium drew comparisons with the Taiwan Friendship Bridge, which had used Costa Rican labour and respected domestic legislation. On this point, Holtz (2011) stated: “take a look at [the stadium] now because Costa Rica has no budget for maintenance”, when comparing the stadium to media reports that the bridge had fallen into disrepair despite the presence of Costa Rican engineers on the project (Inside Costa Rica, 2010). However, undoubtedly the greatest controversy has surrounded the state-owned company Anhui Foreign Construction (AFECC) who built the stadium. In addition to the discontent regarding the lack of Costa Rican labour and materials, AFECC attempted to enter the Costa Rican domestic construction market after the completion of the stadium, undercutting local firms in tendering for an executive apartment complex called Torres del Lago close to the stadium to be constructed with the leftover materials and remaining migrant workforce (Rojas, 2010). This proved to be difficult for the PRC’s public diplomacy, with first the Costa Rican Chamber of Construction announcing its displeasure at these actions (Murillo, 2010b), and then further revelations by the media that the Costa Rican embassy in Beijing had received considerable pressure from various PRC government agencies to grant additional visas to AFECC workers to enter Costa Rica (Mata, 2010).

To provide some critical perspective to these events in Costa Rica, in the city of Ndola in Zambia’s copper belt the PRC has employed local labour for the construction of the new stadium due for completion in 2012. What is more, while the stadium has been constructed, a select group of Zambians have been attending university in the PRC to provide them with the vocational skills required to maintain a stadium of such size and modernity. This was due to the lack of human capital in the country before this (Times of Zambia, 2011). While one can speculate that the decision to employ a Zambian workforce is probably more a reflection of the lower labour costs in Zambia than in Costa Rica, it may also reflect the PRC’s awareness of

their international image, and is therefore an attempt to improve the way in which their public diplomacy is delivered and subsequently received.

Stadium diplomacy is one of the most aesthetic methods of public diplomacy utilised by the PRC in Costa Rica and demonstrates the PRC's keenness to endear themselves to Costa Ricans through investment in infrastructure and the country's sporting eminence. What is more, this method of performing public diplomacy is similar to that used domestically by the PRC, where they have attempted to channel positive public sentiment and national pride through investment in sport (Zhao, 2008). Thus, the stadium, and Beijing's other sporting incentives to Costa Rica, are a tried and tested method of public engagement that the PRC also uses on the international stage in coordination with its foreign policy priorities.

Medical Diplomacy

Medical diplomacy is a largely implicit way of performing public diplomacy as attention is focused towards the deed of healthcare provision. The PRC has a history of medical diplomacy dating back to the 1960s when small parties of medics were deployed to newly independent African states to offer much needed expertise (Yu, 1963). Much of the PRC's early medical diplomacy was politically motivated with teams being deployed to countries with leaders who were either officially non-aligned to either the US or Soviet Union, or who displayed sympathy towards Beijing (Gilbert, 1963). Indeed, the first medical mission the PRC made was to Algeria in 1963 as Beijing sought to win influence with new President Ahmed Ben Bella who had officially declared the country non-aligned after the departure of the French colonialists (Zhu, 2010).³¹ As will be seen in this section, these medical missions have become larger and now provide more services, and, as with much of the PRC's strategic engagement, ideological rhetoric has been diluted as concerns

³¹ It was Beijing's ambition to play a leading role in the non-aligned movement, particularly amongst underdeveloped nation-states (Cooper, 1976; Kim 1979).

over economic development, the isolation of Taiwan, and the general portrayal of the PRC's international image take precedent (Zhu, 2010: 6).

The PRC naval medical vessel 'Peace Ark' docked in the Costa Rican city of Puntarenas on its Pacific coast for five days offering local people a free clinic from 24th – 29th November 2011 as part of the focus of the PRC on building positive public sentiment around the world through the provision of free healthcare. The local media in Costa Rica wrote that the vessel, which also berthed in Cuba, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago during this trip, was in attendance to reduce waiting lists at *Hospital Monsenor Sanabria* in the city, and treated over 1000 patients in a combination of surgical and consultancy procedures (see Rodriguez, I., 2011; Heredero, 2011).³² When the Peace Ark arrived in Costa Rica, a spokesperson for the PRC embassy stated that, "in times of war this boat is used for the treatment of wounds, to give medication, or to move patients to hospitals on land. In ordinary times, it is used to offer services to those in coastal areas" (Lee, cited in Rodriguez, I., 2011).

The Peace Ark was first used as a tool of public diplomacy when it travelled to the Indian Ocean for three months in late 2010 (Yu, 2011), stopping at Kenya, Tanzania, Djibouti, Bangladesh and the Seychelles on that voyage (Li, 2010; Ross, 2010). Indeed, the missions to the Indian Ocean and to Central America and the Caribbean have offered assistance to countries where free public healthcare is either limited or almost non-existent. However some commentators have criticised Beijing's selection of the recipients of medical diplomacy for being too focused on political and economic factors. For example, writing in the *Washington Times*, Yu (2011) criticised Beijing and the Peace Ark's work in the Caribbean for not helping the countries in the region most in need.³³ Indeed, the article in the *Washington Times* makes an important point about the selectivity of humanitarian aid, Chinese or

³² The Peace Ark also has an optical and a dental clinic (Ross, 2010). However, Costa Rican news reports focused on its role as a hospital.

³³ The Peace Ark sailed very close to Haiti, which continues to struggle after the earthquake of 2010.

otherwise, especially if one considers the October 2011 devastation caused by torrential rain and flooding across El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua (see BBC News, 2011). These countries all maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan, and so it may be argued that the locations of the Peace Ark in late 2011 are primarily linked to winning hearts and minds in current PRC regional political and economic priorities.

Beyond this, the selection of Puntarenas as the Peace Ark's docking location is in itself of interest to analysis of public diplomacy strategy. It is understandable that Puntarenas was selected. The PRC already has a significant presence on Costa Rica's Caribbean coast around Puerto Limon, the country's other major port, where the port area is being upgraded in preparation for more sea traffic as production increases at the nearby RECOPE oil refinery. This is part of the PRC's increasing need to acquire finite resources from countries around the world. Therefore, in what is the only other Costa Rican port for the Peace Ark to dock, Chinese projects have already brought opportunities to local people.

Moreover, aside from the sizeable community in the capital San Jose, Puntarenas is home to the second largest concentration of Chinese Diaspora in Costa Rica, though the PRC has found itself at odds with them since 2007. The Chinese in Puntarenas are considerably influential in the local fishing industry, owning a number of private docks (Ramsay, 2011). These docks are geared towards the controversial practice of shark-finning for which Costa Rican waters offer a plentiful, if declining supply (Alexander, 2011e). However, whether through heritage or business, most of these Diaspora are affiliated to Taiwan. Working from a number of private, heavily guarded docks along the waterfront, these businesses export their products to markets across Asia, and to Taiwan in particular, a primary market for this expensive delicacy (Ramsay, 2011). Therefore, in addition to the public diplomacy being conducted by the PRC with the local Puntarenense, the appearance

of the Peace Ark may well be an attempt to counter what Beijing believes are negative attitudes amongst Costa Rica's Chinese Diaspora.³⁴

It is clear that the PRC's medical diplomacy follows its international diplomatic and economic agreements and priorities. Therefore, the presence of the Peace Ark in Costa Rica, and indeed Puntarenas, should be judged in the wider context of Beijing's public diplomacy strategy of providing healthcare assistance to its underdeveloped allies. This highlights public diplomacy's use as an incentive to ensure continuity amongst friendly nation-states. However, the voyage of the Peace Ark can also be interpreted as an attempt to endear the PRC to the Chinese Diaspora in Costa Rica and beyond, in the hope that these communities can assist by informally promoting the PRC within the region they have made home.

Education Diplomacy

The provision of education assistance and the creation of partnerships in learning is one of public diplomacy's most studied activities. Perhaps the most renowned public figure of this type of public diplomacy is US Senator J. William Fulbright who began the Fulbright Program in 1946, which continues to offer international educational exchange to young Americans and those wanting to study in the USA (see Woods, 1995). However, variations of this flagship method of engagement with the elite of foreign publics have been used for centuries. One can look to the scholarships handed out by the Byzantine or Holy Roman Empire as they sought to maintain and spread their influence (Eide, 1970). Education Diplomacy was one of the first, formal, post-World War II methods of conducting public diplomacy, when predominantly European and North American governments offered international scholarships to each others' citizens and to elites from the underdeveloped world in a bid to influence those who have the potential to be in

³⁴ Further illustrating this argument is the fact that the Peace Ark stopped at Cuba, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, all island states with considerable immigrant heritage with China. For more information see Look Lai (1993), and Johnson (2006).

positions of political and economic power in the future (Manheim, 1994). The most notorious examples from US programmes are Hamid Karzai and Mikheil Saakashvili, the current leaders of Afghanistan and Georgia respectively.

The PRC and Taiwan have both made education scholarships available to the publics of their formal diplomatic allies. In 2004 The Chinese National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (known as 'Hanban') launched its first Confucius Institute in Seoul, South Korea and as of October 2011 had 350 registered institutes around the world (Hanban, 2011). Furthermore, in 2011 the government of Taiwan announced the creation of Taiwan Academies, which analysts claimed was at least partly in response to the rapid growth of the PRC's Confucius Institutes (*China Post*, 2011; Rawnsley, 2011). The main function of these organisations is therefore to be visible hubs of Chinese culture and language teaching on the ground in strategic locations around the world (Paradise, 2009). Both education scholarships, which bring students to the PRC and Taiwan, and institutes of cultural diplomacy such as the Confucius Institutes, which seek to educate a foreign public in their home country, are therefore instruments of educational public diplomacy.

International Scholarships

The accurate documentation of international scholarships is reliant on both transparency and the good statistical housekeeping of the governments involved. To this end therefore, the largest issue when investigating this aspect of public diplomacy is the provision of accurate data. This is not a result of data protection but of data being partially obscured in the process of scholarship donation and acceptance.³⁵ Consequently, these circumstances hamper both the stocktake of a nation-state's social capital and also accuracy in the discussion of public diplomacy.

³⁵ Carmen Claramunt explained that not all scholarship offers come through the Department of Scholarships at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Costa Rica. Some nation-states, for example France, work with the Department of Education, whereas the USA and Germany have provided scholarships direct to universities and have refused requests from the Department of Scholarships for information. Therefore, the Department of Scholarships takes information from the website of the awarding agencies. However, the names of awardees

With the movement of Costa Rica's diplomatic relations from Taiwan to the PRC in 2007, Taiwan withdrew its education funding to Costa Rica and terminated all scholarship contracts of Costa Rican students studying in Taiwan. As part of the agreement of diplomatic relations however, the PRC agreed to relocate all 16 Costa Rican scholarship holders studying in Taiwan to appropriate universities and courses in the PRC should they wish to complete the remainder of their contracts (Claramunt, 2011; *Nacion*, 2007b). Indeed, that only 16 students required transfer is indicative of the indifference shared by both governments in promoting the Taiwan scholarship for, as the Department of Scholarships at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in San Jose revealed, in 2006 Taiwan donated 20 scholarships (Claramunt, 2011). Such indifference is a parable of Taiwan's incumbency in Costa Rica and reflective of its preoccupation with the diplomatic relationship as motivation for all its activities in the country.

When asked about Taiwan's engagement with the UCR, the most prestigious university in the country, Mayra Achio, Head of the Confucius Institute on campus provided concise and significant enlightenment on this issue. A transcript from the interview is therefore worth quoting at length:

Achio: When the diplomatic relationship finished Taiwan told us that no more teachers would be coming from Taiwan, and that was mainly the relationship [of the UCR] with Taiwan. There were also a few conferences here and there and the exchange of academics, but it was not as strong as it is now with China and I think it will become even stronger.

Question: Why was the relationship with Taiwan not strong?

Achio: Because there was little interest from either party. I think that Taiwan was not interested in developing a stronger relationship with our

and even the academic discipline of the scholarship remain unclear (Claramunt, 2011). This opaque situation between countries and domestic government departments has therefore rendered the collation of reliable data problematic and hampers our ability to conduct critical analysis.

university, maybe they had other interests. Plus it was not attractive for us as scholars or academics to go to Taiwan [...]. We were not really that interested in having a relationship with Taiwan and they were more interested in politicians, the USA and Europe. (Achio, 2011)

Where Taiwan seemingly lacked interest, the PRC has been keen to demonstrate its value. The PRC has made 40 scholarships available to Costa Rican students via the Department of Scholarships at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, doubling the number Taiwan provided and making the PRC the fourth most generous provider to Costa Rica according to department statistics.³⁶ These are on a rolling basis, so for example in academic year 2010/11, 24 new students began scholarships in the PRC with 16 students continuing their studies from the previous year (Claramunt, 2011).

Similar to Taiwan before 2007, the PRC offers three types of scholarship: to study Mandarin for one year; one and two year Masters courses; and finally full three-year undergraduate courses (Claramunt, 2011).³⁷ However, whereas the number of Taiwan scholarships was sufficient to the demand, at each intake since 2007 applications for study in the PRC have far exceeded the number of available scholarships (Claramunt, 2011). This indicates the PRC's greater attractiveness to Costa Ricans, which has been bolstered by the support of both governments who have a keen interest in maximising the opportunity.

Given Taiwan's apparent lack of interest in either the scholarship programme or its capacity as a form of public diplomacy, it should also be noted that the PRC Embassy in San Jose contacted a number of former scholarship holders in late 2010 and asked them to establish the *Asociacion Exbecarios Costa Rica – China* (Association

³⁶ The most generous is the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JAICA) (Claramunt, 2011).

³⁷ Claramunt (2011) confirmed that applications for the Masters and Mandarin courses far outweigh applications for undergraduate study. This is unsurprising, given that fluent English is a prerequisite and that the majority of students are of high school leaving age. Claramunt also confirmed that scholarships to study in Mexico and Argentina are the most popular at undergraduate level due to language compatibility.

of Ex-scholarship holders Costa Rica – China). This group meets at the China – Costa Rica Cultural Centre in San Jose once a month for Chinese language and cultural evenings. I asked one of the founders, Pablo Rojas, a former UCR Masters student whether the PRC embassy had explained to him their motivation for creating the association.

We used to be students in China because of the scholarships that China offers every year, and now they want us to keep the link between our countries. They want us to show the China that we lived in. That's the reason they gave us in order to create this association. Of course, their interest is to maintain the 'special link' between countries. I understand that this is because of their political interests in Central America. (Rojas, 2010)

Thus the organisation was created by the PRC's embassy rather than the collective organisation of the ex-scholarship holders and this reflects the PRC's desire to harness the human capital accumulated by the experiences of these Costa Ricans while they lived abroad. In this sense, there is much greater likelihood that the ex-scholarship holders' interest and fondness of China will be consolidated if they reminisce about their experiences. In addition to the creation of this organisation, the embassy facilitated an exhibition of photographs taken by ex-scholarship holders during their time in the PRC at an up-market Chinese restaurant in central San Jose during Chinese New Year 2011. This is public diplomacy at its most basic and arguably most effective.

At the time of writing approximately 60 to 70 ex-scholarship holders had shown an active interest in regular attendance at these meetings, and the group keep in regular contact via the Facebook page created by Rojas for announcements and discussion (Facebook, 2010). This number is likely to grow as more Costa Ricans attend university in the PRC in years to come. Indeed, while it is too early to tell whether any correlations can be found between this group and the maintenance of

positive sentiment for the PRC by exchange students, its initial organisation goes beyond Taiwan's endeavours in international scholarships in Costa Rica.

Therefore, the PRC's doubling of the number of scholarships provided by Taiwan can be interpreted as an intent to demonstrate the greater benefit of relations with China. Complementing this is their instigation of a social network for former scholarship holders to maintain the cultural and academic capital accrued by the scholarship, and in so doing, ring-fencing this positive sentiment among the demographic. In this sense, post-scholarship attendance at the association's meetings largely confirms that the experience of the scholarship holder has been a positive one. Finally, the assertions of both Claramunt and Achio that the Taiwanese were apathetic during their incumbency can be attributed to their focus on relationships with the political executive. Thus, while the PRC has made a genuine attempt to both build and maintain relations with the public of Costa Rica through its contribution to education, the Taiwanese sought primarily to build and maintain relations with politicians and civil servants through the same practice.

'Instituto Confucio'

The Confucius Institutes, run by Hanban, are non-profit public organisations with affiliation to the PRC Ministry of Education (Hanban, 2011). While most promote Chinese language and culture within their locality, some, for example the Confucius Institute for Business at LSE, operate in more specific channels. Indeed, if one compares the locations of these institutes around the world with the PRC's international political and economic focus then it becomes apparent that these institutes are used strategically as apparatus to engage with universities in areas of foreign policy priority. The theory of such engagement is that the PRC can integrate directly with the opinion-leaders of today and tomorrow, bypassing the gatekeepers of international media organisations, which the PRC claims to frame the government

of the PRC as authoritarian, economically protectionist, and an abuser of human rights (Zhang, 2009).

Analysts such as Paradise (2009) have therefore argued that Confucius Institutes represent a 'Trojan horse' approach to the challenges presented by negative international coverage, and one that is all the more important given that the PRC's growing band of international media continue to be largely ignored around the world (Rawnsley, 2009: 286). As such, this direct contact between PRC citizens and foreigners from strategically selected social groups make Confucius Institutes one of the flagship methods of PRC public diplomacy.

The selection of the Chinese philosopher Confucius (c500BC) and Confucianism for international promotion is also of interest for public diplomacy. Being a humanist philosophy, Confucianism is based around three virtues: *ren*, *yi* and *li*, which offer the individual a protocol to their participation in a harmonious society (see Bell, 2008). As such, Confucianism is compatible with the image of pacifism that the PRC wants to project for both its international intentions, known commonly as its 'peaceful development', and also the guiding philosophy of its domestic society. What is more, given that during the Cultural Revolution (1966 – 1976) the Chinese philosopher Confucius (c500BC) was reviled by the state, the 21st century utilisation of his name as part of the PRC's public diplomacy strategy demonstrates a remarkable turnaround (Paradise, 2009: 648). That 350 sites of academic excellence have successfully applied to be hosts of a Confucius Institute in only eight years is therefore testimony not only to the PRC's encapsulation of the interest in its rise, but to the success of this particular public diplomacy policy as well.³⁸ Hanban has said that it plans to have a thousand Confucius Institutes by 2020 (Xinhua News Agency, 2006).

³⁸ For a complete list of Confucius Institutes across the world, see Confucius Institute (2011).

In early 2008 the Rector of the UCR, Yamileth Gonzalez, signed a pre-agreement with Hanban while on a trip to the PRC as part of a Costa Rican education delegation (Achio, 2011). Motivation to host an institute came as a result of the UCR's previously discussed focus on international agreements with other universities around the world, with the Institute opening its doors to students in March 2010. In the first semester of teaching the Institute had 78 students and from the second semester beginning in September 2010 it had 150. Around 30% of the numbers are regular students at the university, 10-15% are those who work at the university and the remaining 55% are professionals from the general population (Achio, 2011). Additionally, the partnership between UCR and Renmin University has provided a further 10 international scholarships, on top of the 40 awarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However this is a private arrangement for UCR students to attend Renmin University to study Mandarin for one year (Rodriguez Holkemeyer, 2011; Achio, 2011; Rivero, 2010).

The institute at the UCR has been housed in a small but easily visible, newly renovated building in the centre of campus that had been the office of the Rector until it fell into disrepair. There is a large statue of Confucius on the walkway near the building. With the controversy of the new Stadium in mind, I questioned Achio on how the refurbishment had been carried out: "Everything was built by Costa Ricans, they [the PRC] just sent the cheque. It was supervised by the planning office of the university: they made the plans and everything" (Achio, 2011).

As a result of a legal battle in Costa Rica however, at the time of writing the institute had not been able to call itself an *Instituto Confucio* in line with other Hanban affiliates across the Spanish speaking world. This is because the China Association of San Jose, the centre for the Chinese Diaspora in Costa Rica, has been offering language courses to Costa Ricans from its 'Instituto Confucio' for many years and has the patent on the name in Costa Rica. The Institute at the UCR has thereby been forced to call itself what translates as the Centre for Studies of Chinese

Language and Culture, although Achio informed me that legal proceedings were underway to resolve the issue (Achio, 2011). To this end, it is clearly important to Hanban that the Institute at UCR joins the worldwide family of Confucius Institutes in name also. That said, despite the lack of the word 'Confucio' in its formal title, the university and the domestic media have been calling it the 'Instituto Confucio' anyway (for example, Marin, 2009; Murillo, 2008c).

Hanban's policy requires that each Confucius Institute is paired with a university in the PRC. The institute at the UCR was linked to Renmin University, a prestigious university in Beijing, and Achio affirmed that this pairing was a prestigious accolade for the UCR, and epitomised the importance the PRC has attached to its relations with Costa Rica as a platform to the rest of Central America. This greater intention Achio confirmed at the end of her interview:

There is a special interest from China in our country, as there are no other diplomatic relationships with China in Central America, as you know because you are working on the region. We are the first so they want [Costa Rica] to show up all the benefits of that relationship. But we can take advantage of that, if we do it with purpose, and I think that the authorities of this university have it clear that we try to support and develop projects that are coherent with our mission as a public university in a country like Costa Rica. We should not serve other interests. (Achio, 2011)

The UCR has been both realistic and cautious in its reciprocal exchange of PRC students. Indeed, while the government of Taiwan did not develop student exchanges to Costa Rica, and programme for students from the PRC, and Renmin University in particular, has not been developed thus far, development of this would have been beneficial. In the case of the now incumbent PRC, the programme would form part of the government's 'going out' directive (Li, 2010a). However, as Achio noted, it has been difficult for the Confucius Institute to find people at Renmin

University who speak enough Spanish to teach Mandarin at the elementary level, let alone a student population (Achio, 2011). Consequently, English has been the language of mediation. For such a system to work therefore, it is most probable that the UCR would need to begin teaching courses in English.

Beyond this, representatives of the UCR have expressed other concerns. Professor of Chinese Studies, Patricia Rodriguez Holkemeyer, stated that cultural divisions may also be an issue should PRC students begin coming to Costa Rica in the future:

Rodriguez: It will be very difficult to put Chinese students who do not know Spanish in Costa Rican families. Foreign students stay with Costa Rican families [at the UCR] and we have a big pool of families who benefit from having these students stay in their homes.

Question: Why is there a problem then?

Rodriguez: The problem is that they do not speak Spanish and the Costa Rican families will find it very odd to have a Chinese student in their house. (Rodriguez Holkemeyer, 2011)

That there is a perception that the network of families who provide accommodation for foreign students at the UCR may find it 'odd' to have Chinese person in their house says much about continuing international attitudes towards the Chinese. Indeed, this concern over the cultural gap, whether interpreted innocently or as xenophobic, reflects the continuing enigmatic persona of the Chinese, which is most likely a consequence of the legacy of self-imposed isolation from the world. It therefore remains that this is still an obstacle to PRC engagement with foreign publics.

The inauguration of a Confucius Institute (in all but name) has allowed the PRC to establish a public academic headquarters for the projection of its culture and

language in Costa Rica. As such, education diplomacy is one of the most explicit methods of performing public diplomacy given the considerable rhetoric that such organisations attract. Indeed the PRC's diplomats around the world appear eager to discuss these institutes when relaying their local public diplomacy. Furthermore, the strategic decision to make the Institute at UCR as visible as possible on campus fits well with analysis of the choice of location for the new stadium, for the PRC has an interest in being as visible as possible in the activities it is conducting in Costa Rica.

The increasing number of students enrolled can also be considered a positive indication of civic interest in the PRC, with the institute's affiliation to Renmin University in Beijing only adding to that prestige. However, that the two nations remain largely unfamiliar with each other is apparent in the statement of Professor Rodriguez that there would be issues housing Chinese students with local families should the ties extend. As a source of explicit public diplomacy therefore the PRC has gone beyond the Taiwanese in Costa Rica both in terms of opportunity for international exchange that they have delivered and the opportunities to promote cultural and linguistic understanding between the two people. However, whether the opportunities presented by the PRC in Costa Rica have been noticed elsewhere in Central America remains unclear.

Engagement with Costa Rica's Domestic Media

A foreign government's use of domestic media to further their own ends developed alongside the growth of mass literacy and mass circulation newspapers. For example, Bourne comments on how, in 1840 when Britain and France were involved in a power struggle over what is now known as the Middle East, Lord Palmerston, the British Prime Minister at the time, directed the British Minister in Stuttgart to use newspaper *Allgemeine Zeitung* to 'keep the Germans right' (Bourne, 1982: 481). Indeed, history provides us with stories of media being clandestinely funded by foreign governments in search of domestic mouthpieces. One example of

pertinence to this research is the US government's channelling of funds through its National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to support Nicaragua's *La Prensa* newspaper during the so-called 'Contra' War of the 1980s (see Kinzer, 1991; North, 1985). Thus, the use of their domestic media to communicate with the public of a foreign country is one of the most explicit forms of public diplomacy, although in many cases it has existed outwith the remit of public diplomacy institutions in the source country.

Since 2007 the PRC has sought to use the domestic media of Costa Rica to communicate objectives and promote understanding to their audience. This strategy has added importance for the PRC given the lack of impact being made by China Central Television, Xinhua News Agency, China Radio International (CRI), and other Chinese international broadcasting organisations (see Rawnsley, 2009).³⁹ The PRC's engagement with the domestic media has clearly been orchestrated from within the PRC embassy in San Jose, using predominantly radio and print thus far as part of a strategy to highlight four agendas to the Costa Rican people, namely that the PRC: is a peaceful international actor; who stands up for under-developed states like themselves; has a rich cultural history; and wants to be a friend to Costa Rica. Thus, we see an attempt by the PRC to create empathy with their audience, one of the central emotions of sentiment and a key theme of public diplomacy. As such, this section will provide critical analysis of two case studies from instances when the PRC has utilised the Costa Rican media as part of its public diplomacy approach. Representing radio and print the two studies aim to demonstrate the variety of the PRC's approach. However, in keeping with the structure of previous sections, contextual discussion of Taiwan during its incumbency will be provided first.

³⁹ In 2007 Xinhua opened a small bureau in San Jose. However this appears to be for the reporting the 'progress' being made in Costa Rica to audiences in the PRC. When I asked Armando Mayorga about Xinhua's local presence he was surprised as he was not aware such an office existed and certainly no approach had been made by either the news agency or *Nacion* to work closer together (Mayorga, 2011). For more on Xinhua bureau expansion, see Xin (2009 and 2010).

Taiwan has also sought close ties with Central American journalists and did so in Costa Rica until the break in diplomatic ties between the two nations in 2007. I conducted an interview on this subject with Armando Mayorga (2011), the long-standing Editor-in-Chief of Costa Rica's highest circulating daily newspaper *Nacion* (Rockwell and Janus, 2003). Given his long service to *Nacion*, Mayorga offered interesting comparisons to Chinese and Taiwanese approaches to the Costa Rican media:⁴⁰

[The Taiwanese] used to send us gifts all the time, for example, calendars, and they used to invite us to parties and so on. Now, with China, both we and they stand-off. We have said to them that they must understand that this is how we work and that the relationship between the countries is very new. But with Taiwan we needed to say to them, 'please respect that we have an ethics code'. For example, we must report and log all gifts that we receive which cost more than 3,000 Colones (\$7). For example, about two months ago the Japanese embassy gave me this pen, which is fine, but with Taiwan, we had to say to them to stop (Mayorga, 2011).

Mayorga confirmed that Taiwan had attempted to win favour with Costa Rican journalists through the use of strong interpersonal relationships and that on occasion the team at *Nacion* had been approached to stop a story being published. He was also aware that such relations could compromise journalistic integrity and was keen to highlight the measures that had been put in place to protect against such accusations. Mayorga also confirmed that the press office of the Taiwan embassy had regularly sent *Nacion* ready-prepared copy of stories involving Taiwan but that a lack of relevance to Costa Rica meant that they were rarely published. *Nacion* had from time-to-time covered stories involving Taiwan's contribution to development assistance in Costa Rica, but Mayorga confirmed that the Taiwanese did not put

⁴⁰ Mayorga has first-hand experience in dealing with both the Taiwanese and the PRC as both a journalist and then editor for Costa Rica's most reputable media organisation. (Mayorga, 2011)

pressure on the newspaper to publish (Mayorga, 2011). However, that the Costa Rican media were quick to label the bridge over the Tempisque river ‘the backstab bridge’ goes some way to emphasising that Taiwan did have a degree of sympathy from some corners of the establishment.

Thus, Taiwan’s cultivation of Costa Rican journalists had very limited impact on the media coverage of Taiwan. Indeed, there is a consistency between the interview with Mayorga and a search of the *Nacion* online archives, namely that coverage of Taiwan primarily followed three related and overwhelmingly negative frames: Costa Rica’s diplomatic relationship with Taiwan as unusual in the international context; Taiwan’s use of dollar diplomacy (and Costa Rica’s readiness to accept monies); and Costa Rica’s behaviour at the UN on the issue of Taiwan participation (Mayorga, 2011). Thus, given Mayorga’s claim that the stories sent by the Taiwanese lacked relevance to Costa Rica, it is logical to conclude that a more bespoke approach to the content by embassy staff would have improved uptake. This is further indicative of Taiwan’s prioritisation of maintaining interpersonal relationships with Costa Rica’s establishment and social elite, in this case editors and journalists, and their neglect of positive public sentiment. Contrasting this, the following sections on radio and print will demonstrate the PRC’s intention to forge more of a relationship with the Costa Rican people.

Radio: ‘Que Conoce de China?’

China Radio International (CRI), founded in 1941 and run by the state, is the sole overseas radio broadcaster of the PRC (CRI, 2011). It broadcasts music and also provides information programmes about the PRC and its international engagement. Prior to 2007 when diplomatic ties were announced, CRI had no bandwidth in Costa Rica. That said, Costa Ricans would have been free to listen on the internet to the Spanish sister-station to CRI, known as ‘*Radio InterNacional de China*’ before 2007.

However, as Rawnsley (2009) has noted, while CRI may have been broadcasting since 1941, its international audience figures remain speculative.⁴¹

In September 2009 the PRC's embassy in Costa Rica offered the prize of an all-expenses paid trip to the PRC for two winners of a radio station competition called 'Que conoce de China?' [What do you know about China?].⁴² Both *Radio Nacional* and *Radio IQ*, who ran the competition, are spoken-word stations delivered by the public-owned National Radio and Television System of Costa Rica (SINARTA) and both, since 2007, have carried content from China Radio International (CRI) (Gonzalez Vargas, 2009). The final of the competition, which received approximately 300 entries between its opening on 25th June and its closure on 31st August, was held on the 18th September 2009, when sixteen top scoring entries were asked questions during a broadcast from the PRC embassy in San Jose. Mauricio Delgado was one of the sixteen finalists at the embassy that day and confirmed that while embassy staff and affiliates watched the competition, it was only Costa Rican voices on the airwaves. As an international research contributor to an anthropological study of indigenous populations being conducted by SOAS, Delgado has lived in the PRC, Vietnam and Cambodia, and said that he entered the competition as he felt that this experience made him well placed to answer questions on the PRC (Delgado, 2011). His synopsis of the event at the embassy is of interest:

The questions were so blatant in terms of their agenda. For example, they asked one guy, 'how long has Tibet been part of China?' And the answer was, I can't remember, but the "correct" answer, the answer they wanted, was something like 1500 years. This happened a few times during the competition, they'd ask questions that had debateable answers (Delgado, 2011).

⁴¹ Wang Yuqing, a journalist from CRI, in a personal communication with the author said that the anticipated audience for CRI programming in Latin America was around 500,000 (Wang, 2010). How CRI have established this number remains unexplained.

⁴² Four second place contestants won a digital camera and ten third place contestants received an MP3 player (Gonzalez Vargas, 2009).

Delgado's description of the political agenda confirms statements made by Alan Pendleton, Vice-president of New World Media Inc. in the USA. Radio stations owned by Pendleton's company were the first to broadcast CRI content in the USA in 1993. He notes:

The first broadcasts were translations of domestic Chinese programmes that were heavy on statistics. It was like listening to the crop report. The Chinese have since grown more sophisticated in their business acumen and their broadcasting. One of the first things they learned was that blatant propaganda doesn't work. CRI has a point of view, but doesn't resort to fabrications. (Pendleton, cited in Rice, 2010)

Given that one requires an educated ear to separate the subtle propaganda from their broadcasts in Costa Rica, Delgado's statement goes some way to confirming the level of contemporary sophistication of PRC international broadcasting.

Thus, the hosting of this radio competition demonstrates reciprocal engagement with Costa Rica's intellectual elite and is thus a major achievement for PRC public diplomacy in Costa Rica. Moreover, that public radio stations in Costa Rica are broadcasting PRC content demonstrates both the influence of the PRC at the executive level of the Costa Rican government, and also a perceived market for these programmes among Costa Ricans, the decision to run a competition called 'What do you know about China?' on Radio *Nacional* and Radio IQ, stations with predominantly educational content, being indicative of an attempt to engage with a highly-educated demographic. Of greatest interest however, is the use of Costa Ricans to tell the PRC story to the listeners. For, as studies on source authority and credibility explain, one of the factors improving audience reaction is cultural similitude between orator and audience. This is part of what Kelman and Hamilton

(1989: 151) call the orator's 'aura of legitimacy', a concept underpinned by Aristotle's notion of 'ethos' (Aristotle [c350BC], cited in Erickson, 1974).

Newspapers: The Ambassador Addresses the Nation

Given the focus of Central American television on entertainment, and radio's regurgitation of stories from other media (Rockwell and Janus, 2003), academic studies of political reportage from the region have tended to focus on the print media (for example, Jones, 2002; Kodrich, 2002; Alexander, 2009). Therefore, both Taiwan and the PRC during their respective diplomatic incumbencies in Costa Rica have sought to maintain cordial relations with journalists from the print media, in particular, the country's most widely read and authoritative newspaper, *Nacion*.

Whereas the Taiwanese limited their engagement with the domestic print journalists of Costa Rica to small gifts, dinners, press releases and correcting perceived bias or untruths in reporting, the PRC has developed a considerably more advanced press engagement strategy since 2007. A noticeable advance occurred following the appointment of Li Changhua as Chinese Ambassador to Costa Rica on 6th January 2010. Li came from the post of Ambassador to Colombia, and had held the same post in Chile from 2003 to 2007 during which time the two governments had signed an FTA (Murillo, 2010a). Beginning on 27th July 2010, Li, through arrangement with *Nacion*,⁴³ began to write a quarterly article in the newspaper in which he addressed the Costa Rican people directly. Until then, the media's engagement with the ambassador or other embassy officials had been through face-to-face interviews, telephone and email conversations or interaction with the embassy press department (Mayorga, 2011). However, there is a direct correlation between Li's arrival in Costa Rica and *Nacion* beginning to publish unedited copy from the PRC embassy.

⁴³ Editor of *Nacion*, Armando Mayorga, did not reveal how the arrangement had been reached (Mayorga, 2011). However, in early 2012 it was revealed that similar content carried by the Washington Post and New York Times on the PRC had been paid for by the PRC's American Embassy (see Powell, 2012).

The appointment of a seasoned Chinese diplomat with experience in Latin America as ambassador highlights the prestige held by the PRC for its relations with Costa Rica. What is more, given that FTA talks were to begin in Costa Rica in 2010, it is clear that Li was brought in for his credentials in handling negotiations of this nature to their successful conclusion. This tactic of addressing the people directly represents a departure from Li's engagement with the Chilean and Colombian publics (he did not have a column in either *El Mercurio* (Chile) or *El Tiempo* (Colombia)), although more research is required as to whether this was a result of lack of opportunity rather than strategy. However, while it cannot be known whether Li wrote the columns in *Nacion* himself or whether they were produced by script writers in the embassy press office, given his fluency in Spanish the former should be suspected.

At the time of writing Li had published in *Nacion* six times, with each article addressing issues of both general and specific importance to Costa Rica (see Appendix D). Therefore, to understand this method of conducting public diplomacy, it is worthwhile conducting a thematic analysis of the language used by Li in these articles. What follows is a discussion of the various inter-related themes of the PRC's wider foreign policy as found in the six articles. These include: the PRC as a peaceful international actor; the PRC as leader of the global south or undeveloped world; and the promotion of greater understanding of the PRC. Each of these will now be discussed in turn.

On 1st October 2010, Li entitled his address to the Costa Rican people 'Desarrollo pacifico' [peaceful development], as the PRC sought to explain to the readers of *Nacion* that, "The China of today ties closely to the interest of the larger world, it is an important participant and entrepreneur in the international system, and it has become a significant force in the safe-guarding of world peace and promotion of joint development" (Li, 2010b). This theme of peaceful development is prevalent in most of the articles written by Li, and further examples include, "the

Nation Stadium of Costa Rica, donated by China, is an obvious expression of diplomacy, the ideal of peaceful development and the construction of a harmonious world” (Li, 2011b); and, “the ascent of China is being carried out peacefully, and instead of implying a threat to the world, generates opportunities for its economic development.” (Li, 2011d)⁴⁴

That the PRC affirms its peaceful intentions within the rhetoric of public diplomacy on a regular basis suggests a number of points. First of all, and most importantly, it shows that there is a need to counter the perceived Western bias regarding the PRC’s rise being dangerous to the stability of the international system. Related to this, but more specific to Costa Rica, the PRC’s claims of having peaceful intentions reflects Costa Rica’s tendency to ‘look north’ with the sources of their international newswires being in North America and Western Europe, not Asia.⁴⁵ Finally, content of this nature is a reminder that the diplomatic relationship between the PRC and Costa Rica is still in its infancy and that reassurances of the well-intended nature of the relationship may assist in the construction of mutual understanding and friendship.

An interesting albeit controversial way to gauge response to Ambassador Li’s theme of peaceful development is to read the commentaries that readers can post on *Nacion*’s website having read the articles online. Two readers posted sizeable passages of feedback having read the ‘desarrollo pacifico’ [peaceful development] article (Li, 2010b) Both were sceptical but for different reasons; one focused on the PRC’s growing need for natural resources as the overriding reason for the

⁴⁴ The phrases ‘peaceful development and ‘peaceful rise’ have both been used to describe the PRC’s intent as it moves up the global ladder. The latter was coined by Zheng Bijian the then Deputy Head of the Central Party School and subsequently received official sanction after being used by President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao. The phrase has since fallen out of favour and been replaced by ‘peaceful development’ after leaders, worried that critics would see the word ‘rise’ as threatening, changed the wording to ‘development’. (Zakaria, 2009)

⁴⁵ Armando Mayorga confirmed that *Nacion* has contractual relationships with AP, AFP, Reuters and EFE but not with the likes of Xinhua. Furthermore, to confirm the assertion of Waisbord (2000) that Latin American journalists ‘look north’ for examples of quality reportage, Mayorga stated that those publications most regaled at *Nacion* included the New York Times (USA), El Pais (Spain), CNN (USA), and the BBC (UK) (Mayorga, 2011).

development of their international relations; and the other following a more political line of criticism for the PRC's authoritarian government and his own government's eagerness to partner with the PRC. He signs off by saying, "Caution. Think. Do not let ourselves be deceived as easily as the politicians in power" (Aadrianov Castro, cited in Li, 2010b).

The second theme to highlight is the notion of the PRC as leader of the global south. This approach is reminiscent of Chinese attempts to foster relations with non-aligned countries during the Cold War where the PRC sought to offer an alternative to the neo-liberal policies proscribed by US hegemony but also to Soviet expansionism. As such, while the PRC has enjoyed accolades for becoming the second largest economy in the world, it has been keen to emphasise to the states of Asia, Latin America and Africa that it remains an under-developed country, albeit one advancing quickly. This demonstration of what is widely described as 'south-south' solidarity has been discussed by the likes of Le Pere (2008) and Strauss (2009) when analysing the PRC's relations with Africa. Indeed, on China – Africa relations, Le Pere writes:

This refrain often takes the form of a shared historical experience with other developing countries [vis-à-vis Western Imperialism], but there is also frequent reference to the importance of solidarity, self-reliance, shared purpose, and cooperation with other developing countries as foundational elements of its foreign policy. These values, in turn, are locked in a dialectical interplay with China's definition of its self-image, national interest and world view (Le Pere, 2008: 20).

Thus, we see the PRC using itself as a reference point for nation-states in Africa to encourage reverence from the underdeveloped world. This is also found in Li's articles in Costa Rica's *Nacion*. The following are some selected quotations from Li.

Being developing countries and lovers of peace, China and Costa Rica face the same task of promoting economic development and improving the people's standard of living (Li, 2010b).

In the course of sixty years since the foundation of the People's Republic, the Chinese government has forged cooperation between developing countries. In helping them to develop their economies and improve the living conditions of the people, this has deepened the friendship between China and these countries, and promoted south-south cooperation (Li, 2011b).

Focusing on issues that are hoped will create empathy between the source and the target audience is a basic and well-known tactic of persuasion (Kelman and Hamilton, 1989). Indeed, on the specific issue of climate change, Li goes a little further, criticising the irresponsible behaviour of developed states since the advent of industrialism, and in so doing, affirms the PRC's status as a fellow underdeveloped country. In addition, given that the promotion of environmental issues has become Costa Rica's 'niche diplomacy'⁴⁶ and that it desires to be the world's first carbon neutral country (Lean and Kay, 2008), this aspect of Chinese public diplomacy seeks to build upon the national stereotype of Costa Ricans being conscientious environmentalists: "The accumulated emissions of China are only 9% of the world and its emissions per capita are not even a quarter of that of the United States. The developing countries, including China, are very conscious of not committing the great errors of developed countries of irresponsibly not limiting their emissions" (Li, 2011a).⁴⁷

The PRC has been required to demonstrate multiple international personalities in its public diplomacy. While still classified as an underdeveloped state, in the

⁴⁶ Foreign Minister Rene Castro Salazar indicated this commitment to environmental diplomacy in a talk at the LSE in January 2011 (Castro Salazar, 2011). For more on niche diplomacy see Henrikson (2004).

⁴⁷ The timing of the Ambassador's engagement with Costa Rica on this issue is also interesting given the accusations of Chinese sabotage after the Copenhagen (2009) and Cancun (2010) rounds of the United Nations Climate Change Conferences (see Lynas, 2009).

coming years it will come under increasing scrutiny as its development continues. That it should be considered outside this group of developed states is therefore essential to its ability to invoke south-south compassion and thus the overall credibility of this public diplomacy strategy. Indeed, while there will always be those who consider this policy lacks credibility, the longer the PRC can pressure developed states on their environmental record and deflect criticism of its own contemporary issues the longer their empathy with the underdeveloped world will remain credible.

The third purpose of Li's articles has been to generate understanding of the PRC. This is partially due to the perceived negative bias that the PRC believes to be prevalent in western media discourse (Paradise, 2009; Zhang, 2009), but also reflects an independent public diplomacy strategy to raise awareness of the PRC. As such, Li Changhua has sought to encapsulate the PRC to audiences that may consider the PRC to be a relatively unknown or worrisome entity. Given the infancy of relations between Costa Rica and the PRC therefore, Costa Ricans can be included in this description. What is more, from analysis of Li's articles, there are three agendas running through his approach to increase understanding of the PRC: to legitimise the political sovereignty of the CCP; to alleviate scepticism surrounding the PRC's international enterprise; and to highlight the rich culture of the PRC. What follows are examples which emphasise each of these themes.

Thanks to its capacity to include all social forces in the political system, this system [of governance] totally reflects public opinion and the interests of different social sectors, so as to guarantee popular democracy and freedom of expression [...] It puts emphasis on the democratic consultation between the governing party and the participant parties [...] eliminating the instability of frequent political changes and minimising internal friction to combine fairness and effectiveness, while avoiding the defects of dictatorship. (Li, 2011c)

This quotation discusses what Naisbitt and Naisbitt (2010) call 'vertical democracy': where political society is structured by layers, each layer voting for their representative at the layer above. As such, this is a good example of Li trying to legitimise the political sovereignty of the CCP. However, given that Costa Rica operates a representative democracy, use of the term 'democracy' to describe the PRC's political structure is unhelpful for audience comprehension. Li's usage of familiar terms such as 'popular democracy' and 'freedom of expression' should therefore be considered an attempt to legitimise the PRC's government in the eyes of the Costa Rican public. However, the credibility of this approach remains to be seen.

Scepticism of the long-term sustainability of the PRC's economic rise after the reforms of the Deng administration has been well documented (Naisbitt and Naisbitt, 2010; Leonard, 2008; Garrison, 2005; Medvedev, 1986). The PRC's rise has received criticism from media across the world on issues such as poor working conditions, unpaid or low wages, corrupt practices, and competition from cheap Chinese made goods in the domestic market.⁴⁸ As a consequence, the PRC's public diplomacy has sought to frame its growing international footprint as positive for the world economy. For example, on the issue of the PRC's \$1.5 billion dollar investment in the Costa Rican state-owned oil company RECOPE, Li wrote that investment in the refinery, "will be a highly advanced and environmentally friendly project of bilateral cooperation in the region. While it will generate extra [oil] availability for

⁴⁸ In late 2009 the *New York Times* ran a ten article series called 'Uneasy Engagement' which examined issues surrounding the emergence of the PRC as a world power (see Wines et al., 2009). The articles that focused on PRC investment in under-developed countries focused on Africa and Asia, however, the issues discussed are of pertinence to Latin America given that they highlighted how the people's initial feelings of anticipation from the investment forthcoming soon changed to frustration and bitterness. In addition, during my time in Costa Rica, *Nacion* ran a large feature article from a Senegalese journalist entitled, 'China's African Front: In the style of Apartheid, Chinese managers impose atrocious conditions on African workers' (Mbaye, 2011). This article is representative of the unease many Costa Ricans feel towards PRC investment. Issues such as these have considerable history. For example, during the 1891-1892 the Silver Bow Trades and Labor Assembly, in coalition with the Butte Miners' Union in Montana, USA launched a boycott of all Chinese and Japanese businesses over what it called the 'fight against the lowering Asiatic standards of living and of morals' (cited in Flaherty, 2003:394). Awareness of negative publicity such as this most likely plays a role in PRC need to apply positive rhetoric to its international activities.

the country, the exchange and cooperation between our peoples will be extended incessantly” (Li, 2011b).

This quotation demonstrates the commitment of the PRC to reassuring Costa Ricans that PRC investments are a cooperative act for the betterment of both countries. Therefore, in the case of the RECOPE deal, while one is able to argue that the primary concern of the PRC, and that of any other country in this situation, is the security of access to natural resources, Li’s linkage of foreign economic investment to an opportunity for international social interaction is indicative of an attempt to frame such activities as acts of public diplomacy under the rhetoric of ‘mutual benefit’. Consequently, it can be deduced that the PRC, in awareness of the debate over their rise, has sought to alleviate fears that its investment in Costa Rica will replicate the apparent confrontations that have occurred elsewhere.

Finally, although Li’s public diplomacy regarding the richness of Chinese culture and heritage has been somewhat marginalised in Costa Rica by the greater prevalence of the themes discussed above, this theme can still be seen in some of Li’s articles. For example,

China is one of the ancient civilisations of the world. With more than 5,000 years of history and an extremely numerous population, it has undergone transformations as complicated as they are winding, from a poor and economically enclosed country with a political system of feudal monarchy, to a modern, open, democratic and friendly one (Li, 2011d).

The giant knot located above the entrance to the [national] stadium implies union, luck, and affection. Demonstrating a rich cultural content, it constitutes a traditional cultural sign of the Chinese nation (Li, 2011b).

That these statements appear less regularly in the Costa Rican media than the other themes of PRC public diplomacy discourse is not surprising. Given that few

Costa Ricans could afford the substantial costs of travel to the PRC,⁴⁹ the likelihood of independent travel is slim. Hence Li has strategically given greater attention to the PRC's political and economic priorities in the region.

In concluding this section there is, first of all, a need to acknowledge that while limitations exist in the capacity of all countries' international broadcasting institutions to engage with foreign audiences, the PRC's institutions appear less capable of reaching foreign publics than their equivalents in Western nation-states.⁵⁰ Indeed, while the rhetoric of those working for the PRC's international broadcasters tends to be positive towards the performance of CCTV, CRI and Xinhua on the international stage (Wang, 2010), the reality is that the PRC depends more on agreements with domestic broadcasters if they are to reach a significant audience for their messages. Therefore, while officials from the PRC might try to skew information by providing figures of 'estimated' or 'potential' audience size, the embassy staff's elusiveness on the issue is indicative of their recognition of the limitations of the PRC's international broadcasting.

In addition, it may be argued that the PRC has pursued a considerably more professional relationship with the media in Costa Rica than Taiwan did during its incumbency. Indeed, that the editor-in-chief of the most important media organisation in Costa Rica was required to tell Taiwan of the need to respect the impartiality of journalists is evidence of discomfort with the informal approach used by the Taiwanese. Furthermore, if anything was gained from this approach it was nullified by the provision of largely non-newsworthy material. It is difficult to deduce whether this was a consequence of negligence, ignorance or apathy on the part of the Taiwanese. However, given previous discussions of Taiwan's prioritising of the audience back home and of relationships with executive officials in its formal allies, one is tempted towards the latter. In stark contrast, the PRC has established a

⁴⁹ A return airfare costs around US\$1600, approximately a quarter of the average annual wage in Costa Rica.

⁵⁰ For example, Rawnsley (1996) has documented the remarkable success and lasting legacy of the BBC World Service and Voice of America in its broadcasting over the 'iron curtain' to Eastern Europe during the Cold War.

process of strategic engagement with the Costa Rican public in what is a considerable attempt to generate empathy and knowledge of their version of Chinese history. What is more, through strategic engagement with the domestic media they have been able to attract an audience, a crucial component in effective public diplomacy.

Chinese Diaspora in Costa Rica

Researchers such as Rawnsley (2009) and Zhu (2010) have discussed Beijing's intention to build positive sentiment with the considerable Chinese Diaspora around the world. However, this has proved somewhat difficult with the PRC encountering anti-Beijing sentiment, as Asian economics commentator Dan Biers notes on Panama:

The community typically have been pro-Taiwan because of its allegiance to the Kuomintang or Nationalist Party, which ruled until Chen's opposition victory last year. That support is fading now, partly because of the fall of the KMT and an influx of new immigrants from the Chinese mainland. Beijing's representative in Panama is working hard to win the community over and Taiwan diplomats say they are concerned. (Biers, 2001: 18)

Given the age of Biers comments it is not unreasonable to suggest that the formal diplomatic presence of the PRC in Costa Rica from 2007 onwards will have strengthened the PRC's ability to engage with the Chinese Diaspora in Costa Rica and perhaps elsewhere in the region. However, no academic research has been conducted into the Chinese Diaspora in Costa Rica and so we must turn to the work of Siu Lok (2005), an academic from the Chinese community in Panama to improve our clarity of this situation in Central America. On the Chinese community in Panama, she wrote in 2005 that they, "range in generational, class, religious, occupational, linguistic, and regional backgrounds, not to mention their extremely diverse racial-ethnic make-up and cultural identifications, attitudes and behaviours. Despite this diversity, they maintain a collective identification with being culturally

Chinese, broadly defined, and at the same time they feel deeply connected to Panama” (Siu, 2005: 33).

Chinese migration to Central America occurred in waves following four historical events which should be considered as push and pull factors: the California Gold Rush (1848); The Chinese Exclusion Act in the USA (1882); the victory of the CCP in the Chinese civil war (1949); and, Deng Xiaoping’s reforms (1978). While Siu’s comments are also correct for Costa Rica in that the Chinese Diaspora do range in regional heritage, most are southern Chinese from coastal regions such as Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan (Lin, 2011). These are the regions with greatest exposure to the colonial powers and international mercantilism, and where Beijing governments have traditionally lacked influence (Pye, 1992; Siu, 2005).

Hence, almost all mass-migration from the Chinese mainland has been as a consequence of political upheaval or economic destitution. Consequently, engagement with these groups presents a challenge for the PRC in Costa Rica as such movement since 1949 has been ultimately symbolic of a rejection of the CCP’s rule. Moreover, that the majority of Diaspora originate from regions towards the periphery of Beijing’s influence has made them unlikely to uncritically accept the contemporary presence and public diplomacy exploits of the PRC in Costa Rica. Recognising this, part of Beijing’s strategy in Costa Rica has been to at the very least nullify the threat of backlash but potentially to win the hearts and minds of this important social group. However, the influx of a new generation of Chinese Diaspora who have arrived in countries not as refugees but at the encouragement of Beijing has weakened this dynamic.

On Panama Siu (2005) explained that, “many expressed a sense of connection with the Taiwanese government based on memories of their family’s experience with Communist China. Others feel a deep indebtedness to the Taiwanese for their

many years of support and collaboration. I must emphasise however that the concern lay not in what would happen to Taiwan per se [if Panama were to recognise the PRC], but rather Chinese state representation in Panama” (Siu, 2005: 182). As such, the Chinese Diaspora is as much a threat as they are an asset to the PRC in Central America. However, if the same trajectory is retained then it can reasonably be said that there will be growing empathy for the PRC in years to come.

Competition for influence over the Chinese Diaspora is therefore an area of increasing importance for both the PRC and Taiwan in Central America. As a result, one of the focuses of this research was to understand the extent of this allegiance following Taiwan’s departure in 2007. I asked the manager of the China Association of Costa Rica, Lin Hsiao, about the relationship between the PRC and the Chinese Diaspora:

The China Association does not include or exclude anyone, Chinese or Taiwanese. We are all Chinese here. Before 2007, when Taiwan had the embassy, they provided lots of assistance to the Association. For example, when there was a party they would always ask how they can help. But now it has changed and China is here and they do not help.

We invited them to have a party when they arrived but they did not want to come. They said that they would only provide assistance and come to the party if we put a Chinese flag on the building. [...] We are an independent organisation including all people with Chinese heritage, the Chinese embassy wanted to make a political statement. (Lin, 2011b)

Additionally, in 2009 the mayor of Beijing, Guo Jinlong, and Costa Rican President Oscar Arias laid the founding stone of a proposed China Town in San Jose. However the Diaspora perceived this to be a hollow gesture given that a large proportion of San Jose’s Chinese population already live around the area of Paseo de los Estudiantes (*Inside Costa Rica*, 2009; Lin, 2011b), there businesses and community

making it a China Town by default. Thus, the PRC have attempted to politicise that which already was a working entity.

It should also be remembered that the PRC's embassy in Costa Rica is involved in a legal battle over the term 'Instituto Confucio' with the China Association who have been using the term to head the language and cultural courses that are run from the Association's headquarters. Additionally, there has been the docking of the Peace Ark in Puntarenas where the Chinese Diaspora have a sizeable community. Therefore, given the research by Siu and additions made by this research in Costa Rica, it can be determined that the scepticism discussed by the Diaspora community surrounding a PRC incumbency has been validated by the reality of China's engagement in Costa Rica. It can therefore be said that, as of writing, the Chinese Diaspora cannot be considered a public diplomacy asset of the PRC in Costa Rica. Indeed, it is arguable that such public diplomacy events as the docking of the Peace Ark in Puntarenas are as much a demonstration of the PRC's intended compassion towards the Chinese Diaspora as they are to the people of Costa Rica.

Challenges for the PRC's Public Diplomacy

While most of those studying the PRC's modern diplomacy agree that positive inroads have been made across the world (for example, Brautigam, 2009; D'Hooge, 2005 and 2007; Rawnsley, 2009; Wang, 2008; Zhu, 2010), for greater understanding of the success of their public diplomacy in Costa Rica it is worthwhile developing a discussion of the context within which the projects analysed above have occurred. This is because, as Wang notes: "The positive image China hopes to project is constantly overshadowed and undermined by negative headlines of the country's policies and governance. Just recently the expose of yet another spate of food safety scandals prompted Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao to lament in the Chinese media that without strengthening culture and morality, "China will never become a truly strong

and respected nation"" (Wang, 2011).⁵¹ Yet, despite the criticisms of the PRC's domestic and international conduct, Taiwan has not been seen to engage on issues like democracy, human rights, or working conditions, where its example has significantly more respect than that of Beijing. This section therefore feeds the main argument of the thesis as it emphasises the extent to which Taiwan is constrained by its diplomatic isolation and the policies of its KMT government.

Consistent with the ethnographic case study approach, this research selected two heavily publicised negative events that have occurred between the PRC and Costa Rica. The first is the visit of Hu Jintao to Costa Rica in November 2008, the first PRC President to come to any Central American country, and the second is the eventual ratification of an FTA between the PRC and Costa Rica in August 2011. While almost certainly intended to be positive and to benefit public diplomacy, both events were overshadowed by blunders which have arguably detracted from whatever positive public sentiment they were intended to generate.

President Hu Jintao comes to Costa Rica

The US Charge d'Affairs in Costa Rica at the time, Peter Brennan, introduced the state visit of Hu Jintao to Costa Rica between 16th and 17th November 2008 in a diplomatic cable to Washington D.C. by saying, "Chinese President arrives like Santa Claus with FTA, balls and bicycles" (Brennan, 2008b). It was the first time a PRC President had ever been to Costa Rica and the historic event received considerably more media attention than the revolving door of visits by Taiwanese Presidents and cabinet ministers to the region.⁵² Indeed, while Hu's distribution of

⁵¹ When the PRC and Costa Rica announced diplomatic relations in summer 2007 a number of stories appeared in *Nacion* discussing the poor quality of Chinese made goods. Stories included sickness and vomiting from toothpaste, food products, and lead poisoning from toys, although the toys had come from US company Mattel's factory in the PRC (see Avalos, 2007a and 2007b; Metzler, 2007).

⁵² With considerably less media coverage due, in part, to the frequency of the visits, President of Taiwan Chen Shui-bian (2000 – 2008) made yearly state visits to Central America during his tenure and attended almost all of the swearing in sessions for new Central American Presidents. For example, following the loss of Costa Rica as a diplomatic ally in June 2007, Chen made trips to Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador in August 2007 and

gifts for young Costa Ricans upon his arrival should be seen as an act of public diplomacy (Murillo, 2008a), Hu made no public address while in the country nor did he attend a press conference, choosing instead to allow embassy staff to issue a statement describing the importance of the FTA that was being discussed during his visit (see Murillo, 2008b and 2008c). Thus, we can deduce that Hu's arrival in Costa Rica was primarily for intergovernmental discussion of economic ties, with public diplomacy as a secondary motive.

However, of greater interest for this research are revelations regarding the Dalai Lama because they help to contextualise Hu's visit to Costa Rica, and the dynamics of the PRC's international affairs more generally. The Dalai Lama had been due to visit Costa Rica in September 2008 at the invite of the *Asociacion Cultural Tibetano – Costarricense* (Tibetan – Costa Rican Cultural Association). His visa was initially granted by the Costa Rican Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but the visa was withdrawn after a request from the PRC Ambassador to Costa Rica at the time, Wang Xiaoyuan (*Inside Costa Rica*, 2008; Mayorga, 2011; Cerdas, 2008). When interviewed, Mayorga (2011), Delgado (2011), and Holtz (2011) all considered the rejection of the Nobel Peace Prize laureate and spiritual leader to be internationally embarrassing for Costa Rica because Arias himself is a Nobel Peace Prize winner (1987), and denying the Dalai Lama a visa contradicted Costa Rica's projection of pacifism and religious tolerance.⁵³ Hence, the story of the Dalai Lama framed much of the Costa Rican media's reporting of Hu's visit, especially when journalists discovered that President Arias himself had decided to rescind the visa. Maritza Pacheco, President of the Tibetan – Costa Rican Cultural Association, told the media about her telephone conversation with President Arias: "What he said to me exactly was that if the Dalai Lama comes, Hu will not come and that is not convenient for Costa Rica at this time" (Pacheco, cited in *Inside Costa Rica*, 2008).

then to Guatemala and St. Lucia in January 2008, with the purpose of securing diplomatic support (see Luxner, 2007; Office of President of the Republic of China (Taiwan), 2011).

⁵³ Costa Rica's state religion is Catholicism but the constitution speaks of respect for all religions.

The Dalai Lama incident lays bare that appeasement of the PRC must now come before some of the principles Costa Rica has been renowned for. While much of the criticism for the decision was levelled at the Arias administration for causing considerable embarrassment to Costa Rica's international image, the issue raised a number of questions regarding the domestic and international conduct of the PRC and what may be asked of a nation-state so reliant on PRC investment. In particular, it raises questions regarding the PRC's principle of non-interference over issues of sovereignty in the underdeveloped world. Indeed, the PRC has been accused of propping up unsavoury regimes in Sudan and Zimbabwe, although Large (2008) has noted how the PRC has become more of a mediator in recent years. However, at the other end of the spectrum the PRC has been accused of meddling in Presidential elections in Zambia (see Ndulo, 2008). Thus, the incident with the Dalai Lama here must surely sit somewhere between these two extremes. Armando Mayorga also commented on the incident:

Mayorga: Oscar Arias has said to the world that he is a defender of human rights, but when the Dalai Lama tried to come to Costa Rica Arias blocked this due to pressure from China.

Question: Is denying someone entry to a country a human rights issue?

Mayorga: For me it is, it involves freedom, and the Dalai Lama wanted to be here, he wanted to give his message to the people in Costa Rica, but he could not.

Question: But freedom of movement is not always a human rights issue because many countries have strict visa requirements.

Mayorga: But he is a spiritual leader and his mission is to speak to the world about the occupation of Tibet. (Mayorga, 2011)

Thus, the Dalai Lama incident laid bare some of the potential issues of political and economic engagement with the PRC. It also raises questions about the credibility of public diplomacy by such individuals as Ambassador Li Changhua in *Nacion*. Indeed, while the PRC might not apply explicit pressure, the reality is that a government like Costa Rica's may be required to make decisions that are consistent with the PRC's worldview, but which diverge from the core beliefs of their people and traditional allies, if they wish the levels of investment to continue. Thus, this incident demonstrates that the PRC remains somewhat at odds with overwhelming international opinion on some issues, but of equal importance, it highlights contradictions in the PRC's policy of respect for internal sovereignty. Taiwan's views on this matter received no publicity in El Salvador or Guatemala.⁵⁴

The Free Trade Agreement

Although the PRC lacks diplomatic relations with most of Central America, the region has not been immune to its rise as an economic force. Indeed, the opportunities presented by the Chinese economy have been the main focus of the PRC's efforts to create desire for stronger ties amongst Taiwan's diplomatic allies, and this research has argued that it was growing ties with the countries of APEC that was Costa Rica's primary objective for establishing relations with the PRC. The most notable demonstration of the primacy of economics for Costa Rica occurred on 1st August 2011 when, after six rounds of negotiations, the PRC and Costa Rica signed an FTA. However, in similar respects to the negotiation and signing of the Central American and Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) with the USA, public opinion has been divided over the merits of such a strategy. That this had become a national debate was made clear by a close reading of *Nacion*. While the vast majority of Costa Rican politicians and PRC officials addressed the

⁵⁴ This can be said after a close search of the online archives of the two countries mainstream media organisations. The following chapters have more detailed of what these are.

positives of the negotiations (for example Arias, 2007; Li, 2010b),⁵⁵ notable lawyers, economists and academics criticised their actions in *Nacion*, focusing their arguments on issues these include the size difference between the PRC and Costa Rica (Margery, 2007), and the difference in economic growth rate (Sobrado, 2010). However, of particular note was Prof. Patricia Rodriguez Holkemeyer. Rodriguez Holkemeyer's central argument was not with the Chinese in particular or with the theory behind FTAs but that as a small nation-state, Costa Rica should be wary of signing FTAs with countries much larger. She based her critique on Costa Rica's experience of the CAFTA-DR negotiations with the USA. When I interviewed Rodriguez Holkemeyer, I asked her about this:

You know what happened here in Costa Rica, one candidate for the [Costa Rican] Presidency who was against the treaty brought two [Republican] congressmen here from the US about three days before the Presidential elections. They held a press conference explaining how terrible it would be for our countries to subscribe to an FTA [...] I wrote to the paper stating that '[the candidate for the Presidency] should apologise to all Costa Ricans because these two congressmen have said x, y and z in the US. They contradicted themselves because they said that the USA should not allow these FTAs because all the good jobs go to South America (Rodriguez Holkemeyer, 2011).

Thus, for Rodriguez Holkemeyer, Costa Rica should approach any such negotiations with pragmatic caution and be alert to political double-speak.

Given the desire to manage public perceptions through this process, it is not surprising that Beijing moved Li Changhua, their Ambassador to Chile, to Costa Rica in January 2010 (Murillo, 2010a). Li had the experience of working with the Chilean government and managing public perceptions during the negotiations and signing of the PRC - Chile FTA in 2006. However, whereas in Chile the motivation

⁵⁵ In terms of political voices in opposition to the signing of the FTA with the PRC, Mata and Barquero (2011) limit it to just 13 notable politicians, mostly from smaller political parties.

for an FTA was more obvious given the amount of natural resources being imported by the PRC, motivation for a Costa Rica FTA was not so clear. Other than bananas, a small amount of coffee and even less oil, Costa Rica has little to contribute to the PRC's domestic consumption (Zhu, 2010), and cheaper produced products from the PRC would arguably be in free competition with Costa Rican goods which incur greater overheads (*Siglo Veintiuno*, 2011; Zhu, 2010: 105). Costa Rica's motivation for signing an FTA is therefore consistent with its economic strategy towards the countries of the Pacific, and that it should be seen as a willing candidate to join APEC (Leff, 2011). However, the most obvious immediate beneficiary of an FTA between the two is the US owned microchip company *Intel* who will now pay no tax on imports of their semiconductors when they are shipped from their assembly factory in Costa Rica to the PRC for installation into various IT hardware (World Bank Report, 2006).

The FTA will only make the PRC a more appealing entity for those Costa Ricans who look upon it as a business opportunity. Moreover, the FTA highlights the benefit of a wider perspective on such activities, because negotiations with the PRC brought similar divisions within Costa Rican society to the surface as the CAFTA-DR agreement had done in years previous. Therefore, if the Costa Rican people and the media believe that their interests have been damaged by, or are at risk from the Costa Rica – PRC FTA, the credibility of the PRC in conducting other activities within the country may diminish. However, the people's frustration may lie more with their own politicians for failing to do what is best for Costa Rica, as opposed to the PRC who are merely looking after theirs, as occurred in the case of the Dalai Lama's visit.

Conclusion

The PRC has shown itself to be adept at public diplomacy in Costa Rica since it began diplomatic relations with the country in 2007. Indeed, while Costa Rica has

little strategic influence outside of Central America and the Caribbean, its decision to ally with the PRC has increased the international isolation of Taiwan in the region, making it an important part of Beijing's foreign policy in this regard (Zhu, 2010: 6). At the same time, Costa Rica has been eager to expand its ties with Asian markets and to move away from its traditional reliance on the economically stagnant USA and Europe as export markets. Thus, there has been incentive for both parties to make this relationship work.

The public diplomacy activities displayed by the PRC in Costa Rica originate from centrally orchestrated policies in Beijing and we see various other examples of these in other regions of the world. This is what Lieberthal and Lampton (1992) call Beijing's "fragmented authoritarianism" in its diplomacy, where, as Taylor describes, "policy made at the centre becomes ever more malleable to the organizational and political goals of the different parochial and regional agencies entrusted with enforcing [it]" (Taylor, 2009: 5). Thus, we find evidence in Costa Rica of the PRC's embassy being given considerable innovative leeway to devise public diplomacy policy, but within centrally formulated directives. These have been in a combination of implicit and explicit communications styles, their main objective being to strengthen political and economic relations with Costa Rica and Central America generally, but also to demonstrate the PRC's international strength to a domestic audience. Thus, by working around this notion of fragmented authoritarianism conclusions can be drawn that improve general understanding of the PRC's public diplomacy, but also ones that are unique to Costa Rica.

What is more, inspiring the performance of any kind of diplomacy are macro objectives, actions to be taken in best and worst case scenarios, and general strategic planning by government departments. Therefore, if a nation-state is to perform public diplomacy, one prerequisite is the predetermination of a communications strategy that will engage with a foreign and perhaps a domestic public in the manner that is desired. What the message is, how implicit or explicit it is, and the

resulting reception that the message receives will vary, but crucial to its classification as an act of diplomacy is that there is a message being projected in the first place (Hamilton and Langhorne, 1995; Zhu, 2010). However, for Taiwan in Costa Rica, neither an explicit nor an implicit message for the Costa Rican public could be identified. For example, Taiwan provided education scholarships for Costa Ricans to study in Taiwan but appeared apathetic towards their uptake and to ensuring positive future relations with the scholarship holders after they returned to Costa Rica. This is illustrative of a disinterest in public engagement and a disregard for public diplomacy as an effective tool of international relations beyond it influencing political decision-makers. More than anything therefore, this represents a failure on the part of Taiwan to understand and accommodate the changing socio-political dynamics of Central America. For if greater concern had been given towards public sentiment in Costa Rica then greater effort would have been made to induce competition for the scholarships and to ensure what social capital the scholarships created was built upon in years to come.

This conclusion feeds into a wider deduction that Taiwan had no real interest in Costa Rica beyond the confirmation of the independent sovereignty its government conferred on Taipei. Thus, the main public audience for Taiwan's public diplomacy in Costa Rica was its domestic public at home. Indeed, while Taiwan maintains trade offices and de-facto embassies in numerous countries around the world, 2007 signified Taiwan's disappearance from the country, and there has been little gesture or rhetoric since.

In contrast, the PRC has out-performed Taiwan in its engagement with Costa Rica since 2007, and has tried to encourage maximum exposure of its policies and interests. This is largely because it does not bear the weight of diplomatic isolation in its international conduct. As such, the PRC has made a genuine attempt to engage with the Costa Rican public both within and out with the political sphere, and has integrated Costa Rica into its centrally strategized approach to public diplomacy.

Thus, similar public diplomacy activities to those discussed in the text above are seen in other regions of the underdeveloped world where Beijing also has political and economic interests. However, the diversity of the activities and the speed with which they have been brought to fruition infers that the PRC has awarded high precedence to this small country because of the considerable regional symbolism the relationship represents.

Most analysts would agree that the PRC's international image has improved since beginning its reforms in 1978 and then again after the backsliding of the Tiananmen incident in 1989 (for example, Bell, 2008; Ellis, 2009; Kent, 2007; Kurlantzick, 2007; Wang, 2008; Zhu, 2010). However, the PRC's public diplomacy will continue to suffer if its behaviour in political, economic and social spheres continues to receive negative publicity. As such, Costa Rica has provided an interesting case study of how the PRC has attempted to overcome such problems. The PRC embassy has used the country's domestic media to communicate with the Costa Rican public, thus overcoming the limitations of its country's own international broadcasting. Indeed, to bring about greater understanding of the PRC and its aims in Costa Rica, Ambassador Li Changhua has utilised the most widely read and most respected newspaper in the country to act as a communication platform for the PRC message. Neither his predecessor Wang Xiaoyuank nor the Ambassadors of other countries in Costa Rica have broadcast in this way and so the approach should be considered somewhat innovative on his part, although instances of this have occurred in other countries where the PRC has substantial interests, the USA for example. The significance of this is threefold; first, it is an indirect admission by the PRC that their international broadcasting continues to lack penetration; second, it reflects the prioritisation given to controlling the content of media spaces regarding the image of the PRC; and finally, it highlights the limitations of the institutional approach to public diplomacy research because such relationships tend to be beyond the influence of central government agencies.

Nevertheless, it remains that without the presence of Taiwan in Central America, Costa Rica would not be the recipient of the multitude of public diplomacy activities in which the PRC has engaged since 2007. Such quantity may dissipate in the coming years depending on the political circumstances involving Taiwan. However, Costa Rica has been a willing recipient of PRC 'gifts' while Taiwan's influence persists in the region. Indeed, while the price of these gifts has only been hinted at thus far, being in the PRC's sphere of influence has required some uncomfortable shifts in strategic posture, the refusal of a visa to the Dalai Lama being the most prolific to date. Thus, the extent of the PRC's public diplomacy is such that it must improve public sentiment towards Beijing, but also induce certain behaviour from the Costa Rican government by creating a degree of dependency on their market.

The decision to recognise the PRC was undoubtedly a personal one for Oscar Arias and his closest advisors, and while one could speculate that Taiwanese public diplomacy surrounding its successful transition to democracy and respect for human rights could have made the decision more publically confrontational for the Arias administration, in all likelihood the outcome would have been the same. It can therefore be argued that Costa Rica was an atypical contemporary ally for Taiwan, given that diplomatic support for Taiwan tends to come from countries with a history of ideological sympathy at the elite level and a lack of professionalism within the civil and diplomatic service. Consequently, Taiwan's public diplomacy was largely insignificant in preventing Costa Rica from approaching the PRC. Costa Rica's decision is indicative of an increase in technocratic positioning by the President, and the culmination of efforts to move the civil and diplomatic service away from politically motivated appointments (Saborio, 2011). Thus, it is arguable that a country making such adjustments is less likely to be an ally of Taiwan. Moreover, as Taiwan is also going through a similar process of diplomatic reform as

it becomes a competitive multi-party democracy, it remains to be seen how this will impact its future diplomatic relations.

Accordingly, while public diplomacy played no role in the acquisition of Costa Rica by the PRC, it has played a major role in consolidating the PRC's influence in Costa Rica, and it is these activities, designed for maximum exposure, that have brought greater public understanding of the PRC. Indeed, where the PRC has arguably met with greatest resistance – its relationship with the Diaspora and the incidents with the Dalai Lama and Torres del Lago after the stadium was completed – dissatisfaction has largely been contained to those in the immediate vicinity, for example, the construction industry.

That the public are of the general opinion that Costa Rica has benefitted from its move to the PRC has therefore been central to this process, as it has largely prevented public backlash to the abandonment of long-term ally Taiwan. Therefore, it can be argued that public diplomacy has only a minor part to play in the actual decision of which entity to diplomatically recognise, but that public diplomacy has a fundamental role to play in consolidating the relationship forthwith.

El Salvador

Introduction

El Salvador, the smallest and most densely populated of the Central American Republics, advances our understanding of public diplomacy in the context of China – Taiwan relations. El Salvador exists in political and ideological disparity, with the centre-left *Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional* (FMLN) competing against the right-wing *Alianza Republica Nacionalista* or ‘ARENA’ party in national elections. As a result, each side of El Salvador’s political divide has clearly favoured either the PRC or Taiwan based on their traditional ideological allegiances (Anderson and Anderson, 1986; Lauria-Santiago and Binford, 2004; Wood, 2003). When contrasting this situation with other Central American states, only Nicaragua offers their electorate a similarly broad spectrum of political options, for in the other countries either the political right continues to dominate or, in the case of Costa Rica, both main parties now occupy the central ground. For the majority of states, this tends to make politics an inter-elite competition between liberals and conservatives lacking in socialist alternatives. What is more, as a result of the left-wing challenge from the FMLN, the ARENA party remains ideologically entrenched towards the extreme right. This is shown clearly in cables written by H. Douglas Barclay, the US Ambassador to El Salvador (2003 – 2006), which were published by *Wikileaks* and reveal the anti-socialist sentiment of former President of El Salvador Elias Antonio Saca (2004 – 2009):

Saca has a visceral dislike for Communism (FMLN, Castro, Chavez), which he blames for having destroyed the country's infrastructure and overall economy during the war years. Saca is proud to say that he smokes only Padron cigars, made by Miami Cubans, and would never smoke a Cohiba. He also vows never to establish formal relations with Cuba so long as Castro is in power (Barclay, cited in *El Faro*, 2011).

Such a principled mind-set towards Cuba would no doubt have comforted the Taiwanese at the time. Indeed, Saca's political and economic outlook is common among much of the region's right-wing capitalists who, as Chasteen (2011) notes, see themselves more as part of an international capitalist class than belonging to one or another small Central American Republic. Thus, allegiances towards the PRC and Taiwan remain firmly divided by political party in El Salvador, with the ARENA party the underwriter of Taiwan's incumbency and the FMLN traditionally more inclined towards the PRC. Consequently, it can be argued that the affection these political parties have with Beijing and Taipei respectively has persisted, particularly in the case of the PRC and the FMLN, because of similar reforms made at similar times in all three countries. This will be discussed in more detail a little later.

Therefore, while the election of Mauricio Funes of the FMLN as President in 2009 was a landmark for El Salvadoran society, it also brought the weaknesses and strengths of the country's relations with Taiwan into focus. Indeed, one of the first acts of the new FMLN government was to announce the resumption of diplomatic relations with Cuba, which had been broken after Cuba's socialist revolution in 1959 (AFP, 2009). This led to questions of whether an attempt would be made to split from Taiwan as well (Shih, 2010). As it transpired, El Salvador approached the PRC sometime in mid-2009. However, the current diplomatic truce prevented the switch from occurring (*China Post*, 2009a; DPA, 2009; Stephenson, 2010). This indicates the priority that the ECFA has for the PRC. Thus, while the defection of El Salvador would have been a significant coup for Beijing in Central America, improving relations with Taiwan was clearly of much greater importance. Finally, this demonstrates the extent to which the competition for allies is now only concerned with small nation-states that are and strategically trivial to wider international power politics.

Beyond the concern that Taiwan would have had when the matter came to light (see Young, 2007a), it can be argued that the diplomatic truce offered Taiwan an opportunity to perform public diplomacy without the question of diplomatic security preoccupying its efforts. Thus, with the knowledge that diplomatic relations would not be rescinded at little notice, Taiwan could attempt to build positive sentiment with the Salvadoran public and hopefully win over the new government in the process. However, this chapter will argue that Taiwan's public diplomacy in El Salvador fails to engage in such a way; to the detriment of the Salvadoran public, its primary concern continues to be the support of government officials and the domestic audience in Taiwan.

This chapter begins by summarising relevant contemporary history. Thereafter, the discussion will separate public diplomacy by the different resources being used by Taiwan including infrastructure, medical diplomacy, education diplomacy, domestic media relations and engagement with the Chinese Diaspora. Following this, the PRC's role in El Salvador will be discussed. This has focused around commercial diplomacy. A conclusion addressing some of the key questions set out in the introduction to thesis will complete the chapter.

Taiwan in El Salvador: Its Controversial Past

Two areas immediately stand out when discussing the history of Taiwan's relations with El Salvador: first, its technical assistance to El Salvador; and second, its engagement with right-wing politicians and the El Salvadoran military, what Zhu (2010: 91) calls 'military diplomacy'. Taiwan announced full diplomatic relations with El Salvador in 1961 and established its technical mission in 1971 (Huang, 2011). Until 1979 El Salvador was governed by a military dictatorship and after 1979 by a civilian head of government, although the influence of the military did not

diminish.⁵⁶ Thus, it is as a result of ideological similarities and gratitude for their assistance during the armed conflict that the political right of El Salvador, and the *Alianza Republicana Nacionalista* (ARENA) party in particular, continues to diplomatically support Taiwan.

Furthermore, based on information from other nation-states who have switched their diplomatic recognition across the Taiwan Strait (see Chance, 2012; Chirombo, 2010, Taylor, 2002), it can be argued that the FMLN would have wanted to marginalise Taiwan upon gaining office in 2009 as part of their bid to consolidate political power. After all, this was the first democratic turnover of power from right to left in El Salvador's history. However, the Taiwanese have been saved from de-recognition as a result of the current ECFA between the PRC and Taiwan which guarantees a 'diplomatic truce' (*China Post*, 2008; *Taiwan Today*, 2010). Without the ECFA El Salvador would almost certainly now have a diplomatic relationship with the PRC.

During the 1950s and 1960s both the PRC and Taiwan prioritised the diplomatic allegiance of the newly-independent states of Africa over other underdeveloped states in Latin America and elsewhere (Cooper, 1976; Gilbert, 1963; Hsieh, 1985; Strauss, 2009; Taylor, 2002; Yu, 1963). As a result of El Salvador's allegiance to Washington and its lack of natural resources neither side paid it much attention. Thus, Taiwan's recognition of El Salvador in 1961 was merely symbolic of the empathy between their ideological preferences, rather than a reflection of any growing bi-national trade or other such integration (Anderson and Anderson, 1986). It would not be until the early 1970s when Taiwan's formal international

⁵⁶ El Salvador's right-wing military dictatorship had been imposed on the people following socialist uprisings across Central America in the late 1920s and early 1930s; events from which the likes of Farabundo Marti and Augusto Sandino (Nicaragua) have received political martyrdom (Dunkerley, 1988). As such, according to Karl (1988), the movement from a martial head-of-state back to a civilian one in 1978 after national elections had been held to appoint a constituent assembly, was a key component of the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations advice to El Salvador. Aware of the stigma attached to military rule, Washington advised El Salvador that appointing a civilian President would greatly improve the international image of El Salvador, damage the legitimacy of the FMLN fighting against the government, and crucially, make it easier for the US Congress to back proposals for financial and military assistance (Karl, 1998: 174).

relationships had significantly deteriorated in number that the likes of El Salvador and other Central American and Caribbean states would first see an increase in attention.⁵⁷

The inauguration of a technical mission to El Salvador 1971 reflected changes involving both countries. These included the increasing prominence of socialist guerrilla factions operating under the umbrella of the FMLN in El Salvador, and Taiwan's expulsion from the UN in October 1971, the latter being one of the main causes of the deterioration in the number of formal allies that Taiwan could claim.

Operation Vanguard was inaugurated by Taiwan in 1961 and in 1971 a mission was sent to El Salvador. Operation Vanguard sought to teach the peasantry free market economics and how to get the most from the poor land they had been forcibly moved to. Taiwan was therefore assisting El Salvador's right-wing government to consolidate its oligarchy by subduing the communist leanings that might be developing amongst the peasantry.⁵⁸

In addition to technical assistance projects, Taiwan supported and trained El Salvador's military throughout the 1970s and during the country's armed conflict (1980-1992) (Anderson and Anderson, 1986).⁵⁹ From the mid-1970s onwards a

⁵⁷ While the PRC is the 4th largest exporter to El Salvador, trade between El Salvador and Asia as a whole remains minimal (Ministerio de Economía El Salvador, 2012). El Salvador remains heavily reliant on the rest of the Americas to purchase its goods, and this is despite the signing of an FTA between El Salvador and Taiwan in 2008. In 2009, raw sugar was the main product to be exported from El Salvador to Taiwan, the 55,000 tons shipped amounting to around US\$15 million (Central America Data, 2009). This small quantity was put into perspective by the Taipei Representative Office in London who stated that, "nearly 99% of [Taiwan's] trade, cultural, economic and people to people relations are carried out between Taiwan and countries that do not recognise us" (Lin, 2011a).

⁵⁸ Baloyra (1983) notes how El Salvador's particular model of agro-export was based on coerced labour. Like many social, economic and political issues in Central America, the roots of this model of land-holding and the popular disgruntlement that came from it were largely the product of the political crisis in the region during the late 1920s and early 1930s, although it can arguably be traced-back further (see Dunkerley, 1988). What is more, since the end of World War II, land concentration had intensified with the expansion of coffee production and the introduction of non-traditional crops such as cotton, sugar and beef cattle, which were being farmed almost entirely for export. This resulted in the forced migration of more and more peasantry to land less suitable for subsistence farming, and a growing sense of injustice towards the authorities (Bulmer-Thomas, 1987; Williams and Walter, 1997).

⁵⁹ This continues today but on a smaller and arguably less controversial scale, after both countries made improvements to their human rights records (see Chang, 2010).

plethora of senior personnel from politics, the El Salvadoran military and the national defence forces (frequently referred to as 'death squads') would attend the Political Warfare Cadres Academy (PWCA) in Taiwan, and Taiwan would also provide advice and training on the ground in El Salvador. Indeed, according to Anderson and Anderson, Taiwan structured the largely "inefficient" government forces to "infiltrate, expose and liquidate any opposition that may be suspected to exist at any level of society, even down to the family level" (Anderson and Anderson, 1986: 56).

An undisclosed number of military officers and right-wing politicians enjoyed all expenses paid trips to Taiwan to study political and psychological warfare during this period (Anderson and Anderson, 1986: 214). The regard for which Taiwan was held within military and right-wing political circles was epitomised by Lieutenant Colonel Domingo Monterrosa of the Atlacatl battalion. To some Monterrosa was an influential military hero and anti-Communist martyr, and would surely have been a future President of the country, if not for his assassination in 1984. To others his legacy is one of barbarity and war criminality. What is clear however is that in November 1978 Monterrosa returned to El Salvador after completing the 31st political warfare course at the PWCA enthused by his training (Danner, 2005). Monterrosa often talked of his time in Taiwan to Western journalists covering the armed conflict and his graduation certificate from the academy takes pride of place in the room dedicated to him at the Museum of Military History in San Salvador.

Western journalists in the country during the armed conflict called the El Salvador military's approach to the peasantry 'hammer and anvil', a strategy Monterrosa attributed to Taiwan when interviewed by reporter Mark Danner in 1983 (Danner, 2005). Jon Lee Anderson, a US reporter embedded with Monterrosa for a time during 1983, provides some interesting clarity on this tactic:

For several hours, sitting behind a table and using a hand-held microphone, Monterrosa gave the villagers a lesson in consciousness-raising.

“We are your true brothers,” Monterrosa told the peasants. “We’re not caretakers of the rich. Do you see any rich among us? We give our blood to the soil, but it’s up to you to make it fertile.”

Those gathered, however, seemed more interested in the soccer balls that were still in their original grey Spaulding cartons and in the boxes of children’s clothing that the soldiers had stacked beside the table.

One by one, the people stepped forward. As they did, the soldiers distributed clothing and threw out soccer balls.

“Is this Taiwanese?” [Anderson] asked as Monterrosa wrote down the testimonies of the villagers. “This is it.” (Anderson and Anderson, 1986: 215)

Anderson’s observations are interesting on many levels. They demonstrate the astuteness and depth of importance that the El Salvador, and by default Taiwanese, military attached to communications. But more generally they are indicative of the importance of gesture as a method of implicit communications in diplomacy. Thus, while discourse can often be overlooked or seen as hollow, a gift, even as small as a football, can go a long way. We also saw this tactic in Costa Rica where President Hu Jintao handed out footballs to Costa Rican children upon his arrival.

Officially, the authorities referred to 'hammer and anvil' as first the National Campaign Plan and after 1986 as UPR (Unidos para Reconstruir/Unity for Reconstruction). These were three-stage strategies, as Williams and Walter write:

First, the military was to eliminate the guerrillas and suspected sympathisers from designated areas. Next came the consolidation phase, when the military was to establish permanent control in the zones. And third

was the resettlement and reconstruction phase. (Williams and Walter, 1997: 119)

Therefore, in December 1981, in the same locality where Monterrosa would hand out footballs in 1983, his Atlacatl battalion had been responsible for what is widely regarded as the worst atrocity of the armed conflict, an incident popularly known as the 'Massacre at El Mozote' (Danner, 2005). I visited this region in February 2011 as part of my research in El Salvador. The hamlet of El Mozote is approximately ten miles from the site at Perquin where the incident described by Anderson took place, and both hamlets are within Morazan Province, a region still referred to as 'zona rosa' (the red zone) in reference to its supposed communist sympathies. Thus, the military first used brutality to gain control of the region before courting the local people with apparent generosity; Monterrosa admitting that this had been learned from Taiwan. Zhu refers to this type of tactic as 'military diplomacy' on the part of Taiwan (Zhu, 2010: 91). As such, it is clear that Taiwan understood the power of the army in El Salvadoran politics (see Williams and Walter, 1997) and considered its allegiance a way of consolidating the political powerbase of an ideologically favourable regime and therefore guaranteeing diplomatic relations with El Salvador.

Taiwan has managed to keep its controversial role in the armed conflict largely out of the public eye mainly because there has been a shortfall in academic or journalistic investigation into it. This is partly the result of the distraction caused by the very public US role in the conflict, but it also reflects the reality that Taiwan's military diplomacy was carried out in Taiwan, far away from the theatre of war, and without public transparency. Instead, what documentation there has been of Taiwan's formal diplomatic relations has tended to be of their humanitarian and community-based projects (see Alexander, 2011d; Hsieh, 1985; Springer, 2012; Taylor, 2002). The encouragement for this perspective has come from their diplomats who cite that because Taiwan was the recipient of aid and international assistance

until the 1970s it is their duty to reciprocate now that they are in a position to do so. In the words of Sun Yat-sen, that having achieved its own emancipation, Taiwan should, “rescue the weak and lift the fallen” (cited in Ansprenger, 1989). Nevertheless, while Taiwan’s diplomatic isolation is limiting to its international relations and thus public diplomacy, their diplomats should take heed that what international image the country has does not focus on Taiwan’s heritage of close association with the unsavoury regimes of latter 20th century Central America. However, it remains that Taiwan’s previous strategy for survival in the region has the potential to hinder the prosperity of its current relations.

Both Taiwan and El Salvador have made internal changes since the period of armed conflict in El Salvador (see Hickey, 2007; Lauria-Santiago and Binford, 2004; Mattlin, 2011; Williams and Walter, 1997). In particular, both have become competitive multiparty democracies that have experienced turnovers of power without disruption on any grand scale. Both have also made considerable reforms to their diplomatic corps vis-à-vis political patronage. However, like all post-conflict and post-authoritarian societies, consciousness of the social traumas of recent history unavoidably shapes the political landscape (see Halbwachs, 1992; Pennebaker et al, 1997). This is the case in both El Salvador and Taiwan. The election of the FMLN in 2009 was therefore a milestone in El Salvador’s national reconciliation, as it brought an end to the monopoly that the military and their civilian right-wing counterparts held over the Presidential office since El Salvador gained independence from Spain in 1821. What is more, with a stated commitment to pragmatic rather than ideologically based policy (Chang, 2009), the FMLN have taken a lead role in how El Salvador and Central America as a whole can conduct relations with one time foes on the political left.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ While he was President-elect in early 2009, Mauricio Funes met with the Taiwanese Foreign Minister Francisco Ou. Ou remarked that Funes had, “stressed that his government [would] give top priority to the welfare of El Salvador’s people, and that its diplomacy [would] be based on national interests instead of

During his election campaign for the Presidency of El Salvador, Mauricio Funes stated that switching diplomatic recognition to the PRC would be a high priority should he be elected (*El Diario de Hoy*, 2008). The PRC had solid relations with national liberation movements like the FMLN during the Cold War because of their ideological similarities (see Xu, 1994). Indeed, the rockets that were launched at the US Embassy in San Salvador by guerrillas on two separate occasions during 1980 had been clandestinely imported from the PRC (O'Brien Steinfelds, 2001). Manuel Flores, a politician who has been with the FMLN since its days as a guerrilla group, confirmed the reality of the ideological bond between the FMLN and the PRC:

My colleagues and I found inspiration from the Chinese, partly because of their struggle but also in the reforms that they made [after the death of Mao]. From such incidents as the Cultural Revolution and the suppression of academics we gained greater understanding of what not to do, along with what we should do if given the chance. For me and many of my colleagues Deng Xiaoping is the true hero for his economic reforms, he brought a degree of regulated capitalism to China and this is something that the FMLN has wanted to emulate. (Flores, 2011)

Some journalists interpreted the electoral success of the FMLN to be the end of Taiwan's period of diplomatic privilege in El Salvador and the beginning of the process towards PRC recognition (for example, Chan, 2009; Urquilla, 2010). Indeed, cables released by Wikileaks, written by US diplomats in Central America and Taiwan, reveal Taiwan's apprehension at the so-called 'pink tide' occurring across the region (for example Keegan, 2006b; Stephenson, 2010; Young, 2007a), which, if correct, demonstrates the extent to which Taiwan still sees the region through a Cold War gaze. However, the FMLN's path towards PRC recognition was closed by the announcement of a diplomatic truce between the PRC and Taiwan in 2008. The

ideology" (Ou, cited in Chan, 2009). This marks a change from the ideologically based politics of the ARENA party.

mandate of the truce became apparent in March 2010 when Chang Kao, vice-Chairman of the Mainland Affairs Council of Taiwan, told a seminar that El Salvador had tried to recognise the PRC at some point after the election of President Funes in 2009, but that Beijing had turned them down stating that they, “did not want to hurt the cross-strait reconciliation” (Chang, cited in DPA, 2010). As will be discussed later, this has not stopped the FMLN government pursuing greater economic engagement with the PRC.⁶¹

The incident provides clarification on a number of wider issues, most importantly that policy-making where under circumstances of diminished ideology may result in attempts to discontinue diplomatic relations with Taiwan. This was one of the reasons for Costa Rica’s recognition of the PRC in 2007. Secondly, this incident demonstrates that the diplomatic truce is the key factor in maintaining Taiwan’s relationship with El Salvador; and finally, that the FMLN’s attempt to recognise the PRC demonstrates their desire to consolidate political power, and acknowledges that Taiwan, while stating its willingness to work with whichever party is in power, would clearly prefer an ARENA government.⁶² Given the circumstances therefore, the FMLN have discussed a desire to build a relationship with both the PRC and Taiwan (Urquilla, 2010), using the diplomatic truce to the advantage of El Salvador.⁶³

⁶¹ In a batch of classified Wikileaks cables published in May 2011 originating from the US Embassy in Panama, the US Ambassador to the country Barbara Stephenson (2010) documents how the government of Panama approached the PRC regarding formal recognition in January 2009 but were told that it was not possible due to the diplomatic truce. However, crucially they were also told to ‘remain calm’, insinuating that if things were to change that it would be possible.

⁶² Evidence of this can be found on the Caribbean island of St. Lucia where Taiwan is also diplomatically recognised. St. Lucia is a ‘swing state’ and support for the PRC and Taiwan is firmly divided along party lines, where the ruling St. Lucia Labour Party favour relations with the PRC and the opposition United Workers Party (UWP) favour Taiwan. Support for both is therefore more pronounced than in some other formal allies. Indeed, there have been accusations of political interference levelled at Ambassador Thomas Chou after he apparently supported the opposition right-wing United Workers Party (UWP) during the 2011 general election (see Springer, 2012) Thus, while Taiwan will work with the FMLN in El Salvador, it is clear that they would rather it be the ARENA party.

⁶³ A similar scenario unfolded in Nicaragua after the election of FSLN candidate Daniel Ortega in 2007 (Young, 2007a). His pre-election rhetoric included diplomatic recognition of the PRC. However, once in office, this was reduced to building ties with both (La Prensa, 2007).

There is a final factor to be discussed in the relationship between Taiwan and its Central American allies. PARLACEN was established in 1991 and is headquartered in Guatemala City. It is the second supranational regional parliament to be established in the world after the European Parliament (PARLACEN, 2012). It was mandated by the Declaration of Esquipulas in 1986, which was signed by the Presidents of Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras and Costa Rica mainly in a bid to prevent the Republics of Central America acting against one another in times of war. In this regard, it was developed on a similar philosophy to that of the European Union and its precursors after World War II. However, although PARLACEN played a major role in brokering the initial talks, Costa Rica did not become a member. This may be one of the reasons for Costa Rica being called the Switzerland of Central America.

The Honduran and Costa Rican jungle had been used by the USA and others (most notably Argentina), as major training and arming facilities for so-called 'Contra' troops engaged in conflict with the FSLN government of Nicaragua (see Kinzer, 1991), while, at the same time the Nicaraguan government had been sending weapons to the FMLN in El Salvador (Anderson and Anderson, 1986; Booth, 1982; Kinzer, 1991).⁶⁴ Taiwan enjoys 'permanent observer' status to PARLACEN, and moreover has funded the construction of many PARLACEN buildings across Central America. Indeed, at the time of writing, Taiwan was the sole funder of the soon-to-be-complete Central American Integration System (SICA) building opposite the El Salvador Ministry of Foreign Affairs in San Salvador.⁶⁵ While one cannot definitively measure Taiwan's influence within PARLACEN and its member states, it is significant that all member states of this supranational body continue to

⁶⁴ The Declaration of Esquipulas contains the following statement in reference to the creation of PARLACEN. "It is necessary to establish and complement activities that support understanding and cooperation through institutional structures. These shall strengthen the dialogue, the common development, democracy and pluralism as fundamental elements for peace in the area and for the integration of Central America. Therefore, the creation of the PARLACEN is necessary. Its members will be elected freely by universal and direct elections with special regard to the principle of participatory political pluralism." (PARLACEN, 2012)

⁶⁵ This was documented on a visit to the site by the author in February 2011.

recognise the island diplomatically. Indeed, as a large financier of the physical assets belonging to the parliament and its subsidiary agencies, Taiwan will have considerable influence over parliamentary decisions, yet much of this is beyond public scrutiny. Therefore, it is logical that PARALACEN's apparent reliance on Taiwanese funds for edificial construction is a factor in the continued diplomatic recognition of Taiwan by its member states.

Taiwanese interest in performing public diplomacy in El Salvador has increased as El Salvador has democratised and as the PRC has gained regional prominence. Moreover, the evidence presented in the following section suggests that Taiwan's public diplomacy is more concerned with convincing El Salvador's political elite that Taiwan is deserving of diplomatic recognition, than of any real interest or commitment to communicating with normal citizens. This enhances the central argument that those senior personnel deciding Taiwan's diplomatic strategy continue to consider the publics of their formal diplomatic allies to be of secondary importance, and reflects the reality that this is a nation-state conducting public diplomacy primarily to secure its sovereignty. Thus, the forthcoming evidence suggests that Taiwan has an apathy towards these people that is the result of a failure to adapt to the changing socio-political dynamics of modern Central America. The research found considerable reliance on minimally trained volunteers and junior diplomats working without clear strategy. This was surprising, given that Taiwan's history in El Salvador has been very strategic, and that it is seen internationally as a shrewd diplomatic operator. Part of the following section is therefore an attempt to answer why such lapses have occurred.

Taiwan's Public Diplomacy in El Salvador

When asked the question, "how important is public diplomacy to securing the overall diplomatic relationship?" Lin Kuo-chung from the Taipei Representative Office in London replied: "It is important in a democracy as the government is

elected by the people and their views are therefore represented. In a non-democracy public diplomacy is less important. [...] President Ma decided to focus on public diplomacy and he understood the importance of it on top of the economy etc” (Lin, 2011a). This quotation is an explicit declaration from the Taiwanese that the use of public diplomacy is subservient to Taiwan’s foreign policy goals, and is implemented selectively where it can be of benefit to its international relations.

The quotation also provides two main themes for the following section on El Salvador. First of all, it indicates that the method and volume of Taiwan’s public diplomacy is apparently linked to the foreign public’s inclusion in the selection of political leaders, thus confirming that the maintenance of good inter-governmental relations is the main motivation behind Taiwan’s public diplomacy. In this sense, public diplomacy has elevated importance beyond the manufacture of positive public sentiment. Secondly, it asserts that the timing of the increase in public diplomacy activity by Taiwan is the result of a combination of the appearance of the PRC in the region, El Salvador’s movement to competitive multiparty democracy, and the central manifesto of the KMT in Taiwan vis-à-vis furthering ties with the mainland. As such, public diplomacy has become an increasingly prolific method of engagement for Taiwan.

The way in which the PRC and Taiwan perform public diplomacy towards their respective allies is similar, with both using a combination of implicit and explicit communications to engage with domestic and foreign audiences. Thus, development assistance, medical diplomacy, education diplomacy, domestic media in Central America, and the Chinese Diaspora have all been used as foreign policy tools. However, while infrastructure diplomacy has been used by the PRC in Costa Rica and elsewhere in the underdeveloped world, and is used by Taiwan in some of its other diplomatic allies, this research found little evidence of this method in El Salvador. Indeed, the only Taiwanese infrastructure projects that could be found in El Salvador were the aforementioned SICA building and Taiwanese assistance to the

reconstruction of a bridge, completed in November 2010, that had been washed away by flooding in the town of Melara, La Libertad, the previous year (Wu, 2011). However, as this is an ethnographic research project in the phenomenological sense, we must not rule out Taiwan's utilisation of this in the future as this is a known tactic of theirs.⁶⁶

Development Assistance

In 1971 Taiwan established a technical mission in El Salvador, and, from the observations of this research, this has been the method of public diplomacy most keenly emphasised by Taiwan's public diplomats. As the Head of Opinion at the national daily newspaper *El Diario de Hoy* in San Salvador, Rolando Monterrosa, confirmed: "the relationship with Taiwan is based largely around aid, all kinds of aid, and, for example, the assistance they have given El Salvador in agriculture, which has been invaluable and very successful" (Monterrosa, 2011).

Three projects make up the technical mission in El Salvador: agriculture, aquaculture and handcrafts. Carlos Lee, Head of the Taiwan ICDF in El Salvador, highlighted the specifics of their engagement with the people of El Salvador,

[The Taiwan ICDF] have eight people including myself in El Salvador and we have three main projects. The first one is an agricultural project, and the second is aquaculture – improving the productivity of freshwater fish. For example, in Lake Ilopango we have a project for aquaculture in a cage (Interjection - fish farming?). Yes, so we provide such things as feed to the fish farmers there, and we also help them to sell fish to the market. We also have a centre at Zapotitan which is a demonstration farm, and we show [farmers] different techniques for cultivation. We also have a conference office and each

⁶⁶ Taiwan has however been prolific in the design, construction and financing of power stations in Nicaragua and Honduras, however it withdrew from a tender to build a dam on the Patuca river in Honduras leaving Sinohydro, the firm responsible for the Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze river in the PRC, to move forward with planning. (Eidt, 2011)

month we do classes for the people in agriculture. We have introduced a variety of vegetables and fruit to the farmers (Lee, 2011).⁶⁷

Whereas Operation Vanguard was mostly engaged with the displaced peasantry, the modern Taiwan ICDF assistance programme largely abandoned this practice in El Salvador as the armed conflict drew to a close. We can argue that this change in policy came from the nullification of the communist threat as the Cold War came to a close. However, while several other high-profile country donors (Spain, for example (Huang, 2011)) tend to engage through outsourced organisations, charities, or by training local people to implement policy, the face-to-face approach of the Taiwanese and the permanency of its mission put it on the frontline of its public diplomacy in El Salvador. However, Taiwan's lack of ability or desire to monitor the success or failure of these projects must be questioned.

The annual report of the Taiwan ICDF states that, in 2011, it helped 30 fruit and vegetable farmers and 10 fish farmers, all of whom reside in low lying areas (Taiwan ICDF, 2012). These were not small cooperative farms run by the peasantry, but much larger commercial farms operating for supply to the international market. Carlos Lee attested that:

For the technical operation we have an agreement with the government [of El Salvador] and every two or three years we review the content of the agreement and assess the quality of the work. If this is satisfactory then the agreement will be continued, we have never had a situation where it has not been continued [...] every month we have to make a report for Taipei and every three months we report to the agricultural ministry of El Salvador what we are doing and the success of the programmes we have. [...] every month we have to report whether we have got to a certain point. Each year we

⁶⁷ The eight people referred to include three agricultural engineers, three engineers in aquaculture, one marketer who works across the three projects (also focused on the sale of locally made handcrafts) and Carlos Lee as Head of the Taiwan ICDF in El Salvador (Lee, 2011).

separate our targets into twelve months and then we have a progress report every month. Then in the final month of the year it should reach 100%. (Lee, 2011)

Copies of the documents mentioned were unavailable. However, if one consults the progress report of the Taiwan ICDF in El Salvador to the end of 2011, neither the statements nor the statistics bear reference to public opinion about Taiwan (Taiwan ICDF, 2012). Moreover, Lee's preference to discuss when questioned the satisfaction of government authorities for Taiwan's contribution indicates that the solidifying of the diplomatic relationship is the primary motivation for Taiwan's public diplomacy (Lee, 2011). Thus, while public diplomacy always tries to influence a foreign government's decision-making mechanisms, what differentiates it from inter-governmental diplomacy is its understanding of the necessity to court public opinion. However, for a country as diplomatically isolated as Taiwan, the emphasis on government influence is considerably more than is typical in other countries.

A second point concerning Taiwan's assistance in El Salvador surrounds the somewhat controversial introduction of non-native agricultural crops. As Gustavo Huang explained:

We have also introduced different varieties of vegetable or fruit to the farmers [...] First of all we have to do some research to see if this fruit or vegetable is adept to this environment here, and also that it requires a short time to harvest, because high yield is a priority. The people can adapt easily, for example with guava. (Huang, 2011)

Gustavo Huang was the member of Taiwan's diplomatic corps responsible for implementing these strategies in El Salvador. Of interest here is his remark that high yields are a priority, and given the somewhat familiar coverage of high yielding varieties of alien food produce being unpalatable to local populations, for example

high yield rice in Asia (see Mukherjee, 2011), there was a need to pursue this line of questioning.

Yes, we've faced problems like this here. The Taiwanese like the fruit but the El Salvadorans do not like it. But we try to present to them how healthy the fruit is and how profitable it will be to sell. But if they don't like it then they don't like it. But we've changed this type of work now, we now find out what type of fruit makes a high price in the market and what the people are willing to pay high prices for and what kinds of variety they are interested in, and we change accordingly. (Huang, 2011)

Therefore, to the detriment of domestic concerns regarding food preferences, Taiwan's 'development' assistance has taken steps towards making El Salvador a more efficient producer to international markets. In doing so, the motivation of Taiwan's development assistance is not to disentangle El Salvador from the agricultural subservience of its economy and the dangers associated with such a role, but to further their vulnerability to the forces of the international market.⁶⁸ Taiwan has therefore been complicit in the consolidation of El Salvador's agro-exporter status, as this policy reflects both the economic policies of a right-wing political party such as ARENA and Taiwan's desire to assist them in their aims. At the same time however, this also offers evidence as to why the FMLN and Taiwan are likely to clash, given the differences in economic outlook (for an overview of FMLN economic policy, see Funes, cited in Whitehouse.gov, 2011⁶⁹). Thus, we see that Taiwan's public diplomacy is more concerned with the manufacture of elite relationships than acquiring positive sentiment from the average citizen. However, as the case of El

⁶⁸ Beyond the danger of fluctuations in international markets, there is a strong argument that weather extremes do not cause famine but that a country allowing its most fertile land to be reserved for agricultural export leads to overpopulation of lands that are vulnerable to drought or other adverse conditions. The introductory chapter detailed how in El Salvador and Guatemala the government has a history of moving the peasantry off fertile land to make way for commercial farming, and that Taiwan was involved in teaching these refugees how to farm the less tenable land as effectively as possible.

⁶⁹ For an overview of FMLN economic policy, see(Funes, cited in Whitehouse.gov, 2011).

Salvador demonstrates, this approach leaves diplomatic relations with Taiwan vulnerable when changes of government occur.

Confirmation of Taiwan's policy was found in Morazan, a mountainous province of El Salvador close to the border with Honduras. This was the heart of the so-called 'red zone' during the armed conflict and was where the majority of the civilian casualties of war occurred, caused mainly by government forces (UNVCS, 1993). It is also El Salvador's poorest province and a place where subsistence farming remains a prominent way of life. Taiwan has no presence here; instead Taiwan's development assistance is provided to the provinces in the lowlands towards the Pacific coast with land more appropriate to the harvest of products that can be sold on the international market. Decisions about the location of Taiwan's assistance are made in coordination with the government of El Salvador who are responsible for the coordination of all development assistance projects from international sources (Lee, 2011). However, Taiwan's ICDF has strategically pursued such development assistance throughout its formal allies in recent years (see Taiwan ICDF, 2012), indicating that it prioritises engagement with the landowning factions of these societies. El Salvador's FMLN government has made no comments on this so far.

Therefore, it is essential when discussing public diplomacy to understand who is, and crucially who is not, being assisted, as it is not those most in need of assistance that are being helped by Taiwan in El Salvador but a select few large employers. Given what is known of Taiwan's legacy in El Salvador, its continuing close relations with the ARENA party and its desire to satisfy the political establishment, the most obvious conclusion is that political patronage played a significant role in the selectivity of its public diplomacy in El Salvador and that this has not been consigned to history. As such, we can argue that Taiwan's policy of doing as the government asks shows little in the way of independent public strategy. This is risky for Taiwan as turnovers of political power in this polarised country may lead to Taiwan's insignificance in this area should the government decide to pursue

other directions. Moreover, it demonstrates the extent of Taiwan's apathy towards actual public need, and in a country where the public having increasing political influence we must conclude that this is rather short-sighted.

Medical Diplomacy

Without a floating hospital like the PRC's Peace Ark the Taiwan ICDF provide smaller land-based medical clinics which travel to their diplomatic allies offering free medical care, normally for about two weeks at a time, before moving to another country or region. These roving clinics, known as Mobile Medical Missions (MMMs), only function in Taiwan's formal diplomatic allies (Taiwan ICDF, 2010), and give Taiwan a more regular medical presence in Central America. However, such continuity reduces the media attention that is bestowed on a single large event such as the arrival of the Peace Ark in Costa Rica in November 2011.

MMM focus tends to be on rural villages, although clinical assistance at city hospitals has also occurred.⁷⁰ Given the awkward terrain in which they tend to travel, MMMs number around 30 personnel and carry only easily transportable equipment and supplies. In El Salvador, as elsewhere in Central America, MMM's focus on treating simple ailments and conducting simple procedures. For example, the provision of antibiotics against Chagas disease, extracting decayed teeth and other dental issues, pregnancy screenings, and issuing education leaflets and advice.

MMMs were established by the Taiwan ICDF in 2006. Before this the ICDF partnered with Taiwanese international non-governmental organisations such as the Tzu Chi Foundation and the Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps (TRMPC) to perform medical diplomacy to its allies. Thus, by linking with the Taiwan ICDF and by flying the flag of the ROC when doing so (for example Tzu Chi Foundation, 2009), these

⁷⁰ Prior to arriving in El Salvador, I was informed that the Taiwan ICDF would deliver an MMM in a hospital in the city of Santa Ana and that I could attend the clinic as an observer. However it was delayed until May 2011, preventing the materialisation of valuable ethnographic research. Delays such as this are a result of the Taiwan ICDF focusing much of its resources over the past two years to assisting Haiti following the earthquake of 12th January 2010. Haiti is one of the 23 nation-states worldwide who diplomatically recognise Taiwan.

organisations are demonstrating consciousness of the political significance of their role and have become part of the public diplomacy apparatus. The symbolism of the flag, and sensitivities to it, will be reinvestigated in the coming section on the PRC's presence in El Salvador. These organisations now continue their work in Central America and elsewhere in tandem with MMMs.

The TRMPC is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation set-up by an individual to assist the needy around the world (Taiwan Government Information Office, 2002), and the Tzu Chi Foundation is an internationally registered Buddhist charity based in Taipei. Thus, those favouring the institutional or resource-based approach to public diplomacy research would probably think these to be outside of the realm of public diplomacy. However, this research has made it clear that it favours the objective-based approach and by this logic must emphasise that these organisations are clearly public diplomacy resources being directed by the Taiwan ICDF towards a foreign public with the intention of assisting Taiwan's foreign policy goals. Lin Kuo-chung from the Taipei Representative Office in London discussed this during his interview:

There is a trend of more money being spent on public diplomacy and in this the private sector also has a big role to play. For example, the Taiwan government tries to persuade people to volunteer and also engages with charities such as the Tzu Chi Foundation. Our medical corps are a combination of charities and government run schemes. (Lin 2011a)

Therefore, since 2006 medical missions in Taiwan's Central American allies have partly been provided directly by the Taiwan ICDF and at other times through non-profit, non-governmental organisations linked to the ICDF. For example, a Taiwan ICDF MMM visited a hospital in the city of Santa Ana for several days in May 2011. However, in November 2011, following extensive flooding in El Salvador, the TRMPC arrived with a 23 person team to treat some of those affected (Huang

and Liu, 2011). But in November 2009 it was the Tzu Chi Foundation who came to assist those in El Salvador affected by Hurricane Ida (Tzu Chi Foundation, 2009).

Medical diplomacy is an area somewhat different from other public diplomacy initiatives in that it mainly relies on outsourced staff and organisations, with doctors, nurses, and dentists taking time away from their regular jobs to participate in missions. Medical diplomacy is also one of the clearest examples of the perception of the recipient being more important than the institution delivering the performance. However, there is a fundamental need to be careful not to document certain activities as public diplomacy when, for example, a medical mission is made up of multiple nationalities, or when it does not declare allegiance to a government mission. However, in El Salvador Taiwan outsourced all of its medical diplomacy until 2006 when Taiwan ICDF MMMs were first introduced, yet the ICDF has coordinated all of these missions both pre and post 2006 (Lee, 2011). What is more, most, if not all, have flown the Taiwan flag as a statement of their country of origin but also of their support for Taiwan's right to self-rule. Consequently, while not as much of a media spectacle as the arrival of the PRC's Peace Ark in Costa Rica, Taiwan's use of MMMs to visit rural communities coupled with support in the aftermath of the natural disasters thus prioritises medical assistance to those who need it most.

Education Diplomacy

Europe has engaged in education diplomacy for centuries. For example, the Holy Roman Empire provided students from across Europe with bursaries to attend Rome, with the era of Emperor Charlemagne (800 – 814AD) being particularly renowned for educational scholarships, as he sought to manufacture a pan-European identity (see McKitterick, 2008). Indeed, the performance of education diplomacy has always been tied to variables such as the quality of the diplomatic relationship between two nation-states, the strategic importance of the relationship, and

competition from rival powers (see Eide, 1970; Waller, 2007). In the modern era, the likes of France (Alliance Francaise) and the United Kingdom (The British Council), and more recently Spain (Instituto Cervantes), the PRC (Confucius Institutes) and Taiwan (Taiwan Academies) have established education and cultural offices around the world to complement international scholarships and increase their presence within target countries (Leonard et al, 2005; Paradise, 2009; Rawnsley, 2011). At the institutional level, this two-pronged education diplomacy tactic is a balancing act between rewarding receptive regimes and publics, and attempting to improve the national image among those who are indifferent or even hostile.

Taylor (2008) states that education as a tool of public diplomacy derives from a faith in the phrase 'to know us is to love us', meaning that a foreigner who spends considerable time in a foreign country, making local friends and adapting to the lifestyle, will favour that country in the future should they gain a position of economic or political power.⁷¹ Yet the potential also exists for that foreigner to dislike the experience ('familiarity breeds contempt'). On Taiwan in Central America, one interviewee at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in San Salvador expressed scepticism about this education diplomacy strategy:

I think it is a good theory but I think that the people of poor countries do not have the same perspective. Because in El Salvador there are a lot of people who have studied abroad, but when you come back to El Salvador you do not have the same opportunities. Also, here the people who will be able to gain these scholarships are from a small elite class, in a way they are already successful and even if they do not go on international scholarship they will still be leaders in the future [...] (Anonymous, 2011a)

⁷¹ One of the best examples of this is Mikheil Saakashvili, President of Georgia, who studied at both Columbia Law School and George Washington University School of Law in 1994 and 1995 under the Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Programme. This scholarship is aimed at the countries occupied by the Soviet Union until its collapse in 1991 and was established by the US government in 1992 (see IREX, 2012). Since taking office Saakashvili has led Georgia on a pro-NATO path, much to the irritation of neighbouring Russia.

With this new government (the FMLN) we try to be more transparent, but before, the only people who had the opportunity to have a scholarship are the best friends of the ministers etc. But now we try to give the opportunity to the common people, and maybe in the future these people can form a leadership, but it is not the case during this time. (Anonymous, 2011a)

These quotations re-emphasise the extent political patronage has played in Taiwan's public diplomacy, and apparently continues to play. Thus, we see the widespread exclusion of society's non-elite from the public diplomacy process. This highlights the extent to which nation-states, Taiwan included, try to recycle relations with the offspring of those who already favour them in a bid to guarantee generational inter-elite partnerships. However, as social mobility increases in El Salvador as it makes political reforms, we must question whether Taiwan is wise to persist with such a strategy, as it is essential that Taiwan's diplomats in El Salvador are flexible enough to adapt to changing socio-political dynamics, because if they do not it runs the risk of political and public backlash.

International Scholarships

International scholarships tend to flow either between developed countries or from developed to under-developed countries. Moreover, the governments who provide scholarships have seemingly standardised this approach, with the provision of similar monthly allowances and a return air ticket being standard. In 2010 Taiwan provided El Salvador with 46 education scholarships for students to go to Taiwan. This was an increase on previous years – 34 in 2009, 38 in 2008 and 30 in 2007 (Anonymous, 2011a). This is in contrast to the PRC who do not provide the government of El Salvador with any scholarships. Taiwan's scholarships account for approximately 10-15 percent of all that are received by the Department of Scholarships at El Salvador's Ministry of Foreign Affairs each year (Anonymous, 2011a). Taiwan offers a combination of undergraduate and postgraduate

opportunities, as well as shorter courses for Mandarin study. Competency in English is a prerequisite.

The other notable providers of international scholarships to El Salvador – South Korea, Japan and Israel – are all 'ideological allies' from the Cold War (Anonymous, 2011a).⁷² Powerful members of the economic and political elite of these countries were brought together by the WACL, which while officially an NGO, facilitated intergovernmental debate de-facto (Anderson and Anderson, 1986). However, this is not to say that they continue to perform education diplomacy on the basis of ideological solidarity, but it does signify a legacy of friendly relations. Moreover, as Zhu (2010) rightly points out, South Korea and Japan's on-going assistance to Latin America is part of their bid to maintain region influence in light of the PRC's growing presence. As such, we must remember that while there is little doubt the isolation of Taiwan is the most important foreign policy issue for the PRC in Central America, the Japan issue also shadows and motivates their engagement with the underdeveloped world.

It should be noted that while El Salvador and the PRC have no formal diplomatic relations, this does not exclude an El Salvadoran from gaining a scholarship to study in the PRC, for the PRC provides the Organisation of American States (OAS) with a number of scholarships each year (OAS, 2011).⁷³ A national from any member state is permitted to apply for these and the Department of Scholarships clarified that the OAS was one of the top ten providers to El Salvador,

⁷² The source did not disclose numbers for these other countries but indicated in descending order which countries were most prolific in their provision of scholarships. These three were in the top 5 alongside Taiwan (Anonymous, 2011a).

⁷³ The PRC has official observer status at the OAS (Committee on Foreign Relations of the US Senate, 2010: 62). In March 2011 the OAS stated that it was not at liberty to publish the numbers of students who took up scholarships in the PRC or the countries from which they originated, and only reiterated that the scholarship was available to citizens of all member states.

although the extent to which the uptake of China scholarships was from El Salvador remained unclear (Anonymous, 2011a).⁷⁴

The accurate documentation of international scholarships is dependent on both transparency and good statistical housekeeping by the governments involved. To this end, the provision of accurate data is the largest issue when investigating this aspect of public diplomacy. Indeed, El Salvador's Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that in documenting scholarship provision and feedback they regularly fell short when trying to secure accurate statistics for reasons including differences in the way scholarships are provided from country to country, incomplete visibility of all scholarships coming into El Salvador and their own lack of departmental focus and budget (Anonymous, 2011a). These circumstances thus hamper the stock-take of a nation-state's social capital and only serve to reinforce issues concerning our inability to quantify public diplomacy.

While the central issue for most governments including that of El Salvador is cost versus benefit (Anonymous, 2011a), the extent to which Taiwan monitors its provision of scholarships and seeks to maintain the positive sentiment created by their activities is dependent on the importance it attaches to positive public opinion. However, Taiwan's interest in doing this should be minimal given claims discussed earlier as to Taiwan's priority being foreign elites and the audience at home. This was proved after informally speaking on Facebook to a number of ex-Taiwan scholarship holders from El Salvador, all of whom attested that the Taiwanese authorities had sought no contact in the months and years after their return from Taiwan. That said, in neighbouring Guatemala the Taiwan Embassy has begun post-scholarship groups for former holders (Sanchez, 2011), leading to conclusions that

⁷⁴ El Salvadorans can also apply for scholarships with private organisations such as the Beijing Center, a Christian organisation offering degree level education. However this is beyond the periphery of public diplomacy as it lacks government involvement. In fact, given what is known of the PRC's contempt for many religious denominations, it can be argued that the organisation such as the Beijing Center may serve to critique their country of residence.

such actions are not the result of central government directives but are locally made decisions. All of this must be positioned in contrast to Costa Rica where the PRC has attempted to ring-fence and even expand upon the goodwill generated by their international scholarships, the obvious example being the Association of Ex-scholarship holders Costa Rica – China.

The failure to consolidate support from those accepting scholarships in Taiwan suggests that Taipei prizes the act of negotiating the scholarships with civil servants to their satisfaction, more than student experience. Therefore, their disinterest in consolidating positive public sentiment in El Salvador inevitably results in a loss of control over the sentiment building process. However, as Taiwan's foreign policy is prioritised towards the upkeep of the diplomatic relationship, this way of performing public diplomacy fits the current requirements of Taiwan's foreign policy in the region. What is more, some at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in El Salvador are sceptical as to whether any positive sentiment is actually created at all given that invariably these scholarships are given to the social elite. As such, while there is scepticism over whether this helps Taiwan to recycle personal relations with the elites, the continuation of such a policy does nothing to advance Taiwan's cause amongst the general public and highlights a consistency in Taiwan's education diplomacy policy since before El Salvador's political reforms.

Taiwan's Education Presence in El Salvador

In terms of education and cultural centres, Taiwan does not have a flagship entity in El Salvador like the PRC's Confucius Institute in Costa Rica. However, all of the major universities in San Salvador have at least one Mandarin teacher provided by the Taiwan ICDF. This is the same in Taiwan's other Central American allies. The majority of these teachers are recent female university graduates from Taiwan who are eager to travel the world after finishing their university studies in their home

country (Hu, 2011a; Wang, 2011). They are volunteers who are paid minimal wages, and are given return flights, accommodation and living expenses.

Normal residency for one of these teachers is between one and three years in the country to which they are allocated, although there is no barrier to staying longer. In February 2011 there were six Taiwanese Mandarin teachers working for the ICDF, and according to Carlos Lee, Head of the Taiwan ICDF in the country, the government of El Salvador had been requesting more (Lee, 2011). The provision of Taiwan ICDF Mandarin teachers to El Salvador has little heritage; indeed, the first intake was only in 2008. In early 2011 I separately interviewed Wang Yi-fei and Hu Jing-yun, Taiwanese women who had come to El Salvador in the first intake of four teachers in September 2008 (Hu, 2011a). They discussed the growing demand for Mandarin competency in the country:

Most students [who I teach] are university age, so about 18-22 years old. However there are also people who work who come to my Saturday classes. Many of these people are doing business with China, or may want to do business with China in the future. While they haven't said this directly, I think this insinuates a wider reflection of the economic rise of China and that Mandarin is a language of the future if you like. Learning Mandarin is therefore providing them with the equipment for success (Wang, 2011).

It is a result of China's growing presence in the world. Basically, the El Salvador government asked for more people to teach Mandarin as they considered there to be more demand for it. The Taiwan government then agreed to provide more teachers, it was very simple. (Hu, 2011a)

Taiwan's efforts in this field are therefore a contribution to the growing interest in Chinese studies around the world, from which, both the PRC and Taiwan are set to benefit (Dumbaugh, 2010; Ellis, 2009; Li, 2009; Taylor, 2009; Zhu, 2010). Taiwanese ICDF teachers receive six weeks of training in Taipei prior to their departure for El

Salvador, or to whichever ally they are assigned. Wang explained the details of the training:

[The training] consisted of three hours in the morning of Spanish tuition, and then we had Mandarin teacher training in the afternoon for two or three weeks. We also received lectures on why volunteering for projects such as this is important. The ICDF used the US Peace Corps and JICA as examples of good practice. They also brought in people who had volunteered before to share their experiences. This helped to give us some teaching ideas and gave us an inclination as to what was going on in these countries.

Question: Why is volunteering important, what did they tell you?

They said that Taiwan at one point received a lot of international assistance and that this helped us to become the successful country that we are now. It is therefore our duty to do the same for other countries now that we are in a strong position to do so. (Wang, 2011)

This final statement by Wang is one of the clearest examples of the Taiwan government's propaganda towards their own people as it tries to construct a favourable domestic persona of its international relations. Thus, many of Taiwan's diplomatic corps, including several of those interviewed for this research, consider international compassion to be the motivating factor behind their career choice. However, it is also clear that it is Taiwan's preference not to use career diplomats but rather to favour citizen to citizen engagement in education diplomacy.

Enquiries were also made into the structure of teaching by the Taiwan ICDF given that Taiwan had shown little interest in building positive public sentiment. When questioned as to Taiwan's commitment to teaching quality, Wang and Hu's responses were unsurprising:

Question: Have you been set teaching performance targets by your government or embassy?

No there haven't been any targets. When I arrived there was no text book on teaching Mandarin to Spanish speakers so I had to ask the embassy for money to buy them. I think that the Taiwan government uses us a diplomacy tool; they aren't really interested in the results, just in their relationship with the local government here in El Salvador. They are not really focused on the teaching itself. (Wang, 2011)

I was not set any targets by the government. They basically told me to go there and see what you can do. If you get one or two students then it's ok, if you get 100 then great. I designed the course myself so I had virtually complete control over what I taught them and how I taught them. (Hu, 2011a)

The lack of uniformity in course content, the disorganisation in the provision of adequate teaching materials, and the disinterest in maximising student uptake, all highlight the extent of the Taiwan government's apathy towards the consolidation of positive public sentiment. To be sure, this is not a question of budget or resources but reflects apathy towards training and to the overall importance of public diplomacy in these countries from senior diplomatic personnel. Indeed, that the students cannot work towards a recognised qualification in Mandarin with a fully qualified languages teacher demonstrates Taiwanese apathy towards the growth of El Salvador's overall human capital, and its own agency's development as a public diplomacy institution. As such, if El Salvador had not asked Taiwan to provide Mandarin teachers there must be some doubt as to whether the volunteers would be in the country at all. However, at the root of this issue is the use of volunteers and not professional teachers, who, while probably well intentioned, lack the technical experience of language tuition. Thus, while Taiwanese officials may state that, "Taiwan, before China opened up, used to be the only place to learn Mandarin. We

therefore have more experience and better quality teaching than anywhere else” (Lin, 2011a), the fact of the matter is that the PRC is outperforming Taiwan both in quality of teaching and the opportunities for formal language qualifications available in Central America. Thus, while constructing their education diplomacy in this way may once have satisfied Taiwan’s foreign policy of keeping officials and elites happy (their actual education of citizens being of secondary concern), bringing the PRC’s work in Costa Rica into the analysis reveals the vulnerability of such an approach. As such, we really must question how this serves Taiwan’s wider interests, and why Taiwan has approached education diplomacy in such a way. The only real answer is that senior diplomatic personnel and policymakers do not prioritise public diplomacy in El Salvador as this research believes they ought to.

To further this argument, one can look beyond El Salvador to the USA where Taiwan has opened Taiwan Academies in New York, Houston and Los Angeles in October 2011 offering altogether more formal education packages (Taiwan Academy, 2011). Leaving aside debates as to their political objectives in the USA and in Taiwan’s relationship with the PRC (see Rawnsley, 2011), the creation of Taiwan Academies sends the message to the governments and civil societies of its formal allies that despite their support in the face of international pressure, they receive only amateur Mandarin teaching, whereas non-recognising countries receive a far more professional education mission. What is more, there is little doubt that the problems encountered by Mandarin teachers in El Salvador would not occur at the Taiwan Academies. This allows us to position the importance of Taiwan’s Central American allies on its political hierarchy. However, it is also indicative of the balancing act that public diplomacy must perform between rewarding loyalty and incentivising policy change within foreign government. Thus, while Taiwan must try to secure its formal diplomatic relationships, of greater importance is its relations with the USA as its protectorate. This thesis does not seek to make many recommendations of how the PRC or Taiwan should be performing public

diplomacy. However, in the evidence presented here clearly indicates that Taiwan should pursue a more professional approach to its Mandarin teaching in Central America with perhaps the Taiwan Academies as a model for replication.

The final point to be made on the conduct of Taiwan's education and cultural mission in El Salvador concerns their annual Mandarin Singing and Speaking Competition at the Sheraton Presidente Hotel in San Salvador held in 2011 on 17th February.⁷⁵ The event, which the Taiwan embassy considers to be one of the social events of the year, was well attended with an estimated 300 – 400 people in the audience. Seemingly all of the Taiwanese diplomatic staff in El Salvador were there, and they were joined by family members of the El Salvadorans performing, and some local Chinese Diaspora. However, only one local media organisation was visible (local newspaper *Diario Co Latino*) and in the days following media coverage was minimal.⁷⁶

In addition, it was interesting to note the participation of students from 'Centro Chino' at the event, as it offered stark contrast to the poor relations between the PRC and the Chinese Diaspora in Costa Rica, where there has been a legal battle over the name 'Instituto Confucio'. The involvement of Centro Chino, the hub for the Chinese Diaspora in El Salvador which has been providing language classes for longer than the Taiwan ICDF (Wang, 2011), indicates a stronger relationship between the Diaspora and the diplomatic corps than has been achieved by the PRC in Costa Rica. This adds weight to Siu's argument that the Taiwanese have made considerable efforts to ensure healthy relations with the Chinese Diaspora in their diplomatic allies (see Siu, 2005).

⁷⁵ The venue of the Sheraton Presidente is significant. During the armed conflict of the 1980s and early 1990s, the Taiwan Ambassador was always head of the diplomatic core in El Salvador and the annual dinner was always held at the hotel with Taiwan at the head of the table (Anderson and Anderson, 1986). In addition, Lt. Col. Domingo Monterrosa and subsequent military and civilian presidents of El Salvador normally held their press conferences for the international media here during the armed conflict (Danner, 2005).

⁷⁶ *Diario Co Latino* was the only national newspaper seen at the event. However, the article that was published afterwards (see Meza, 2011) did not refer to the competition as such but to the welcome speech of Ambassador Carlos Liao, during which he discussed the state of Taiwan – El Salvador relations. This was the only reference to the competition found in the mainstream press of El Salvador in the days following.

In conclusion, while the PRC operates Confucius Institutes which offers professional teaching and the opportunity for further Mandarin study in China, the Taiwan ICDF is considerably less professional and offers students no formal qualification. This is epitomised by the use of volunteers with six weeks of basic training instead of university lecturers and a lack of centralisation in its course content. While this may be somewhat the result of a lack of resources, this strategy lacks real commitment to the building of civic bonds with the El Salvadorans on the part of Taiwan, and reflects a focus on political relations rather than public opinion.

Engagement with El Salvador's Domestic Media

When asked what the best way for Taiwan to engage with foreign publics was, Lin Kuo-chung from the Taipei Representative Office in London responded:

For us the best and most effective approach to public diplomacy is to engage via the media in the respective country. This allows us to reach the most people with our message. The international media of Taiwan does a job too but it is related to the government, not in its content but its budget is provided by the government. (Lin, 2011a)

That Taiwan considers the domestic media to be such a central component to its public diplomacy policy makes its analysis particularly worthwhile. Indeed, it is enlightening in itself that focus is on domestic media rather than Taiwan's own international broadcasting, as it reflects the wider predicament that many countries have in attracting audiences to their product. Indeed, at the time of writing none of the mainstream domestic media in El Salvador appeared to subscribe to newswires from either Taiwanese or PRC sources. However, they do have relationships with *Reuters*, *Associated Press* (AP), *EFE*, and other familiar European and North American news agencies (Monterrosa, 2011; Wu, 2011). Therefore, while it is important to note the existence of Taiwan's government funded international broadcasting organisations such as *Radio Taiwan International* (RTI), *Taiwan Today* (*Taiwan Hoy* for

the Spanish language), and the *Central News Agency* (CNA), their lack of penetration into El Salvador's domestic market limits the audience of these broadcasters to Chinese Diaspora, those with specific interests, academics studying China, and unintended contact.

This section will now discuss Taiwan's relationship with the domestic media of El Salvador as part of the public diplomacy strategy. Academic studies of political reportage from the region have rightly focused on the print media (for example, Jones, 2002; Kodrich, 2002; Alexander, 2009), as television tends to focus on entertainment in Central America, and radio regurgitates articles from other sources as it lacks a budget for original journalism (Rockwell and Janus, 2003). This section will therefore continue this legacy of research. However, first it is important to understand El Salvador's media history.

El Salvador's media is entangled with the political right-wing. However, while the likes of Guatemala have experienced considerable media reform since the mid 1990s – highlighted by the widening of political affiliations, the professionalisation of journalism, and the introduction of new newspapers (see Rockwell and Janus, 2003) – in El Salvador the media are largely untransformed from the days of the armed conflict where publications not aligned to the right-wing incumbents, including *Diario Co Latino*, were either banned or harangued by the national guard (Rockwell and Janus, 2003). For example, while Taiwan has been involved in a number of contemporary Central American Presidential corruption scandals, most notably in Guatemala and Costa Rica (*El Nuevo Diario*, 2005; *Nacion*, 2006), the lack of media reform in El Salvador goes some way to explaining the absence of revelations about the bribery of government officials by the Taiwanese, for there is no reason to believe that El Salvador has been immune to such behaviour.

When interviewed for this project, Monica Wu, the Head of the Press Office at the Taiwan Embassy in El Salvador, discussed the overall purpose of her department:

Effectively our mission as a press office or the purpose if you like is to provide information about Taiwan to the people of El Salvador. However we also organise all kinds of activities especially cultural activities in order to increase mutual understanding and increase our standing with the people of El Salvador [...]

Question: When you contact the local media, how do you do this?

We send a press release every week which summarises our main jobs. Besides this, we also make contact with [journalists and editors] over dinners or we go to their offices to talk to them to get a better understanding between us and the media. (Wu, 2011)

It is this concept of providing the local media with information on Taiwan that is the central purpose of the press offices of Taiwan embassies around the world.⁷⁷ In addition, Wu confirmed that the press office is invariably tasked with responding to challenges to Taiwan's diplomatic relationship by the El Salvador media (Wu, 2011). As such, it is important to assess the content of press releases and also evaluate the impact of the other tasks of the press office.

Appendices E and F are copies of two Spanish language press releases from Taiwan's Embassy in El Salvador that were sent to mainstream local media in February and March 2011. Each contains two stories on Taiwan. Translated, the four headlines read: 'Taiwan donates US\$100,000 to New Zealand', 'President Ma insists

⁷⁷ Lin Kuo-chung from the Taipei Representative Office in London stated that the press offices, "deal with the local media whether it be newspaper, television, radio etc. Our purpose is to raise the profile of Taiwan, to boost Taiwan's visibility, because a lot of British people do not know what Taiwan is. They think it is either part of China or even Thailand. So we try to provide them with information on our various policies and activities." (Lin, 2011a) This was also confirmed by Rosa Hu at the Taiwan embassy press office in Guatemala. (Hu, 2011b)

that political reform in China be quicker', 'Taipei in list of underestimated tourist cities', and 'President Ma and his wife will unite to collect funds for Japan'.

There are four points that can be made about their content. The first is that two of the stories re-emphasise the compassion-based image of the Taiwan diplomatic corps in El Salvador. Secondly, the stories had nothing to do with El Salvador. Third, none of El Salvador's three largest newspapers ran any of the stories, which makes Wu's statement that the primary purpose of the press office is to 'provide information on Taiwan to the people of El Salvador' seem like a rather fruitless exercise on their part. However, it may be that their lack of relevance to El Salvador goes a considerable way to explaining the lack of interest in their being published. The final point concerns the fact that Taiwan is attempting to broadcast its similar treatment of PRC allies, and wealthy allies at that. This arguably diminishes the distinction of the relationship in the eyes of both the public and the elite in the likes of El Salvador. For the sake of their public diplomacy therefore, perhaps it is not a bad thing that these press releases tend not to be published.

Collectively this demonstrates a shortfall in the understanding of editorial priorities of news organisations by the Taiwanese. However, the extent to which these are errors on the part of the local embassy press office is unclear. For these press releases are unedited copy produced by CNA in Taipei, and it may be that their dispatch is the result of a mandate by the Government Information Office (GIO) in Taipei rather than poor selectivity by the Press Office in El Salvador. That said, it is clear that instead of merely forwarding copy designed for mass distribution, the Press Office needs to begin providing more relevant press releases if they are to improve the volume that are published.

The second job of the Press Office is to respond to what they deem to be negative or inaccurate reporting of Taiwan and thus that which is potentially harmful to the diplomatic relationship (Wu, 2011). Issues of this nature are not

particularly prevalent in El Salvador given the dominance of conservatism in the media. However, it is worthwhile analysing the public response of the Press Office to instances that have occurred. The most pertinent example of the last two years occurred in November 2010 when the ASAC organised a business exhibition for 50 Chinese companies in San Salvador (*Diario Co Latino*, 2010), the largest for Chinese companies in the history of El Salvador (Flores, 2011). Wu (2011) claims that it was the quotation on page three of *Diario Co Latino* from El Salvador's attending President Mauricio Funes that caused alarm. The translation is as follows:

If it is agreeable to the country to open diplomatic relations with China - because China has thousands of millions of capital in the world - if it is agreeable for the country, we will move to do this. (Funes, cited in *Diario Co Latino*, 2010)

Wu said that the newspaper called Taiwan's embassy and asked for reaction to Funes's speech; and given the perceived gravity of the situation it was decided that Carlos Liao, Taiwan Ambassador to El Salvador, would give an interview to *Diario Co Latino* because this would ensure that Taiwan's point-of-view was clearly presented (Wu, 2011). This resulted in the 23rd November 2010 edition of *Diario Co Latino* being presented as follows: the first page gave headline coverage to the exhibition and included a photograph of FMLN politician Manuel Flores shaking hands with Yu Ping, Vice Chairman of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT, 2011), following their signing of an agreement; the second page provided coverage of the interview with Ambassador Liao; and the third page had two articles about El Salvador's relationships with Taiwan and the PRC, one of which included the quotation from President Funes (see *Diario Co Latino*, 2010).

In light of the fact that the Chinese Ambassador to Costa Rica provides a quarterly column to *Nacion*, for comparative purposes it is worthwhile conducting a

thematic analysis of Ambassador Liao's interview with *Diario Co Latino*. However, before this the context that induced the interview and the nature of interviewing itself must be discussed.

It is clear that the interview with Ambassador Liao was a reaction to the negative reportage of Taiwan. The basis for the interview was therefore to override negativity and this naturally preoccupied the discussion. In this regard, the agenda of the interview had been set by an event that required discussion, thus giving the Ambassador little opportunity to discuss the merits of Taiwan more generally. This is in comparison to the quarterly statements issued by the PRC's Ambassador to Costa Rica in *Nacion*, which have proactively sought to communicate with the Costa Rican public. While clearly there is a need to pre-empt topical concerns – Ambassador Li's statement regarding the PRC's environmental record in the aftermath of an international environmental summit is a good example, (Li, 2011a) – it is fair to say that the PRC are communicating proactively rather than as part of crisis management. Instead, Wu stated that the Press Office, "approached the editor-in-chief of [Diario] Co Latino about interviewing our ambassador" (Wu, 2011). To their detriment, Taiwan makes less effort to communicate proactively with the El Salvadoran public, and is therefore sacrificing much of the control over content to the media, rather than seeking a platform from which to present themselves without the same restrictions.

In providing a thematic analysis of the interview, the script can be separated into two sections. In the first half Ambassador Liao is asked about Taiwanese relations with the new FMLN government of El Salvador, and he responds by explaining the year-on-year increase in Taiwanese funding to government ministries, such as that of Justice and Security, as well as Taiwan's assistance in training police cadets in the fight against national security problems such as drug trafficking. The second half of the interview is a discussion of Taiwanese cooperation

in other areas, focusing on activities such as their contribution to education, agriculture and healthcare.

The ambassador's interview highlights the prioritisation of political goals in Taiwanese public diplomacy. For, it appears to be more conciliatory towards government officials than engagement with the public. This is demonstrated by Liao not focusing on the public benefit in any of his answers but on the government of El Salvador's apparent satisfaction with Taiwan's efforts, although those in the public reading the article will also digest Taiwan's contribution. A good example of this is when Ambassador Liao discusses healthcare: after highlighting Taiwan's contribution to the purchase of laboratory equipment, he states that, "[t]he subject of health is an important agenda for the government so for that reason we are supporting it" (Liao, cited in *Diario Co Latino*, 2010). There can be little doubt that a country without the diplomatic preoccupations of Taiwan would have phrased this with more emphasis on the needs of the people rather than of the government. Thus, Liao's emphasis clearly shows that Taiwan's public diplomacy priorities are strongly attached to the country's wider foreign policy regarding diplomatic recognition, and therefore builds evidence in support of the central argument of the thesis.

In conclusion, Taiwan appears to be underperforming in its communication with the domestic media and thus to the public of El Salvador because it operates on a reactive rather than a proactive basis. This is despite the claims of those in the Taiwan Embassy Press Office that their engagement with the public is one of the most fundamental parts of Taiwan's diplomatic mission in El Salvador. Thus, while the motivation to conduct public diplomacy is always about the satisfaction of a foreign government to some extent, when conducting media related activities there is an opportunity to communicate with the foreign civil society without requirement to ensure the appreciation of the authorities. There appears however, to be an imbalance where instead of speaking directly to the people, and communicating Taiwan's ideology and the potential benefits the Taiwanese can bring, there

continues to be a preoccupation with governmental relations. What is more, through apparent ignorance of media systems and practices, the Press Office's weekly press releases lack penetration. Indeed, while some will have been published over the years, that I asked Wu to send some good examples of the content that they offer the domestic media, would insinuate that the copy received was considered good practice by the Press Office, thus indicating considerable strategic ignorance.

Indeed, given the right-wing leanings of much of El Salvador's media, it is surprising that Taiwan's Ambassador does not directly address the people of El Salvador proactively and more regularly. For this would be an ideal way to promote pro-Taiwan sentiment and also to highlight the potential problems and incompatibilities El Salvador could encounter if it further integrates with the PRC. Moreover, this could create considerable empathy for Taiwan given that the timing of political reforms in El Salvador and Taiwan have somewhat mirrored one another, and many of the social issues that have been addressed are similar. Thus, that it does not do this adds weight to our argument regarding Taiwan's prioritising of relations with the PRC ahead of those with El Salvador.

All things considered therefore, the only real conclusion is that Taiwan's media diplomats need more incorporation of Taiwan's larger international strategy into their output, and that they must become more proactive, particularly now that the PRC has a presence in the region. The reasons why they do not do this are down to training on two levels: firstly, that working at the embassy in San Salvador is quite a junior position for members of the press office, where as the Taipei Representative Offices of Europe and North America are much more prestigious. Thus, staff are still very much still learning the particulars of the role; and secondly, because these individuals are media scholars first and foremost, and lack understanding of international relations and diplomacy. Thus, while for many countries employing media strategists to work in the press offices of embassies is suitable, given Taiwan's

precarious diplomatic situation these individuals are frontline diplomats and must be trained accordingly.

The Chinese Diaspora in El Salvador

While animosity has existed between the Costa Rican Chinese Diaspora and the PRC mission in that country (see chapter on Costa Rica), no such situation exists in El Salvador. Indeed, the Taiwan embassy participates in, and financially assists, cultural celebrations such as dragon parades at Chinese New Year, and the diaspora attend embassy social events. Diplomats also use Centro Chino to socialise with other Mandarin speakers while stationed there (Wang, 2011). The extent of the goodwill between the Taiwan embassy and the local Diaspora was evident in the participation of Mandarin students from Centro Chino – the premises in San Salvador collectively owned by the Diaspora – at the embassy’s Mandarin speaking and singing competition at the Sheraton Presidente on 17th February 2011. Those from the Diaspora community also sat in the audience and chatted happily with embassy staff at intervals.

Although Wang could not be specific, Centro Chino has offered Mandarin classes for many years. Indeed, with the embassy only beginning its provision of Mandarin teachers in 2008 (Hu, 2011a, Wang, 2011), Centro Chino was the only formal place to learn Mandarin in El Salvador before this. As Wang said:

The only place to learn [before 2008] was at Centro Chino in San Salvador, however this was not really for local people. Their policy was to teach Mandarin to the second and third generation Chinese descendants in El Salvador. So kids with Chinese parents, or parent, who wanted them to keep their language tradition alive. However now, about 90% of the people who learn at Centro Chino are local El Salvadorans. (Wang, 2011)

Therefore, similar to the China Association in Costa Rica, Centro Chino is a centre for all Chinese Diaspora, and those connected to it were keen to point out that

it held an apolitical position and sought to include “all Chinese”, whether originally from the Chinese mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau or further afield (Wang, 2011). Furthermore, Hu asserted that Centro Chino’s change in focus occurred in 2005 and was the result of demand for lessons as a consequence of “China’s growing presence in the world” (Hu, 2011a).

The majority of the Chinese Diaspora in Central America, and in the Americas as a whole, originate from southern coastal regions such as Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan, and therefore from regions either at the extremities or beyond Beijing’s political control (Romero, 2010). Furthermore, the majority of Diaspora are Christians (Johnson, 2006; Romero, 2010; Suryadinata, 2007), and as Siu’s (2005: 182) work on the Chinese Diaspora in Panama previously indicated, the loyalty towards Taiwan comes more from the embassy’s willingness to support them rather than a concern for the future of Taiwan.

Given the similar collective experience of the Diaspora in El Salvador, there is no reason to believe that this would not be the case here. Furthermore, Wu confirmed Siu’s claim that maintaining good relations with the Chinese Diaspora had been a key public diplomacy strategy of Taiwan’s embassy in El Salvador (Siu, 2005: 183; Wu, 2011). Crucially however, it appears that the concern of the Diaspora is less to do with Taiwan loyalty and more about self and cultural preservation. This is problematic for Taiwan because it is clear that they would like this social group to act as political lobbyists in their favour. However, the strength of the pressure they could potentially apply is not so much related to Taiwan’s actions but to the desirability (or not) of the PRC. As such, while Diaspora can be used in the performance of public diplomacy and to gain political leverage, it must always be remembered that the vast majority of Diaspora reside in another country because of the push and pull factors that govern human migration. Thus, to some extent, those who originally made the decision to leave did so due to dissatisfaction, making any relationship between the two prone to volatility, as was seen in the Costa Rica

chapter. However, the specifics of the situation regarding the PRC and Taiwan mean that Taiwan has an opportunity to use this group as an anti-PRC lobby in Central America, given that most of this group originally left China because of deep political and economic dissatisfaction. That said, as second, third and fourth generation Diaspora emerge such hostility is bound to dissipate, especially as the PRC develops into a modern, successful economy. Therefore, to optimise the benefit of this group, Taiwan needs to exploit the weaknesses in the PRC's international image. However, there is little likelihood of this occurring because to do so would conflict and potentially harm the KMT government's policy of reconciliation with the mainland.

Conclusions about Taiwan's public diplomacy in El Salvador must revolve around its failure to engage effectively with the local civil society. This is particularly the case in its interaction with the domestic media, but applies in lesser amounts to its education diplomacy and development assistance. In addition, its relations with the Diaspora have never really been politically tested, and thus remain inconclusive. Whereas Taiwan's medical diplomacy, particularly the work of the MMMs, is arguably too removed to be of political benefit. Thus, while Taiwan is justifiably preoccupied with its diplomatic relationship with El Salvador's government, public diplomacy which is overly-focused on winning political support but which fails to make a reasonable attempt to consolidate positive public sentiment, is at considerable risk of being ineffective at influencing both public and political elite in El Salvador. It is therefore logical that we look towards Taiwan's domestic audience for explanation of Taiwan's conduct here. However, like any other nation-state, Taiwan must try and achieve a balance, seeking to engage more with the El Salvador public, yet also ensuring that political goals are met.

Challenges to Taiwanese Diplomatic Incumbency

In response to questions about threats to Taiwan's position in El Salvador, the Taiwan embassy Press Office said, "Our challenge is always from China" (Wu, 2011).

Given this statement and the progression of the PRC as a world power, any critique of Taiwanese public diplomacy must be positioned against the activities of their rival within the country in question. This is all the more important given that, while El Salvador and the PRC do not have formal diplomatic relations, in 2011 the PRC ranked as the fourth most prevalent import partner, with US\$443 million worth of product entering the country: only the USA, Guatemala and Mexico were higher (Ministerio de Economía El Salvador, 2012). As was noted earlier, Taiwan has an FTA with El Salvador, yet neither country maximises its potential. What is more, the PRC's use of economic diplomacy has precedence. For example, Brautigam notes the case of Swaziland, a country that has never had diplomatic ties with the PRC, yet Chinese-state owned companies have been winning contracts in the country since the early 1990s (Brautigam, 2009: 69).

On the topic of the PRC's economic diplomacy to El Salvador, Manuel Flores, the founder and Chairman of the ASAC, remarked: "China is practically recognised anyway in Central America, it is the second economy of the world, so to deny its existence is incorrect. Also, for Central America to miss these opportunities is crazy, so there is mutual interest in building friendship and commercial ties" (Flores, 2011). Therefore, it is economic integration that defines the level of interest in the PRC there is in El Salvador. As a result, this section will discuss the growth of El Salvador's economic relations with the PRC, and explain the effect of these developments to Taiwan's public diplomacy and diplomatic incumbency overall.

As noted in the introduction, the FMLN has had friendly relations with the PRC since its days as a guerrilla group. However, the relationship was more a consequence of the PRCs support for anti-imperialist guerrilla groups than any tendency towards the development of international trade. In 2005, Manuel Flores, the mayor of the Quezaltepeque, established the ASAC following the trip he had made to the PRC in 2004 to attend the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) conference where he met Li Xiaolin, an academic

and business leader within the ranks of the CCP, and the daughter of former Premier Li Peng (Flores, 2011).⁷⁸ According to Flores,

For Li [Xiaolin], expanding mainland China's influence in Latin America and the Caribbean was very important. So in 2005 I was inspired to found the ASAC. Similar agencies were set up in Nicaragua and Costa Rica and other countries of Central America and the Caribbean which had no diplomatic relations. We all speak regularly. When Costa Rica recognised China in 2007 the organisation there was a great help in ensuring the smooth changeover. It meant that the ruling party were not completely alien to the functioning of the Chinese as they already had friends within the government. (Flores, 2011)

What is more, Flores should be viewed as an ideal choice as mediator between the two countries. He has been a member of the FMLN since its period as a guerrilla group, and as Mayor of Quezaltepeque he sits on the periphery of high-profile politics in El Salvador, yet can easily access those in the cabinet or the Head-of-State. This permits the FMLN government to publicly indulge El Salvador's diplomatic relations with Taiwan while simultaneously facilitating channels of dialogue with the PRC.

It is clear that the focus of China's public diplomacy in El Salvador is on promoting the apparent economic opportunity that the PRC presents. Indeed, while paragraph one of the agreement, signed in November 2010 by Flores and Yu Ping, Vice Chairman of the CCPIT, states that, "Both parties will, within their respective responsibilities, keep regular contact and actively promote the friendship between China and El Salvador as well as the economic ties",⁷⁹ it is clear that emphasis is on economics rather than the rather vague term of 'cooperation'. Flores was asked

⁷⁸ The CPAFFC is mandated by the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs and permits non-recognised nation-states such as El Salvador to participate. Therefore, it is through this organisation that the likes of El Salvador interact with the PRC government. A framed A2 formal photograph of all representatives at the 2004 conference (including Flores) adorns the wall of the reception to Flores' office in Quezaltepeque. This hangs next to an enormous photograph of the Birds Nest Stadium in Beijing.

⁷⁹ A copy of this document is in the author's possession.

about the reality of what the ASAC wanted to do: “We have talked about creating a CA4 (Central America Four – Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador) agreement with China where a commercial link will be established and where the government of each country can officialise these friendship associations as the referral point for the Chinese” (Flores, 2011).

This approach has been epitomised by the establishment of Chambers of Commerce for the PRC across Central America, San Salvador’s being opened on 25th October 2010 (EFE, 2010). Beyond this, the ASAC, with Flores as its figurehead, provides the most obvious example of PRC’s growing political influence within one of Taiwan’s Central American diplomatic allies. Flores (2011) confirmed that he is the self-appointed, “political reference point for China in the region.” In this regard, the ASAC works of behalf of the PRC to promote perceived mutual interests in El Salvador.

The most significant event was the PRC Trade Exhibition organised by the ASAC in November 2010. It was the result of 18 months planning and gained the participation of 50 companies that Flores claimed were from the PRC. However, at least one of those in attendance was in fact Taiwanese (although they have offices on both sides of the Taiwan Strait), thus demonstrating the need for care when classifying non-governmental actors as part of a nation-state’s public diplomacy apparatus.⁸⁰ It should finally be noted that in Yu Ping, the event was attended by the highest ranked CCP official to ever to visit El Salvador (Flores, 2010).⁸¹

The first thing to note about the trade exhibition is Taiwan’s unhappiness at its occurrence. Flores stated:

⁸⁰ The products on show included a number of PRC ‘fairtrade’ organisations selling herbal medicine and traditional Chinese handcrafts. Additionally, there were PRC brands including H&O Jewellery, Geosofia (manufacturer of domestic appliances such as irons and sewing machines), and Golden Will Industrial, which will be discussed in more detail later. Most interesting however, was the attendance of Pollux Lighting, a Taiwanese company whose production line is in Shanghai (Pollux Lighting, 2012). Their participation in the PRC exhibition raised no eyebrows, which may well be the result of a lack of journalistic enquiry, nevertheless it demonstrates the need for academic prudence when events are categorised as public diplomacy.

⁸¹ Photographs of the trade exhibition are available on the ASAC’s Facebook page. (Facebook, 2012)

During the development of the expo last November I had big pressure from Taiwan, first, to stop developing it, and second, to not put the Chinese flag in a commercial and cultural event. The symbol of the country is the flag and the fact that there is no diplomatic relationship should not stop me from flying the Chinese flag. In any case, I was the one who was developing the expo and the companies coming were from the People's Republic of China. It was clear that Taiwan was motivated by ideological matters, by politics. They did not want me to fly the Chinese flag because they said that this would politicize the expo. So I said to them that in that case, every time you fly the Taiwanese flag at an event, you are therefore politicizing the event. To fly the flag is not to politicize an event; the flag is a demonstration of the nationality of the event (Flores, 2011).

We must question Flores's claim that a flag does not politicise an event, because both the PRC and Taiwan have great emphasis on gesture and that which is implied in their diplomacy. Thus, the PRC flag sharing the stage with that of El Salvador should be seen as a symbolic statement intended to provoke the Taiwanese.

Due diligence ensured I also asked the Taiwan Embassy about the PRC's economic presence in El Salvador:

China is getting stronger everyday so this presents pressure for us because especially economically China is strong and here we often hear or read in the newspaper, on the television or from some government official that El Salvador is talking about how important China is. They have begun to form a relationship with China, not diplomatically but economically, so it presents to us more pressure and we need to explain to the people of El Salvador why it is important to maintain a relationship with Taiwan (Wu, 2011).

It is not surprising that Wu gave such a diplomatic answer to the question because it would be hypocritical for Taiwan to impede their allies' development of trade relations with the PRC when cross-strait trade has been multiplying in recent years. Clearly, this is a face-saving exercise by the Taiwanese. Indeed, Taiwan is forced into the adoption a neutral position on El Salvador–PRC trade, merely emphasising the separation of economic and diplomatic issues. However, when the President of El Salvador shared a stage at this event with both the El Salvador and PRC flags, the lack of differentiation between the two was noticeable.

In keeping with their left-leaning editorial policy, *Diario Co Latino* (2010) gave the PRC trade exhibition a somewhat more positive write-up than the right-leaning newspaper *El Diario de Hoy*, focusing not on the merits of the exhibition but on the failure of President Funes to give a definitive answer on the question of El Salvador's diplomatic recognition of Taiwan (see *El Diario de Hoy*, 2010b). Thus, it can be argued that the exhibition served its political purpose by staging Funes against the backdrop of a PRC flag and ensuring media focus on this rather than the products on show. The symbolism of a flag was also discussed in the section on medical diplomacy, and it is clear that the appearance of the PRC flag crossed with the flag of El Salvador on a public stage with Funes standing in front of it is an intentional act designed to antagonise the Taiwanese. Yet Wu's comments show the extent to which Taiwan remains placid. As such, in keeping with the central argument, Taiwan's diplomacy is severely restricted by its own government's reconciliation with the PRC.

The exhibition's political rather than economic purpose was further highlighted by Rolando Monterrosa, Head of Opinion at *El Diario de Hoy*, who stated that:

[The exhibition] was very poorly attended by the El Salvadoran business community. Moreover, the people who were pitching did not appear to really know the products and could not answer the simple questions people asked. Also, there were very few samples for the people to take away and try. I go

back to this notion of quality, it was almost as though they didn't want to give samples because they knew the quality was poor⁸² (Monterrosa, 2011).

Perhaps the main reason behind the lack of knowledge of those on the stands at the exhibition was that they were Latin Americans and not Chinese, many of whom we can assume were promotional staff on temporary contracts and not regular employees of the companies in attendance. This lack of staff training and investment in products further enhances the argument that the event had more of a political purpose than an economic one. Furthermore, it shows the value of the objective-based approach to public diplomacy research, as it is important for activities such as these to be evaluated on the extent of their interpersonal communications between the source and recipient. Such analysis would not have been compatible with the institutional or resource-based approaches.

Despite the motivation for the exhibition being largely political, it was still important to understand more about the goods being promoted by the PRC in El Salvador. This was because several commentators had claimed that the PRC's integration with the underdeveloped world would lead to countries being awash with cheap (read: shoddy) Chinese products, which would compete with, and most likely undercut, those locally made (see Ellis, 2009; Santiso, 2007; Taylor, 2009). I asked Rolando Monterrosa for his organisation's opinion on this.

Monterrosa: You know a few years ago the local council of San Salvador bought some garbage trucks from China but they lasted about a year before they fell apart [...].

Question: Was it the problem that there were no spare parts to fix the trucks and no mechanics with knowledge?

⁸² There is no evidence to suggest that the event was poorly attended. On the contrary the event appears to have been very busy, however a breakdown of figures from different social sectors is unavailable.

Monterrosa: Yes, but it was also just a general issue of poor quality regarding the steel the trucks were made with. They now sit in a yard and their parts are being sold off here and there or for scrap [...] You know that the same company the government bought the garbage trucks from has begun importing Chinese made motorcycles and it's the same scenario – poor, poor quality [...] We import quite a lot of goods from Taiwan, they cost more than they would do from China but the quality is far superior. In a way, by buying the more expensive goods you probably save money. (Monterrosa, 2011)

The Chinese company responsible for the import of these bin lorries, Golden Will Inc., was one of the 50 companies to attend the PRC trade exhibition despite the negative media coverage they had already received in El Salvador (*El Diario de Hoy*, 2011). According to their website, Golden Will Inc. is a part-public part-private exporter of industrial vehicles based in Beijing and focusing specifically on Taiwan's diplomatic allies in Central America. However, more importantly, the company's President Wang Guangquan is a CCP official and Vice-President for Enterprise of the CPAFFC (Golden Will, 2012), the association Manuel Flores attended the conference of in 2004. This strategic positioning of industry for the purpose of political gain has been documented by Dumbaugh (2010) when discussing the PRC's international soft power.

Therefore, in coordination with the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Golden Will Inc. has strategically targeted Taiwan's diplomatic allies and sought to win contracts for the PRC – in particular, government contracts such as San Salvador City Council – in an apparent attempt to dilute Taiwan's civic stronghold. That said, success has been hard to come by, and given the issue with the bin lorries, one can easily argue that all the PRC has done is confirm much of the Western scepticism that it is an exporter of substandard products.

Conclusion

El Salvador is undoubtedly a key nation-state in the competition for allies as both the PRC and Taiwan devote resources to this country. This research has sought to analyse Taiwan's public diplomacy in El Salvador, and the PRC's attempts to dilute Taiwan's influence in its diplomatic allies. Thus, to gain such perspective it was essential that an objectives-based approach be adopted from public diplomacy's point of delivery in the target country. Isolating the research in Taipei or Beijing would have lacked the necessary perspective to make linkages to Taiwan's performance and to the overall competition for diplomatic allies that both countries are a part of.

The central findings of this chapter are that Taiwan conducts public diplomacy in El Salvador more to ensure generous appraisal from the political elite of the country than out of a desire to promote positive public sentiment from El Salvadoran civil society. Thus, Taiwan's public diplomacy is part of a larger diplomatic structure whose political agenda is decisively geared towards the maintenance of formal diplomatic relations. However, as El Salvador becomes a vibrant young democracy, we must question the sustainability and therefore the sensibility of such an approach. For if El Salvador continues on the same trajectory that it has followed for two decades now then Taiwan's diplomatic policies risk redundancy at best and public and political backlash at worst.

Despite this, Taiwan's diplomatic corps maintain the rhetoric that their intentions towards El Salvador are charitable rather than political. That the mainly younger diplomats are saying this and are being told this in training is concerning, because more than anything it reveals tensions in Taiwan's diplomatic corps between older and younger generations that reflect Taiwan's recent socio-political history and uncertainty surrounding its national identity. These issues can be overcome but only if the training becomes more frank about the political emphasis of Taiwan's work in countries like El Salvador.

On top of this, achieving the goals of Taiwan's diplomacy has been made more difficult in recent years by a turnover of political power to the FMLN, as the party would rather relations with the PRC. More than anything, this has exposed the vulnerability of an approach that is too intent on winning political influence, as the new political incumbents will want to consolidate their position after gaining office, and this may mean ridding the establishment of those who favour their adversaries. Therefore, it can be concluded that El Salvador's transition to multiparty democracy has not been favourable to Taiwan's style of conducting diplomacy, and that diplomatic relations with El Salvador continue only as a result of the diplomatic truce. This can be seen as an opportunity for Taiwan to experiment with new public strategies, yet its lack of proactivity and overall interest in public diplomacy beyond the political relationship means that this would require a complete refocus.

On the aspect of the PRC's economic diplomacy in El Salvador, this should be of grave concern to Taiwan's diplomatic mission. For now the PRC do not seem overly concerned with the manufacture of positive public sentiment. Instead, their presence is primarily to unsettle the Taiwanese, given that isolation of Taiwan is dominant foreign policy in this region. This was most evident at the Chinese trade exhibition in San Salvador in November 2010 which became an overwhelmingly political affair. Economically, the strategic use of industrial companies to win contracts in Taiwan's allies is an interesting development in Central America. We see examples of this in Africa, and it is a tactic that the PRC has been able to use as a result of the political control exerted over their international economic output. Such a tactic would arguably not be available to Western governments who cannot manoeuvre the international investment of their industries to such an extent. However, thus far the approach has had only limited success in El Salvador, as the products of Golden Will Inc. In particular have been sub-standard and staff at the trade exhibition in San Salvador could not provide the attendees with satisfactory information.

Finally, the emerging professional diplomatic service in El Salvador makes the prospect of policies devised by technocrats rather than political appointees a future reality. There is high chance that this will hamper the long-term prospects of Taiwan in El Salvador should their diplomatic mission maintain the same approach. Indeed, it is surprising that Taiwan has demonstrated so little capacity to change in El Salvador given that its domestic political culture has been through similar changes over similar timeframes to that of El Salvador. As such, if Taiwan is to stabilise its diplomatic relations with El Salvador it must rebalance its focus to incorporate genuine attempts to consolidate positive public sentiment in this emerging democracy. Without this, it can be replaced by the PRC without much discontent, should the opportunity arise.

At its crux public diplomacy wants to ensure or induce human behaviour from its audience that is desirable to the source. Admitting to this would involve a degree of controversy and this has made governments unwilling to be transparent over their grand strategy and intentions. In addition, given that sentimentality is a human emotion that is highly vulnerable to fluctuations, public diplomacy research tends not to come to decisive conclusions over its impact, with analysis dependent more on speculation than science. As a result, judgement from a variety of viewpoints is required. However, due to the shortfall in objectives-based research at public diplomacy's point of delivery, there appears to be little desire to overcome these weaknesses.

What transparency there is from public diplomacy departments usually comes from the reality that they must compete with other divisions of government for funding and so may choose to publish reports to assist their budgetary prospects. This was best illustrated in the text by the annual reports of the Taiwan ICDF, which fail to make any comment on El Salvadoran sentiment, preferring instead to discuss, for example, the number of farmers assisted by the mission during the year gone by (Taiwan ICDF, 2012). However, this does not discuss what the desired human

behaviour is and whether it has occurred as a result of the public diplomacy. That said, whether El Salvador's public in this case, is actually the main audience remains sceptical.

Taiwan's objectives in El Salvador revolve around the continuation of its formal diplomatic relationship with the government. Everything that it does in the country, whether it is governmental diplomacy, incentivising greater economic relations, or other public diplomacy areas, contributes to this overall aspiration. The PRC's objectives in El Salvador appear to be both political and economic. By breaking Taiwan's political monopoly in the country through the growth of relations with the governing FMLN party, and also increasing the availability of Chinese products on the El Salvador market. In regards to the latter, this is not necessarily an attempt to marginalise Taiwan but reflects the PRC's wider public diplomacy strategy of growing its economic footprint around the world. However, the exceptions to this are the likes of Golden Will Inc. who have been strategically positioned by the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs to compete in the domestic markets of Taiwan's allies.

Thus, given the lack of specific criteria to base decisions regarding the fulfilment of these objectives, any critique is easily contestable. However, that Taiwan and El Salvador remain diplomatic partners indicates that Taiwan's main political goal in the country continues to prosper. That said, the maintenance of the status quo may be more to do with factors out with Taiwan's sole control, namely the continuation of the ECFA between the PRC and Taiwan, and the limited success of Chinese companies attempting to enter the El Salvador market.

Finally, one must highlight that Taiwan, with or without its repertoire of public diplomacy activities, will in all likelihood continue to find favour with the ARENA party, although their chances of winning the next Presidential elections look slim. Public diplomacy therefore allows those who already favour diplomatic relations

with Taiwan to provide justifiable evidence of their preference. That said, as memory of the armed conflict fades amongst the ARENA party as that generation leaves frontline politics, the evaluation of public diplomacy will become increasingly relevant to these people as well.

Thus, the role of Taiwan's public diplomacy in justifying its continued diplomatic incumbency has been brought into sharp focus in El Salvador with the ARENA party in opposition since 2009. This turnover of power to the FMLN has resulted in the expansion of Taiwan's public diplomacy activities, but greater quantity does not mean greater quality. Winning the hearts and minds of FMLN politicians and the public must now become the overriding goal for Taiwan in El Salvador should it not want to be dependent on a diplomatic truce for the continuation of its diplomatic relationship.

Guatemala

Introduction

Speculation of defection to the PRC has persisted in all of the Central American Republics except Guatemala where diplomatic loyalty to Taiwan has remained steadfast (Keegan, 2006b; Stephenson, 2010; Young, 2007a). This interesting situation was the primary reason for Guatemala's selection as a case study, and it was felt that this country would bring further clarity to our understanding of the competition for allies between the PRC and Taiwan, and the role of public diplomacy within it. In the case of Guatemala the main question was whether Taiwan had been and was continuing to neglect the importance of public sentiment, as had been the case in Costa Rica and El Salvador. If this was so then it would indicate that there was no correlation between the security of a diplomatic relationship and the delivery style of Taiwan's public diplomacy across the Central American isthmus. However, if it was found that Taiwan's public diplomacy had greater public focus in Guatemala then explanations for this would have to be uncovered.

Ultimately, it was found that Taiwan is largely preoccupied with the satisfaction of government officials in Guatemala too, with limited emphasis on creating or maintaining positive public sentiment. However the appointment of Adolfo Sun as Taiwan Ambassador to Guatemala in June 2008 has somewhat altered the extent of this statement. Ambassador Sun has tried to guide a change in the mind-set of those practicing public diplomacy, which includes a more public focus in his country of ambassadorship. That said, several senior members of Taiwan's public diplomatic corps in Guatemala remain largely focused on political rather than public goals. This was best illustrated by Roberto Pan, Head of the Taiwan ICDF in Guatemala, who continues to consider 'success' for Taiwan to be judged on the state of the diplomatic relationship and not the virtues of public sentiment: "the opportunities generated by the work and finance of Taiwan's projects are

indispensable to the government of Guatemala, so every year is considered to be successful” (Pan, 2011). As we will see, this is all very well in Guatemala’s current political climate, but given that this is a region in change it is essential that the focus of Taiwan’s diplomacy can adapt accordingly.

This chapter moves towards the conclusion that Taiwan’s public diplomacy is primarily concerned with securing diplomatic relationships, and that this is systematic across all of Taiwan’s remaining formal allies. This public diplomacy practice reflects Taiwan’s international isolation, and the subtle changes that are documented from country-to-country are the result of individual emphasis and decision-making rather than central policy. This chapter will therefore discuss Taiwan’s public diplomacy in Guatemala, but also the growing albeit limited footprint of the PRC in the country. First however, it is necessary to understand why Guatemala has bestowed a level of loyalty on Taiwan beyond that of its neighbours.

Taiwan and Guatemala: Still a Strong Diplomatic Relationship

While the Central American Republics of Nicaragua, El Salvador and Panama have somewhat distanced themselves from Taiwan despite their countries’ continuing formal diplomatic recognition of the ROC over the PRC, Taiwan has publicly and privately exuded confidence over its relationship with Guatemala (*China Post*, 2009b; Eaton, 2006; Keegan, 2006b). Typical of this rhetoric is this summary extract from a US diplomatic cable published by *Wikileaks*, which originates from the American Institute in Taipei:

Although Paraguay did not support the UN initiative [to reinstate Taiwan to the UN General Assembly], it still has been working with Taiwan on cooperation projects, which demonstrates an intention to continue relations. The new Paraguayan government wants to use the funds provided by Taiwan for new projects, he added. [Foreign Minister] Ou said that Nicaragua had been very quiet up to now. Guatemala, where he served as

Ambassador, is not a problem, although it does want to have economic and commercial relations with China, which is alright. (Young, 2008)

The increase in commercial relations between Guatemala and the PRC will be discussed in greater depth later in this chapter. The immediate question arising from this quotation however is why Guatemala is considered to be 'not a problem' as Foreign Minister Ou claims. The answer to this can be found in the legacy of internal instability in Guatemala, the tumultuous political landscape and the structure of its diplomatic corps. Epitomising the final factor is the appointment of Francisco Bermudez as Guatemalan Ambassador to Taiwan in 2007. Bermudez had significant involvement with Taiwan during the Guatemalan armed conflict (1960 – 1996), because of his various senior roles in the Guatemalan military. However, of greater contemporary significance is that Bermudez was Minister for Defence prior to his appointment as Ambassador to Taiwan (Wang, 2007; Taiwan Government Entry Point, 2007). Indeed, Chen Shui-bian of the DPP, while President of Taiwan (2000 – 2008), stated that Bermudez was the "perfect choice for the position", and that the appointment symbolised, "the importance President Berger [of Guatemala] has placed on the alliance between the two countries" (Chen, cited in Taiwan Government Entry Point, 2007). This demonstrates the extent to which Guatemala – Taiwan relations are based on ideological harmony and a system of historical patronage between the two countries. This was clear from one of Bermudez's first press releases following his move to Taipei:

Taiwan 40 years ago had an economy and social situation that is very similar to Guatemala's today. In terms of social development, I see similarities between both our peoples. Even though we profess different religions, we both respect tradition and adhere to cultural values. [...] International relations must be based on principles and values, and we share that with Taiwan. We think that the political system in Taiwan is very much the same as the one in Guatemala. Guatemala has been a friend of Taiwan's because we

share principles and values. It has cost us to build democracy, just as it has cost Taiwan to build its democracy. That's why we value and support Taiwan's effort to be fully recognized as a democratic state. Guatemala will continue its relations with democratic countries. And we believe that our relationship with Taiwan is completely fortified (Bermudez, cited in Wang, 2007).⁸³

It is not uncommon for Ambassadors to say nice things about the countries to which they have been commissioned. However, Bermudez epitomises the system of patronage and the Guatemalan political establishment's positive outlook towards Taiwan. To be sure, many of the public figures and political parties – albeit often under different guises – from the period of armed conflict still hold political office. For example, the new Guatemalan President, appointed in January 2012, Otto Perez Molina, was head of the Guatemalan military when the peace accords were signed in 1996 (*BBC News*, 2012a). These individuals and organisations have been loyal to Taiwan for their counterinsurgency training against guerrilla groups intent on destabilising the government. Zhu (2010) refers to such activities as 'military diplomacy'.

Contemporary Guatemala is what Marxists would call a 'bourgeois democracy', where, despite universal suffrage, mainstream politics reflects inter-elite competition for political advantage rather than an approximate reflection of social opinion (see Miliband, 1977). In countries like this left-wing political options are typically marginalised. Indeed, while the likes of El Salvador and Nicaragua have strong and politically competitive socialist movements, Guatemala's lacks organisation and has never challenged for the top political honours (Colburn and

⁸³In addition, the current Ambassador of Taiwan to Guatemala, Adolfo Sun (June 2008 – Present), was quoted by the Guatemalan media last year as saying, "Guatemala has been a faithful friend for over 60 years, and that friendship translates not only to the consolidation of economic relations and trade, investment and cooperation, but also to affection, admiration and support." (Sun, 2011a)

Cruz, 2007; Howard and Vasquez, 2011; Rockwell and Janus, 2003).⁸⁴ Much of this is a consequence of Guatemala's armed conflict having different dynamics and lasting for much longer than respective conflicts elsewhere on the Central American isthmus (Alpirez, 2011; Rasch, 2011).

The differences between the conflicts were highlighted by Ana Carolina Alpirez, Editor of the Guatemalan daily newspaper *El Periodico*: "We did not have the same dynamic in Guatemala as there was in El Salvador in terms of the rebels' relationship with the Russians. They say that in Nicaragua and El Salvador the war was different to Guatemala and that this is why the peace process has had a different rhythm in Guatemala" (Alpirez, 2011). The 'different rhythm' that she refers to involves the lack of an organised and at times combative social movement in Guatemala, but it is also the result of the added dynamic of a racially motivated conflict. Evidence of the latter can be found in the different conclusions reached by the UN Commissions for Historical Clarification in the aftermath of the conflicts in El Salvador and Guatemala. The conclusion of the Commission for Guatemala was that the state apparatus was responsible for acts of 'genocide' against the indigenous Mayan population, which accounts for around 60% of Guatemala's total population (Rasch, 2011: 81), while there were no such findings in El Salvador (UNCEH, 1999; UNVCS, 1993).⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Madrid (2005: 702) has calculated that leftist parties on average have won 15% of the vote in indigenous municipalities and 8.5% in non-indigenous municipalities in Guatemala.

⁸⁵ Paragraph 122 of the United Nations' Report of the Commission for Historical Clarification in Guatemala states that, "In consequence, the CEH concludes that agents of the State of Guatemala, within the framework of counterinsurgency operations carried out between 1981 and 1983, committed acts of genocide against groups of Mayan people which lived in the four regions analysed. This conclusion is based on the evidence that, in light of Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the killing of members of Mayan groups occurred (Article II.a), serious bodily or mental harm was inflicted (Article II.b) and the group was deliberately subjected to living conditions calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part (Article II.c). The conclusion is also based on the evidence that all these acts were committed "with intent to destroy, in whole or in part" groups identified by their common ethnicity, by reason thereof, whatever the cause, motive or final objective of these acts may have been (Article II, first paragraph)" (UNCEH, 1999). The late 1970s and early 1980s was the period when Taiwan was most active in its counterinsurgency training in Central America (Anderson and Anderson, 1986).

Guatemalan society has clear ideological and ethnic divides, both of which have caused violence during Guatemala's troubled past (Rasch, 2011; Grandin, 2000). Indeed, at the heart of Guatemala's most recent armed conflict (1960 – 1996) was a purge on the indigenous peasantry who were accused of having communist leanings.⁸⁶ However, what was dressed up as a Cold War dichotomy was, in reality, a resistance to cultural imperialism amongst the indigenous population that had existed in one form or another since the early period of colonialism (Chasteen, 2011).

While some anthropologists and sociologists have highlighted increased social mobility and political participation in recent years (for example, Little-Siebold, 2001; Rasch, 2011), those applying a more economic approach stress the continued exclusion of the indigenous community from decision-making in Guatemala (for example, Dougherty, 2011; Van de Sandt, 2009). Either way, it remains that Guatemalan society is extremely divided, and this inevitably guides the conduct of foreign governments in the country.

The governments of Guatemala and the ROC (then governing from Beijing) began formal relations in 1933, and in 1935 a small consulate opened in Guatemala City (Sun, 2011b). In 1954 a diplomatic mission began to operate in the country and in 1960 a full embassy was opened (Chen, 2011). However, throughout the 1950s and 1960s the primary focus of both the PRC and Taiwan was the alignment of the newly-independent states of Africa (Gilbert, 1963; Hsieh, 1985; Strauss, 2009; Taylor, 2002; Yu, 1963). What is more, Guatemala's strong relations with the United States (and its preference of relations with Taiwan rather than the PRC) during this period meant that neither the PRC nor Taiwan paid it much attention (Taylor, 2002; Yu, 1963). However, Guatemala steadily increased in priority for the Taiwan government during and after the 1960s as Taiwan became more diplomatically

⁸⁶ The armed conflict also reflected inter-elite jockeying for advantage, in so much as political opponents and rival businesses were the subject of assassination attempts and intimidation by each other (see Grandin, 2000).

isolated and the government of Guatemala sought support from ideological allies to counter Communist sympathy (Anderson and Anderson, 1986).

What is more, the ROC's early establishment of an embassy and full diplomatic mission in Guatemala in comparison to other Central American Republics (for example, an embassy was opened in El Salvador in 1961 and a mission began in 1971), reflects the prominence and importance of Guatemala regionally. This early relationship building proved to be a shrewd decision on the part of the ROC as Guatemala subsequently took the lead role to ensure that diplomatic support continued from other Central American Republics in the aftermath of Taiwan's exclusion from the UN in October 1971 (Anderson and Anderson, 1986). At the centre of this effort was Mario Sandoval Alarcon, the then speaker of the Guatemalan Congress. After the ROC's withdrawal from the UN on 26th October 1971, Sandoval arrived in Taiwan on 28th October for a week-long strategic planning visit (Taiwan GIO, 2012).⁸⁷ Anderson and Anderson's investigations provide interesting perspective on Sandoval's Taiwan connections:

It was also during Sandoval's tenure as vice-president [of Guatemala] that closer ties to Taiwan were forged. "Sandoval went to Taiwan while he was vice-president," a former government minister said, "and he brought them in. If you want to trace Taiwanese presence here, you can begin in 1974 [when Sandoval was vice-president]."

Through his leadership role in the Latin American Anti-Communist Confederation and the WACL, Sandoval made numerous trips to Taiwan, where he was feted by Kuomintang leaders. Quietly, Guatemalan officers, an estimated fifty to seventy, were sent to Taiwan to receive training in political warfare.

⁸⁷ Other Central American Republics would follow suit soon after. For example, Walter Beneke Medina, Foreign Minister of El Salvador, would arrive on 10th November 1971 (Taiwan GIO, 2012).

The courses at Peitou, which were taught in Spanish, met Guatemalan educational requirements for military advancement; majors that went to Taiwan returned as Lieutenant Colonels. Even as their Guatemalan armed forces salaries continued, Taiwan picked up most, if not all, of the air fare and living expenses while they were in Taiwan (Anderson and Anderson, 1986: 170).

Taiwan's military diplomacy towards Guatemala was also attractive to other Central American Republics, particularly El Salvador who sought training in counterinsurgency as their own armed conflict escalated (Anderson and Anderson, 1986: 178). Much of Taiwan's latter 20th century military mandate on the Central American isthmus therefore stemmed from Sandoval's activities during the early 1970s.

What is more, similar to El Salvador, assistance by the Taiwanese during the latter part of the armed conflict can be separated into two parts: publicity-seeking development assistance in the form of Operation Vanguard, and the more secretive training of the Guatemalan military. This quotation from a State Department official in Guatemala during the 1980s reflects Taiwan's dual-task.

The Taiwanese have agricultural projects throughout the country, including a model village where they are teaching displaced Indians how to grow soya beans. Their political warfare training has reached an advanced stage; there are now Taiwanese advisers training officers and soldiers in political warfare throughout Guatemala. "You can't go very far", one State Department Official said, "without seeing one of their political warfare manuals. They're everywhere" (Anderson and Anderson, 1986: 183).

This quotation further emphasises Taiwan's involvement with the Guatemalan military in a period from which they would later be accused of genocide. More than 400 indigenous villages were destroyed by the Guatemalan military during the

armed conflict, and this violence against indigenous groups stemmed from the centuries old prejudice of the Spanish *conquistadors* (Rockwell and Janus, 2003: 92). What is more, Taiwan's market-oriented development assistance was part of a larger strategy to prevent Communist sentiment developing amongst the peasantry of underdeveloped countries.

As the introductory chapter discussed, Operation Vanguard's concept of 'development' was very much in the mould of neo-liberalism, as the peasantry were taught not just how to manipulate their farming practices for greater yield but also basic free market economics. In doing so, Taiwan was attempting to assist the Guatemalan government in the suppression of supposedly communist leanings, and thus in the consolidation of the establishment's oligarchic domination.

Much has been written (for example, Gleijeses, 1991; Kinzer and Schlesinger, 1999) on the role of the United Fruit Company (UFC) as the largest landholder in Guatemala and its influence over Guatemalan politics, the CIA coup to remove President Jacobo Arbenz in 1954 being the most obvious example. The UFC owned approximately 550,000 acres of the most fertile land in Guatemala, yet always left around 60% of this land uncultivated, frustrating the peasantry and giving those opposing the government considerable ammunition (Kinzer and Schlesinger, 1999: 75). Taiwan's role after 1971 was therefore to make habitable what poor quality land remained available to the peasants for part-subsistence part-commercial cultivation. As such, Operation Vanguard was designed as a stopgap to potential insurrection, but which fundamentally failed to address the root cause of such predicament.

Taiwan held considerable influence in Guatemala during the latter years of the Cold War, which resulted in the almost complete exclusion of the PRC from the country (Anderson and Anderson, 1986). When I interviewed Jose Lisandro Sanchez, a lecturer at Universidad Rafael Landivar in Guatemala City and former Taiwan scholarship holder, he illustrated how Taiwan conducted diplomacy during this

period: “My father was a military attaché and he had a lot of contact with the Taiwanese during the 1980s. For example, he used to tell me about senior officers being invited to the houses of Taiwanese diplomats for extravagant dinners where [the military officers] would make assurances of political favour” (Sanchez, 2011). The outcome of these ‘extravagant dinners’ becomes clear when one considers the difficulty the government had in trying to forge even minimal economic ties with the PRC during the latter half of the 20th century. As this quotation from Francisco Villagran-Kramer, former Guatemalan Vice-President (1978 – 1980), attests:

Negotiations were going well. We had a commitment from the mainland Chinese on the particulars of the trade deal and then, all of a sudden, it was killed. I checked around why and I found that a lot of the Generals had voiced disapproval about it. They did not want to do anything that might offend the Taiwanese (Villagran – Kramer, 1985, cited in Anderson and Anderson, 1986: 171).

This is an early example of the dichotomy faced by previous governments of Guatemala who on the one hand wanted unrestricted participation in an international market, yet on the other hand felt obliged to uphold ideological values, keep intergovernmental friendships and honour patronage. However, even in a period of armed conflict when foreign policy tends to become more clinical, it demonstrates the limitations of Taiwan’s political influence within the government. Thus, we can conclude from this quotation that it was the Guatemalan military that Taiwan turned to for the security of its political favouritism in the country. However, while still very powerful, the influence of the military has been weakening in Guatemala in the 21st century. As such, contemporary Guatemala continues to bestow diplomatic support upon Taiwan, while also trying to develop economic opportunities with the PRC. That Guatemala is now able to do this reflects the changes that have occurred within the political elite since the 1980s.

From the Taiwan perspective, Daniel Chen, the Third Secretary at the Taiwan Embassy in Guatemala City, stated that, "Guatemala is the most important strategic country in Central America for us, arguably the most important in the world. It has the largest population of the Central American countries and possesses trade road routes to Mexico and into the USA for the rest of mainland Latin America" (Chen, 2011). As a result, the size of the Guatemalan economy in comparison to the other countries bestowing diplomatic recognition on Taiwan results in Taiwan's focus being more towards economics than arguably any of its other formal allies. Indeed, as Ambassador to Guatemala, Adolfo Sun, has publicly stated:

In 2010 the amount of bilateral trade between Guatemala and Taiwan was US\$153.3million, a 44.1% increase in comparison to 2009. During the year 2010 Guatemalan exports to Taiwan went up to US\$71.6million, a 76.9% increase against the exports to Taiwan in 2009. On the other side, Guatemalan imports from Taiwan during 2010 were US\$81.7million, 24% more than 2009 (Sun, 2011).

Third Secretary Chen places much of the acclaim for the development of Taiwan's economic relations with Guatemala on Ambassador Sun:

[Ambassador Sun] looked at what else we could buy from Guatemala as most of our purchases had been coffee and sugar. We have a ship called the Evergreen and we take it around the Caribbean filling it up with products from our allies. It can carry about 1000 containers. We decided that we could also start importing wood and also steak meat from Guatemala. We were already doing this in Panama and Nicaragua so why not Guatemala? (Chen, 2011)⁸⁸

⁸⁸ The prioritisation of the purchase of goods from diplomatic allies has long been a policy of the Taiwanese government. In his biography of General Wang Sheng, Thomas Marks discusses how Wang, as Ambassador to Paraguay (1983 - 1991), had a constant battle to find things that Taiwan could buy from the country (Marks, 1998)

It must first be noted just how small all of these figures are in comparison to the size of the economies of both Taiwan and Guatemala. Thus, that Taiwan can have a 76.9% increase really shows how little economic interest there was in trading with this important formal ally until Ambassador Sun arrived in Central America. This is surprising and appears to show disinterest, poor diplomatic practice and/or chronic short-term and narrow-minded thinking on the part of the Taiwanese. However, it is much clearer that it is the formal diplomatic presence of the PRC in the region from 2007 onwards that has spurred Taiwan's diplomats into economic action. Yet, one cannot help but wonder whether Taiwan's failure to pre-empt this has left them trailing behind a surging PRC.

What is more, while Ambassador Sun may be trying to raise the economic profile of Taiwan in Guatemala, economics has not been the dominant story of Taiwan's diplomatic incumbency in recent years. This has belonged to the bribery scandal which developed in early 2005 as a result of a story first published by *El Periodico* newspaper that Taiwan had given former Guatemalan President Alfonso Portillo (2000 – 2004) a personal cheque for US\$1.5million, and in so doing had purchased Guatemala's continued diplomatic support (Alpirez, 2011; Arriaza, 2005; *El Nuevo Diario*, 2005; *The Guatemala Times*, 2010). This story has been lingering in the Guatemalan media ever since, due in part to the continuing legal proceedings against Portillo. The result is that it has been in the background to coverage of most of Taiwan's other contemporary activities in Guatemala. What is more, on the day of Portillo's extradition from the USA in January 2010 to stand trial in Guatemala on corruption charges, the Guatemalan newspaper *La Hora* ran a headline editorial titled 'Para mandarlos al diablo' ('Send them to the devil'), which among other commentaries of the Portillo case stated that the time had come for diplomatic ties between Guatemala and Taiwan to be renounced in favour of the PRC (see *La Hora*, 2010).

Guatemala's English language newspaper, *The Guatemala Times*, did not give such outright opinion, but explained that:

[...] when the Taiwanese Government learned of the existence of money, they came up with a lame explanation that it was money for charity, for education programs. But the pure and simple truth is it was a bribe paid by Taiwan to maintain the recognition of the Guatemalan government.

Portillo was neither the first nor the last of the politicians of the countries with which Taiwan maintains diplomatic relations in receiving these dirty bribes. In Costa Rica, the press has reported on money given by Taiwan to Costa Rican leaders to be used for their own purposes, either as individuals or through foundations.

In Guatemala it has never been a secret that the Taiwanese embassy has been compensating generously the Presidents that decide not to establish diplomatic relationships with China, one of the world powers, and maintain the recognition of Taipei (*The Guatemala Times*, 2010).

La Hora's 'send them to the devil' headline is an extreme example of the scepticism some of the most notable organisations of Guatemala's post-conflict media have displayed towards the Guatemalan government's continuing strong diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Consequently, there can be little doubt that the negativity of this case has somewhat overshadowed what positive public sentiment Taiwan has created in Guatemala, and any study of Taiwan's public diplomacy in the country must be conducted with this perspective in mind. Ana Carolina Alpirez, the Editor-in-Chief of *El Periodico* the newspaper that first uncovered the Portillo bribery scandal, was asked about the impact this episode had on public sentiment towards Taiwan, she replied:

I think if you ask them to discuss Portillo's case they will never formally recognise that it is corruption. They will say no, that the President asked us to

give the cheque in his name and that is all. But we know the truth. Perhaps an admission and an apology would help repair the damage done (Alpirez, 2011).⁸⁹

Alpirez also confirmed that since 2005 the issue of recognising Taiwan had become a “national discussion”, whereas before it had been only peripheral (Alpirez, 2011). However, given Taiwan’s preoccupation with political relationships in its diplomatic allies, and this being the primary motivation for conducting public diplomacy, it is important to understand how the episode has affected Taiwan’s political relations with Guatemalan politicians. A Guatemalan political journalist who followed the story closely, gave some interesting insights on the influence the Taiwanese continue to wield on Guatemalan politics:

So after the Vice-President of Taiwan came to Guatemala and we repeatedly asked the government and the embassy to give us the documentation [of the bribery cheque]. You see the problem is that you need to look at the back of the cheque to see which account it was processed to, but they did not want to give us this information. So when the Vice-President came she gave a press conference and the President [of Guatemala, Alvaro Colom] told the press they could not ask her about the cheque. This is a classic example of the strength and also the problem of the relationship between the Guatemalan and Taiwan governments. (Anonymous, 2011c)

From this it can be concluded that Taiwan is still seen as a valued friend by the Guatemalan establishment, and that both side wish to protect this relationship. The

⁸⁹ Daniel Chen from Taiwan’s Embassy was asked to explain this situation from the Taiwanese point-of-view. He said, “I don’t think it has been too bad because we have had good crisis management. The project that the money was for was the Presidential Library for Peace. It was an education project to buy maps and books for schools. Now obviously Portillo took a portion of the money for himself but our intention was for all the money to be used for the project. We explained this many times to the press. This is also the reason why [President] Ma directed us to change the policy on giving money. It is to protect ourselves from another situation like this” (Chen, 2011). A Guatemalan journalist from newspaper *Siglo Veintiuno* who wanted to remain anonymous, also said that, “At election time in Central America we have heard that Taiwan still gives money to the candidates, not to the parties, but as individual presents” (Anonymous, 2011c).

journalist indeed confirmed that Taiwan's diplomatic relationship with Guatemala remains strong. However, he concurred with Alpirez (2011) that the scandal had raised the profile of Taiwan's diplomatic recognition in Guatemala, that this remained the overwhelming public memory of Taiwan at the moment, and that, in time, the episode might be a significant component in the relinquishing of ties between the two countries (Anonymous, 2011c).

The chapter on Costa Rica discussed how the Arias administration had sought greater economic and political relations with the APEC countries, and the PRC in particular, to reduce Costa Rica's trade dependency on their traditional markets (see chapter on Costa Rica). However, it was the similar corruption scandal that developed regarding personal payments from Taiwan to consecutive Costa Rican Presidents that offered Arias his best reason to develop relations with the PRC, as it allowed him to publicly demonstrate his opposition to corruption. This move culminated in him calling Taiwan 'muy pinche' [very cheap] as a parting shot in June 2007. In Guatemala however, there appears to be no such reform by recent Presidents and therefore less desire to drop Taiwan in favour of the PRC. That said, President Perez has stated that he will look to Asia for international investment, but it remains to be seen where his emphasis will be. Thus, for now it remains that the bribery scandal offers the Guatemalan political establishment a strong public alibi should they want to approach the PRC in the future.

From the evidence above it seems clear that, in Central America at least, Guatemala's political sphere is that most closely resembling Taiwan's. The absence of clear socialist options and a focus on liberalism versus conservatism is reminiscent of the political spectrum in Taiwan where the DPP and KMT are the main contenders. This ensures that while issues in regards to direction and emphasis are hotly contested, there is little debate over ideology, and much of the indigenous and/or poor are excluded from the political process. Consequently, there is less

chance of an impetus for changing coming from Guatemala given that most politicians will see much of Guatemala in Taiwan.

Taiwan's Public Diplomacy in Guatemala

According to Daniel Chen (2011), Taiwan's public diplomacy in Guatemala can be divided into five areas: improvement of the country's infrastructure; development assistance focused on agriculture and technology; medical diplomacy; education, in the form of cultural exchange and scholarship provision; and interaction with the domestic media. These public diplomacy activities are similar to those discussed in Costa Rica and El Salvador. However, as will become apparent, Taiwan has performed a greater variety of public diplomacy activities in Guatemala than it has done in either of the other Central American republics focused on in this thesis.

Chen was asked what the overall objective was for Taiwan's public diplomacy in Guatemala. He responded: "Other countries have more of an agenda. They want to promote democracy or human rights, for example. We don't have that kind of agenda. We just provide assistance and do what the government and people want" (Chen, 2011). Thus, Chen provided one of the clearest indications of the purpose of Taiwan's public diplomacy in its diplomatic allies. Namely, that Taiwan must be looked upon favourably by the host government, and, since the appointment of Ambassador Sun at least, be more attentive to improving positive public sentiment. Much of the evidence that will be discussed in the following section reflects this.

Infrastructure Improvement

Infrastructure improvement is a diplomacy tactic developed by Taiwan in its diplomatic allies that implicitly aims to satisfy both the government and the public. Indeed, the largest Taiwan project in operation in Guatemala at the time of writing is the expansion of the CA-9 highway which runs from Guatemala City to Puerto Barrios, the country's main Caribbean port (see Alvarado, 2008). Starting in 2010, the Taiwan financed and engineered project will upgrade what is the main artery for the

movement of containers arriving at the port. In early 2011 the project was in the second of three phases which will expand the highway to three vehicle lanes in each direction, beginning in Puerto Barrios and working its way to Guatemala City (Chen, 2011). The expansion of the CA-9 highway provides much needed repair to this overused road and will dramatically reduce journey time between the east and west of the country.

Given what is known of Taiwan's style of performing public diplomacy, the project is intended to be viewed positively by the Guatemalan government and employees of companies dependent on exports and imports from Puerto Barrios. In addition, Guatemala's densely populated southern belt will have improved travel and employment opportunities (Chen, 2011). This is the largest and most expensive project that Taiwan has ever completed in Central America, and reflects not only Taiwan's commitment to the economic development of the region, but also the recognition of Guatemala's importance to the prosperity of Taiwan's diplomatic incumbency around the Caribbean basin.

However, while road construction is no doubt practical and of great benefit to the government and people of Guatemala, the project lacks the visual symbolism of a definitive object. In comparison, the PRC have built a new national stadium in Costa Rica, and, prior to their departure in 2007, Taiwan built a suspension bridge across the Tempesque river. As this thesis has already documented, both of these infrastructure investments have come to embody the incumbencies of Taiwan and the PRC in Costa Rica. The bridge, for example, was nicknamed 'el puente de la apuñalada' (the backstab bridge) in the aftermath of Costa Rica's diplomatic recognition of the PRC, which indicates its distinction and symbolism of Taiwan's diplomatic relationship with the country. The upgrade of the 300km CA-9 highway is costing far more money than either the stadium or the bridge in Costa Rica, yet without a focal point its public diplomacy returns, in terms of government and public positive sentiment, may be significantly less due to the lack of an explicit

reference point.⁹⁰ Therefore, while albeit crucial to the infrastructure needs of Guatemala, Taiwan's classification of their investment in the CA-9 highway upgrade as public diplomacy highlights the need for balance between the political needs of the source and the satisfaction of requests from the target nation-state. However, the reality is that, while this project is the most expensive, it lacks the public diplomacy prestige of other Taiwanese activities. Indeed, given Guatemala's high mountains and vulnerability to tropical storms, a road of this length will require a considerable maintenance budget. After all, a highway has not been built through this terrain until now largely for this very reason. Thus, Taiwan needs to ensure that they are not associated with or blamed for a hazardous project.

Development Assistance

The Taiwan ICDF is the primary provider of Taiwan's development assistance in Guatemala, with the technical mission's seven fulltime staff focusing on three areas: agriculture, aquaculture (fish farming) and housing (Pan, 2011). Roberto Pan, Head of the Taiwan ICDF in Guatemala, highlighted the purpose of the mission as the, "supply and transfer of appropriate technology, to support the non-traditional product diversification programme, and any other line of technical assistance required by the government of Guatemala that can possibly be provided by the ROC" (Pan, 2011). Thus, Taiwan's development assistance to Guatemala is part of its implicit communications, with much of its emphasis on the satisfaction of the Guatemalan political elite rather than the Guatemalan public.

In agriculture, Taiwan has focused much of its attention on the agro-export industry. For example, the Taiwan ICDF is the driving force behind the production of papaya in Peten department in the north of the country. The main market for this

⁹⁰ In December 2011 Taiwan announced that it had agreed to build a maximum security prison in Guatemala. The project will begin planning and construction in 2012 (Central America Data, 2011; *La Hora*, 2011). This is part of Taiwan's assistance to the Guatemalan police force in tackling narco-trafficking, which is particularly prevalent along the Mexican border as shipments move north towards the USA and Canada (Perez and Villagran, 2011). In comparison to highway construction, a single edifice offers far more public symbology.

is North America (Chen, 2011; Pan, 2011). Additionally, Taiwan has helped farmers to produce peas, carrots, mulberries, zucchini and onions across the country, assisting with growing techniques, disease prevention and the marketing of products. In terms of aquaculture, the Taiwan ICDF works with small commercial producers at Lake Peten Itza in Peten department, lending their expertise to the farming of Tilapia fish, a popular food in the Central American diet. However, it has also worked with households in Remate, Escuintla department, to assist in the part-subsistence part-commercial farming of Whitefish (Pan, 2011; Taiwan ICDF, 2012). Both Chen and Pan say that these project are dual-purpose, seeking to produce desirable food stuffs for export but also to expand the Guatemalan diet:

In Chimaltenango department we have an oriental vegetable plantation as we try to vary the diet of the Guatemalans, as most of their traditional vegetables involve some type of beans. There are therefore certain food groups absent from their diet. (Chen, 2011)

The production of basic grain has always been the base of the family economy along with corn and kidney beans as sustenance. However, it is necessary to change this production and focus on other cultivations that can improve the international purchasing power of the population of Guatemala (Pan, 2011).

Hence we can argue that Taiwan's interest in expanding the Guatemalan diet is part of a campaign to imply concern for the public health of Guatemala. The reality however is that by streamlining the Guatemalan diet with food stuffs that are profitable internationally is to pressurise culinary tradition, but also consolidates Guatemala's agro-exporter status. If this policy is successful then it places peasant farmers into direct competition with large commercial farmers who will more than likely edge out their smaller competitors from the industry, thus making the

peasantry more dependent on mass producers for food rather than their own produce.

At the time of writing, the Taiwan ICDF Export Crops Development Project had assisted 14 farm groups in the past two years, while the Aquaculture and Farm Processing Technology Improvement Project had provided services for 35 farm groups since 2010, some of this being part of the Food for the Poor project of the Guatemalan government. Additionally, in this time the Taiwan ICDF has held six aquaculture workshops and trained 319 students in the commercial management of fish farms (Taiwan ICDF, 2012).

Also of interest is Taiwan's cultivation of bamboo in Guatemala. This is part of Taiwan's relief mission for the people made homeless by hurricane Stan in 2005 (Miza, 2007). As Daniel Chen explained,

We are building 600 houses from bamboo, and by doing this we are using our knowledge of bamboo technology and its resistance to earthquakes and tropical storms due to its flexibility. This project should be finished by May 2011. It is also very cooling during hot weather (Chen, 2011).

The employment of bamboo technology is an interesting concept and reflects the similar vulnerabilities Taiwan and Guatemala have to tropical storms and earthquakes. The farming of bamboo and the provision of housing from the plant has been received positively in Guatemala (see Miza, 2007), and in this instance Taiwan has helped those most in need. This sharing of knowledge on technology helps to build affinity and empathy between the two countries and is discussed in greater detail in the section on education diplomacy. Therefore, as a public diplomacy spectacle, the provision of housing is a deeply sentimental act on the part of Taiwan and there is little doubt that it invokes considerable gratitude from those affected by natural disaster. This assistance to displaced peasantry, while in contemporary times the consequence of natural disaster, is reminiscent of its

activities during the armed conflict when it assisted those forced to move from conflict zones with agricultural knowhow (see Anderson and Anderson, 1986; Hsieh, 1985). However, given the change in emphasis of Taiwan's development assistance from subsistence to commercial producers, bamboo technology is one of the few remaining interactions that Taiwan has with Guatemala's indigenous population.

While Taiwan's development assistance in Guatemala does provide a degree of assistance to subsistence farmers, especially in Remate in Escuintla department, most of the Taiwan ICDF's focus is on production for export. In this regard, Taiwan's development assistance is primed towards larger commercial landowners rather than smaller holders with more modest ambitions. This reflects Taiwan's preference to build relationships with the economic and political elite (often the same people in Guatemala), rather than the masses, who it is perceived lack the influence over political decision-making to make them relevant to Taiwan's diplomatic objectives in the country.⁹¹

That said, we must also consider that it is the Guatemalan government's preference for Taiwan to engage in such a way (Chen, 2011). Thus, how and to whom Taiwan provides assistance is the result of inter-government negotiation. This reflects the prioritisation of the satisfaction of the Guatemalan authorities above that of optimum public response. However, it is not unreasonable to suggest that considerable uniformity will exist in the two governments' preferred approaches to development assistance, given the affinity that continues to be held between them, and their traditional right-wing stances on issues of economy. Yet for public diplomacy, Taiwan's policy excludes swaths of the Guatemalan population. Thus, while perhaps working for Taiwan now, such an approach is vulnerable to changes in the socio-political environment.

⁹¹ This is not to say that Taiwan should operate against the Guatemalan government's wishes, just that the degree to which it consults them is notable when compared to other non-profits working in the country. WeGuatemala.org (2012) lists all non-profit organisations in Guatemala (114 in total) and the vast majority of these have little or no government contact other than to register their presence in the country.

Medical Diplomacy

Taiwan's medical diplomacy in Guatemala has been developed around three factors: responding to specific medical necessities originating from natural disasters; bespoke projects resulting from negotiations between the Taiwan Embassy and the Guatemalan Ministry of Public Health; and finally, the Taiwan ICDF's central public diplomacy medical programme which involves all of Taiwan's formal diplomatic allies. The following subsection therefore provides critical analysis of Taiwan's most conspicuous medical diplomacy programmes in Guatemala in recent years. In particular, it will highlight the recent upsurge in the variety of programmes since the arrival of Ambassador Adolfo Sun in 2008.

Guatemala's annual wet season often leads to structural damage from flooding and tropical storms, and this is usually met with Taiwanese medical aid for some of those affected. The storms of October 2011 proved to be particularly devastating across Central America, and Taiwan donated US\$300,000 in aid to Guatemala, and provided basic medical assistance to those in need through the Tzu Chi Foundation (*Radio Taiwan International*, 2011). Taiwan Ambassador Adolfo Sun attended the Tzu Chi Foundation's clinic in the town of Chiquimulilla, Santa Rosa department, to assist in the distribution of supplies. This type of medical diplomacy has been typical of Taiwan over the decades, another such example is Taiwan's provision of one million vaccines against 'Swine' flu in late 2009, the H1N1 virus pandemic having originated in Mexico and Central America and caused widespread health issues (*La Prensa Libre*, 2009).

However, Taiwan has also conducted bespoke medical diplomacy to Guatemala. For example, between 2008 and 2011, the Taiwan ICDF donated 100 ambulances to the Guatemalan Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance (Chen, 2011; Ramirez, 2011; Villatoro, 2009). These vehicles have been designed by South Korean automobile manufacturer Kia specifically to endure the rough terrain

of rural unpaved roads and have been sent to small medical outposts in the departments of Suchitepequez and Huehuetenango (Ramirez, 2011). The ambulances project is unique to Guatemala in Central America at least and it is no coincidence that it began in 2008 after the arrival of new Ambassador Adolfo Sun. Chen (2011) confirmed that the Ambassador had taken a lead role in the delivery of this project, and that he had made speeches at many of the ceremonies to mark the handover of these ambulances. By doing so, Ambassador Sun has appeared conscious of the necessity to generate publicity if one is to receive positive public sentiment. In addition, the sides of the ambulances are emblazoned with the Taiwan flag, allowing those who see them to link Taiwan with Guatemala's public health.

Finally, the Taiwan ICDF coordinates medical diplomacy to Guatemala as part of its public healthcare mandate towards all of Taiwan's diplomatic allies. This is a combination of assistance provided directly by the Taiwan ICDF and that performed by Taiwanese non-profit organisations which coordinate with the priorities of the Taiwan government. The ICDF's MMMs work in Guatemala as they do in Taiwan's other diplomatic allies (Taiwan ICDF, 2012). MMM focus is almost entirely away from urban areas, and they tend to number around 30 personnel. This is because the inaccessibility of the areas in which they travel. MMMs therefore only carry easily transportable equipment and supplies, and treat simple medical problems, for example, providing antibiotics for tropical diseases, and performing simple medical procedures such as the extraction of decayed teeth or pregnancy screenings. Clinics are arranged in different areas of the country two or three times a year and normally last between one and two weeks (Chen, 2011).⁹²

MMMs were established by the Taiwan ICDF in 2006 (Taiwan ICDF, 2012). Before this the ICDF partnered with Taiwanese non-profit organisations such as the Tzu Chi Foundation and the TRMPC to perform medical diplomacy in its diplomatic

⁹² In December 2009, MMMs visited the departments of Zacapa, Chiquimula and El Progreso. In August 2010 they visited Jalapa (Chen, 2011).

allies. The TRMPC were in Guatemala in December 2009 and August 2010 conducting five day long clinics, and as was mentioned earlier, the Tzu Chi Foundation were present in the country after extensive flooding in October 2011 (*Radio Taiwan International*, 2011). Given Taiwan's overall goal of maintaining their diplomatic incumbency, the presence of these groups in Guatemala, or any other ally for that matter, allows the Taiwan Embassy to contact the Ministry of Public Health for advice on where they would like these groups to go during their time in the country. This allows the Embassy to imply Taiwan's commitment to Guatemalan public health and hopefully build positive sentiment.

The final part of Taiwan's medical diplomacy is the training of Guatemalan doctors by Taiwanese health professionals. This has been coordinated by the embassy after consultation with the Guatemalan Ministry for Public Health as to what specific medical knowledge deficits exist in Guatemala (Chen, 2011). The best contemporary examples of this are the 20 doctors from Chang Gung Hospital in Kaoshiung who came to Guatemala from 11 – 24th September 2010 to perform operations and in the process train Guatemalans in the treatment of cleft pallet, liver disease and liver transplant (Chen, 2011; Guzman, 2011).

On Taiwan's medical diplomacy in Guatemala, Daniel Chen said: "We fully cooperate with the Ministry of Health and the First Lady's Office on these projects. We go on their advice and directions as to where to go, even which towns and villages etc. We provide all the equipment and they provide security and part of the transport" (Chen, 2011).⁹³

⁹³ The wife of the Guatemalan President has often taken up a compassionate role, where her office will seek to assist those in poverty in the country. Sandra Torres, the wife of Alvaro Colom (2008 – 2012), was a strong presence in the field of public health. For example, it was her office that coordinated the ambulances that Taiwan donated (see Cereser, 2009). It remains to be seen how the wife of the new incumbent Otto Perez Molina will spend her incumbency as First Lady. However, Rosa Maria Leal visited Taiwan as an official envoy on her husband's behalf in March 2012 so we can be inclined to believe that little will change (see *Siglo Veintiuno*, 2012).

This statement confirms that Taiwan's preoccupation with governmental relations above that of the public extends to the field of medical diplomacy. The result of this is that instead of Taiwan employing a public diplomacy strategy that optimises its relationship with the Guatemalan public, it follows whatever strategy the incumbent administration in Guatemala wants to follow, which may or may not be viewed positively by public opinion. Indeed, that Taiwan lacks an agenda of its own towards the public is a public diplomacy strategy reflective of Taiwan's international isolation.

The local result is that, by following the recommendations of the Guatemalan government, Taiwan does not necessarily assist those most in need. This applies not just to its medical diplomacy but to education diplomacy and development assistance as well, indeed anytime that Taiwan has taken the lead from the Guatemalan authorities. This is best demonstrated through an examination of the locations that the Taiwan ICDF and its subsidiaries have carried out medical clinics in recent years. What is most apparent is the lack of presence in the poorest regions of Guatemala. Indeed, Taiwan's contemporary work is almost entirely in majority Spanish-speaking departments which have little in the way of indigenous ethnicities and are statistically some of the wealthiest departments of the country, for example, Zacapa, Escuintla, and Jalapa. Speculation will persist about the extent that Guatemalan authorities have directed Taiwan to work in these regions and why they have done so; but what can be said is that work in these regions is conducive to Taiwan's public diplomacy policy of maximising government influence. The sizeable non-Spanish speaking factions of Guatemalan society are therefore largely ignored by Taiwan's public diplomacy. However, given the relative lack of political power of these social groups, it can be argued that Taiwan's ignorance of them is inconsequential to its mainly political objectives.

Ambassador Adolfo Sun's prolific presence in the area of medical diplomacy is worth final consideration. For it is no coincidence that 2008 was the year when focus

on medical diplomacy increased and of Ambassador Sun's arrival in Guatemala. He was the catalyst to a number of bespoke medical projects in the country, the provision of 100 off-road ambulances being easily the most notorious. Ambassador Sun's leadership and publicity work around this and other projects therefore marks a departure from Taiwan's preoccupation with the satisfaction of politicians towards a greater appreciation for the value of positive public sentiment. Indeed, while Ambassador Sun's strategy continues Taiwan's engagement with important political allies, it also creates the publicity that only such innovative ways of engaging can do, and takes Taiwan's medical diplomacy in Guatemala beyond the regular aid-based relief to which the population have become accustomed. Thus, it can be said that Ambassador Sun understands the symbolic significance that both the government and public will attach to Taiwan's innovative commitment to the long-term improvement of Guatemalan public health. However, he also appears to understand the balance that it will bring to Taiwan's public diplomacy strategy, and the security it can bring to the overall diplomatic relationship.

Education Diplomacy

Taiwan's education diplomacy in Guatemala can be separated into two distinct sections: its work in Guatemala; and the provision of international scholarships for Guatemalans to study in Taiwan. Indeed, as was noted earlier, Taiwan has offered the Guatemalan military tactical training at their academy in Peitou since the 1970s (Chang, 2010). Thus, education diplomacy works across a range of vocations including the military, engineering, economics, journalism and language competency, and in Guatemala involves both university students and skilled professionals. This more explicit style of public diplomacy comes from the 'to know us is to love us' theory, where increased familiarity with a foreign country is believed to bring about positive sentiment for that country and influence the future decisions of the participant (Taylor, 2008). This was discussed by Esmeralda Sanchez, Director of Support for Human Resource Training at the Secretariat of

Planning and Programming at the Office of the President of Guatemala (SEGEPLAN). The international scholarships fall under her control.

What the countries [providing scholarships] want is that the Guatemalan people who study abroad return to this country and, using the knowledge they have acquired, find jobs in prominent industries. This might be in industry, the public sector or even academia. What [these countries] are looking for is to get friendship links between themselves and other countries, and that when this person gets back to their country they will encourage people to do the same (Sanchez, 2011b).

Sanchez's last point is remains highly contested given the lack of quantifiable evidence, and difference of opinions. This was discussed at length in the chapter on El Salvador and does not require revision here. However, the discussion in the introduction to this chapter highlighted that positive sentiment towards Taiwan on the part of right-wing politicians and the military, provides much of the reason for Guatemala's positivity around keeping Taiwan as a diplomatic ally. Thus, while always vulnerable to the subjectivity of human emotion, this analysis has been approached from the basis that such policies do create greater positivity overall.

International Scholarships

Public diplomacy, and international scholarships in particular, can be used by policymakers as part of a reward to a recipient nation-state for agreeable behaviour, as part of a cultural relations policy, or as a persuasive or subversive tool when a nation-state has behaviour that displeases. Taiwan offers Guatemala more scholarships than any other nation-state or international body, and so it is a persuasive tool to assist the prevention of the loss of diplomatic allies.

Taiwan's international scholarships can be divided into vocational courses for skilled professionals that normally last between one and two weeks, and longer academic scholarships for university students. Responsible for the latter is the

Department of Scholarships at SEGEPLAN. In 2010 SEGEPLAN placed 32 Guatemalans into full scholarships in Taiwan for at least one year in duration. This was in comparison to 23 students in 2009 and 16 in 2008. Each year there are an additional number of students who travel to Taiwan for shorter periods of time for what are predominantly Mandarin language courses. In 2010 this numbered 50 students, making the total number of Guatemalans studying in Taiwan on government scholarships 82. The full scholarships provided by Taiwan's Ministry of Education paid for a return airfare to Taiwan, tuition fees and provided living expenses of around US\$900 per month during their stay (Perez, 2011). Evelyn Perez, the Cooperation Consultant at SEGEPLAN who deals with Taiwan, when asked about the significance of these scholarships to Guatemala, replied:

The government of the Republic of Taiwan has for many years offered scholarships to Guatemalans, and for that Guatemalans are able to study for undergraduate degrees, Masters' and technical courses, as well as understanding the Mandarin language. This has enabled good diplomatic relations and interlaced ties of friendship between both countries (Perez, 2011).

Guatemalans are therefore offered a number of scholarships by Taiwan that befits its importance as a diplomatic ally, and Taiwan is the largest provider of academic scholarships to Guatemala (Perez, 2011). What is more, just like in El Salvador, it is Guatemala's traditional ideological allies from the Cold War who dominate the list of providers, including Taiwan, South Korea, Israel, the USA and Japan (Perez, 2011). However, Cuba also provides scholarships, which is different from El Salvador as they only re-established diplomatic relations with the island on 1st June 2009. It was one of the first acts of the then new Funes FMLN government (see AFP, 2009).

Taiwan also provides scholarships for professional Guatemalans to attend short term courses in Taiwan in various tertiary, commercial and engineering industries (Chen, 2011). These courses tend to last one or two weeks and are not administered by SEGEPLAN but are the result of an invitation to attend from the Taiwan Embassy.⁹⁴ Jose Lisandro Sanchez, a Lecturer in Architecture at the Universidad Rafael Landivar in Guatemala City, attended a course on Seismic Design Technology (SDT) in Taipei in 2010:

One day I got a call from the Dean. You see, we have a relationship with the Taiwan ICDF at this university. [The Dean] said that [the Taiwan ICDF] wanted to invite a member of the faculty of architecture to the NCREE (National Centre for Research on Earthquake Engineering) in Taipei for one week as part of an international seminar. I think they also invited faculties from Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Peru. In the end though it was only me and people from Honduras, the Dominican Republic and Peru, Mexico and Costa Rica did not attend. Then from Asia, there were people from Thailand, Singapore, Cambodia, India, and Mongolia.

I was told I had to buy my ticket and then have it refunded once I arrived in Taiwan but in the end the Taiwan Embassy here paid for it. They also paid my hotel, my meals and transport to and from the NCREE and around Taiwan to certain sites (Sanchez, 2011a).

In terms of his experience of Taiwan, Sanchez made several enthusiastic and complimentary statements regarding what Guatemala could learn. For example:

I felt a little ashamed to be Guatemalan because they have maybe 40% of the landmass we have yet they have 10 million more people and have

⁹⁴ Chen was keen to highlight that it was the Taiwan ICDF coordinating these short-term courses (Chen, 2011). In this regard, he clearly sought to disassociate the short-term military and also police training courses that continue in tandem to Taiwan ICDF projects but which are administered elsewhere, these having a considerably more controversial history. The reality however is that all of these activities sit under the umbrella of attempts to create positive sentiment towards Taiwan.

preserved 70% of their forest. I think the phrase in English is 'sustainable development'. We could learn from that (Sanchez, 2011a).

Ana Carolina Alpirez, the Editor-in-Chief of *El Periodico* newspaper, also went to Taiwan for an international journalism course:

There were also journalists from El Salvador, Peru, Costa Rica and Chile. So we went to Taiwan and were taken to newspapers and radio stations to understand how they do things. It was interesting because they gave favour to the countries that were 'friends' of Taiwan. I remember one of the journalists from Peru complaining that they'd only got two seats. I was there in September 2004 and at the end of the year they were opening the Taipei 101 tower so I was shown round before it was opened and I obligingly wrote some stories about the tower. [...] Every year or so the Taiwanese have this sort of course I went on (Alpirez, 2011).

However, Alpirez's story demonstrates the limitations of international scholarships as a form of public diplomacy. In February 2005, only five months after Alpirez had returned from her Taiwan trip, *El Periodico* broke the story of Taiwan's apparent bribery of Guatemalan President Alfonso Portillo (see Arriaza, 2005). Alpirez as Editor-in-Chief received considerable flak from the Taiwan Embassy and the Ambassador (Francisco Ou, now Taiwan's Foreign Minister) as the story went to print (Alpirez, 2011). She insisted that her expenses paid trip to Taiwan did not cloud her professional judgement, and that the story went ahead on the front page with the originally planned content (Alpirez, 2011). Thus, international scholarships can incentivise the human behaviour desired by the source but have little means to influence beyond this.

It must finally be noted that, while Guatemala and the PRC have no formal diplomatic relations, this does not necessarily exclude Guatemalans from scholarship opportunities to study in the PRC. This can occur through supranational

and non-state actors. For example, the PRC provides the OAS, of which Guatemala is a member, with a number of scholarships each year (OAS, 2011).⁹⁵ A national from any member state is permitted to apply for these and SEGEPLAN confirmed that the OAS PRC scholarship had been advertised to Guatemalan students. They could not however state whether any Guatemalans had been successful as administration is handled by the OAS (Perez, 2011).⁹⁶

That said, Dinora Rosales, the Coordinator of International Exchanges at the Universidad Rafael Landívar, a Jesuit University in Guatemala City, confirmed however that students had gone to the PRC on non-governmental scholarships.

Most of [the university's private] scholarships come from Spain, the USA or Mexico. As we are a Jesuit university we have lots of connections with other Jesuit universities in other parts of the world, for example, the University of San Francisco in California, which is another Jesuit college. [...] but we also have a small relationship with the Beijing Center which is a Jesuit centre in China. Students can go to China to study Mandarin if they want. I think the scholarship for that is six months. The prerequisite for going on these courses however is that the students must be able to speak English as the tuition is Chinese to English. (Rosales, 2011)⁹⁷

Rosales confirmed that only approximately five students from the university attend the Beijing Center per year (Rosales, 2011). However, while it is useful to provide perspective to the study of education diplomacy, this interaction between

⁹⁵ Upon contacting the OAS in March 2011 they stated that they were not at liberty to publish the numbers of students who took up scholarships in the PRC or the countries from which they originated, and only reiterated that the scholarship was available to citizens of all member states.

⁹⁶ The lack of ability to track the human capital accrued by international scholarships was a common complaint throughout the interviews conducted in Central America. As the interviewees attested, this is the result of a lack of transparency amongst the participating nation-states, a lack of administrative prioritisation, and a lack of investment in a database to hold such information.

⁹⁷ The website of the Beijing Center for Chinese Studies does not explicitly declare itself to be a religious-based institution (Beijing Center, 2012), but Rosales assured me that it was. This caution may well be due to the CCP's apprehension regarding religious freedom in the PRC and its views towards the Catholic church in particular. The Vatican has diplomatic ties with Taiwan but not the PRC.

Guatemalans and non-state institutions within the PRC should not be classified as public diplomacy. This is because tensions exist between religious institutions like the Beijing Center and the PRC authorities (see Wilfred et al, 2008) making it more likely to highlight a continuing lack of religious tolerance within the PRC and breed contempt for the establishment.

Taiwan's Education Presence in Guatemala

While countries such as Spain (Instituto Cervantes), United Kingdom (The British Council), Germany (Goethe Institute) and even the PRC (Confucius Institute) centre their education and cultural presence within a country around a single institution, Taiwan has no such facility within its diplomatic allies. However, it did open Taiwan Academies in 2011 in New York, Houston, Los Angeles and London, which reflects the importance of the US and UK as trading partners and informal allies. The chapter on El Salvador gave considerable debate to the sensibility of this approach by Taiwan, and so there is no reason to repeat such debate here. What is more, Pedro Lai (2011) – a Taiwanese Mandarin teacher for the Taiwan ICDF who has worked in Guatemala – confirmed that the situation regarding Mandarin teaching is the same in Guatemala, as it is elsewhere in Central America. Therefore, the focus of this section will be on the education activities of Taiwan that are unique to Guatemala.

Since 2008 there has been a marked increase in the range of Taiwan's public diplomacy activities in Guatemala and it is in the realm of education diplomacy on the ground that some of the starkest increases have been seen. Globally, this has been the result of directives from Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou who began his presidency that year (Rockower, 2011). However, more locally, Taiwan's Guatemala Ambassador Adolfo Sun's personal conviction in the importance of public diplomacy has also encouraged its development (Chen, 2011).

Since Ambassador Sun's arrival, Taiwan has built seven new schools in Guatemala, the final one in the town of Santa Maria, near the city of Antigua, being opened in April 2011. Additionally, the Tzu Chi Foundation, in coordination with the Taiwan ICDF, also opened a school in the town of Palencia to the north-east of Guatemala City in 2010 (Chen, 2011). These schools provide a visual reference for teachers, pupils, parents and towns as a whole, of Taiwan's implied commitment to the betterment of Guatemala's youth, and are therefore long-standing visual gestures of goodwill from the Taiwanese.

What is more, 2011 was a significant year in the histories of both Central America and Taiwan, with Central America celebrating 190 years of independence from Spain and Taiwan celebrating 100 years since the founding of the ROC. This led to Ambassador Sun's conviction that Taiwan should not celebrate alone (Chen, 2011). Daniel Chen was therefore asked what this meant for Taiwan's public diplomacy:

Yes we are making increased effort this year, but I think that it is part of an effort to be more public generally and it will not diminish in following years. This year the Ambassador told us that we should not celebrate our centenary alone so from the 9th September to 10th October [2011] we are putting on a joint exhibition at the National Palace. This will include photographs of our relationship over the years and other historical artefacts. Guatemala on 15th September will celebrate 190 years and we will celebrate our centenary on Oct 10th so it makes sense (Chen, 2011).⁹⁸

The exhibition and double celebration are a clear attempt by Taiwan to create empathy and affinity for a shared and similar history with Guatemala. Indeed, both the founding of the Republic of Guatemala in 1821 and the Republic of China in 1911 are the result of similar fractures in the socio-political histories of these countries,

⁹⁸ In October 2011 Ambassador Sun gave an interview on Taiwan's centenary to newspaper *La Prensa Libre* (see Sun, 2011b).

which remain at the heart of attempts to inspire nationalism (see Grandin, 2000; Makeham, 2005; Marks, 1998). However, the controversy that surrounds the recent political history of both countries will make the selection of exhibition content somewhat modest.⁹⁹

In 2011 Taiwan also began to engage with their ex-scholarship holders to an extent not seen before. Prior to this Taiwan had spent little effort trying to consolidate or expand upon the positive sentiment that the scholarship holders may have felt after their time in Taiwan. Jose Lisandro Sanchez, a Lecturer in Architecture at Universidad Rafael Landivar, explained the change in 2011:

Once I completed my scholarship I automatically became a member of an 'exbecarios' (ex-scholarship holders) club for Guatemala. I went to a few poorly attended meetings and at one [the Taiwan Embassy] asked us to think of an event to host, so I suggested a student lecture [...]. I understood that this was the first time the embassy had asked this of the *exbecarios*. Things basically snowballed from there, first of all it was a few people from the ICDF who would attend, then the Ambassador was attending, then he was also making a speech [...] (Sanchez, 2011a).

In all, four men and two women from the Taiwan Embassy attended, including Ambassador Sun. They sat in the front row in business dress and listened attentively for the hour or so while Sanchez spoke. Behind them sat 50-60 Guatemalan students of architecture and structural engineering and some members of staff.

The lecture began with Sanchez explaining that he had been the benefactor of a short-term scholarship to study SDT in Taipei, that it had been paid for by the Taiwanese government, and that he had learned a lot and was very grateful for the

⁹⁹ The Museum of National History in Guatemala City near to the National Palace offers some comparative insight into what the authorities are prepared to disclose in an exhibition. The museum takes the viewer through the different epochs of Guatemala's political history from independence to the present day, none of which offers critical reflection on the social, economic or political issues of these periods. Moreover, there is not a single reference in the whole museum to Guatemala's indigenous population (correct as of March 2011).

experience. He then began by discussing the similar problems experienced by Taiwan and Guatemala as both sit of major seismic faults, stating that buildings, especially taller ones, needed to be designed to withstand strong earthquakes. He provided the case study of Taipei 101 and its 'earthquake trauma protection system'. Taiwan, Sanchez insisted, was an expert in the field of SDT and Guatemala could learn a lot from them, especially as the Guatemalan government was increasingly looking to build higher buildings due to Guatemala City's space restrictions, but also because many Guatemalan buildings are vulnerable to earthquakes due to a lack of government policy on structural requirements. There was a necessity therefore to ensure that strict structural criteria were upheld to prevent future damage or collapse. The lecture then progressed to the intricacies of architecture and structural engineering.

At the end Sanchez invited Ambassador Adolfo Sun to make a closing speech. Ambassador Sun spoke for about ten minutes in fluent Spanish stating Taiwan's continuing commitment to the safety of Guatemala's buildings and the education of Guatemalans generally. He also encouraged the students to apply for the various scholarship opportunities available. The conclusion of his speech was met with a round of applause. He was then presented with a gift as a token of the university's appreciation, which once again met with applause. Thus, that the initial testimony of Taiwan's dedication to Guatemala's education came from Sanchez himself, a well-respected and well-liked member of the faculty, added considerable authority to the Ambassador's words.

Sanchez's lecture is therefore a positive example of Taiwan trying to consolidate and further its initial investment in scholarship holders, by ensuring a continued relationship beyond the initial scholarship period. Furthermore, the lecture exemplifies the building of sentiment through sharing knowledge and expertise on issues of mutual concern. Finally, in using Sanchez as the medium through which the information passes, it adds to the 'aura of legitimacy'

surrounding the message, as studies show that audiences are typically more receptive when the orator comes from a similar cultural background (see Kelman and Hamilton, 1989: 151). This theory was also mentioned in the chapter on Costa Rica when discussing the PRC's use of radio.

Education diplomacy, whether it is through the provision of opportunities to travel to another country or by educating people in their own country, is a simple and relatively inexpensive way to manufacture positive public sentiment for the source country. That said, the case of Ana Alpirez attests that there are limitations to such sentiment and an expectation that it buys influence can lead to a backlash from the participant. However, the case of Lisandro Sanchez demonstrates that this method of public diplomacy can be successful and that those being provided scholarships do return enthusiastic and are willing to become informal emissaries for their host country.

When judging Taiwan's performance in Guatemala specifically, the beginning of Adolfo Sun's tenure as Ambassador in June 2008 can be seen as a watershed for Taiwan's education diplomacy. What is more, in the case of SDT and other industries, Taiwan has presented itself as an icon in the field, and through respected experts has been trying to show sameness between the two countries. This emphasis on tackling similar problems together is a crucial part of public diplomacy as it can build unity between peoples. Thus, after 2008, in addition to concerns with the satisfaction of government officials, Taiwan increased its interest in the sentiment of the Guatemalan public. There is little doubt that retaining its diplomatic status in Guatemala remains the overall goal for Taiwan's mission. However, by building schools, developing areas of mutual interest in industry, nurturing relations with former scholarship holders, and being generally more public facing, Ambassador Sun has given a clear indication that increased public attention need not negate political attention.

Engagement with Guatemala's Domestic Media

Before a discussion of Taiwan's engagement with the domestic media in Guatemala can begin it is essential to first provide some information about the media landscape there. Of Guatemala's 12 million people around 7 million declare themselves to be of Mayan indigenous origin, and this means that for more than half of the Guatemalan population their first language is not Spanish, the indigenous dialect of K'ichee being the most popular of several (World Bank, 2010). One must go to considerable lengths in Guatemala to find non-Spanish national media however, *Radio Nuevo Mundo's* intermittent K'ichee broadcasts being one of only a handful of programmes available across the country (Rockwell and Janus, 2003). On this exclusion of Mayan voices and script from mainstream media Rockwell and Janus have noted: "Perhaps the greatest threat to Guatemala's uneasy peace and the further development of this nascent democracy lies in a broadcast spectrum increasingly closed to alternative voices and the growing dominance of media chains. These chains either reinforce the power of the country's long time business families or represent outside forces in collusion with the Guatemalan government of military" (Rockwell and Janus, 2003: 93).

Indeed, Rockwell and Janus (2003) also document the threats, intimidation and attacks made on *Radio Nuevo Mundo's* editors in the early 1990s as they began to broadcast K'ichee programmes from their Guatemala City offices, and claim that such behaviour comes from the ingrained vilification of the indigenous community by the Spanish speaking city dwellers. This was discussed at length in the introduction to the chapter.

Both television and radio in Guatemala carry little in the way of news content, and much of what is carried does not criticise the political establishment. This is down to the policies of Mexican media tycoon Angel Gonzalez Gonzalez whose

television stations have a virtual monopoly in Guatemala, attracting approximately 96% of the audience (Rockwell and Janus, 2003: 95):

His stations' news and information programs carry bland items that either pose no challenge to the President or favour whichever party holds power. The amateurish local news programs are some of the worst in Central America. These low-cost efforts at information programming often appear designed to keep the Guatemalan audience uninterested in politics. (Rockwell and Janus, 2003: 95)

So, as in other Central American Republics, one must turn to the printed press for investigative journalism. Leading the way in recent years has been the newspaper *Siglo Veintiuno* (21st Century). Using Anglo-American or North Atlantic journalism (see Hallin and Mancini, 2004) as their theoretical framework, Rockwell and Janus (2003) see *Siglo Veintiuno* as the most authoritative source of journalism in Guatemala. A claim they attach to its stance against the censorship measures imposed by President Jorge Serrano Elias (1991 – 1993). Serrano was eventually forced into exile by popular backlash securing *Siglo Veintiuno's* reputation for reliable reporting. Other sources of news that Rockwell and Janus maintain are reliable in Guatemala are *La Hora* Guatemala's oldest newspaper, and *El Periodico*, one of the newest newspaper in the country. *La Hora* enjoys considerable prestige as it was seen as one of the few voices of protest during the period of armed conflict and was periodically closed down. *El Periodico* was established by Zamora Marroquin, the editor of *Siglo Veintiuno*, in 1996 after a rather public dispute with the newspaper's owners (Rockwell and Janus, 2003).

The reality however is that these publications originate and continue to be owned by wealthy families of Spanish heritage based in Guatemala City, and while they have exposed corruption and misdemeanour, this reflects more the inter-elite jostling for power than any pledge from the media to position themselves as the

fourth estate. One of the best indicators of this is the subtle neglect of indigenous stories in favour of exposes involving political opponents. This media environment should suit Taiwan's diplomatic priorities, especially given that the military and right-wing political parties exert considerable influence over these publications. However, the contemporary expansion of the press in the post-conflict era has proved problematic for the Taiwanese as various parts of their diplomatic mission continue to operate in a style that is non-conducive to public transparency, their bribery of Portillo being a case in point.

Rosa Hu, Press Council at the Taiwan Embassy, stated that the Taiwan press office in Guatemala has four functions:

First, to disseminate all kinds of information about Taiwan and Taiwan's economic assistance to local media and the people of Guatemala; second, to reflect what is happening in Guatemala, and the opinions of Guatemalan media back to the Taiwanese government; third, to clarify our position if there is erroneous reporting; and lastly, to advance cultural and media interflows between the two sides. (Hu, 2011b)

Given the considerations that this research makes for the domestic audience as part of public diplomacy's outreach, cases can be made for all these points being public diplomacy. However, what is interesting for our central argument is that the role of the press office does not include advancing Taiwan's position vis-à-vis the weaknesses of the PRC. For one would expect emphasis on topics such as Taiwan's democratic transition or its contemporary human rights record. These are topics that would resonate well with the Guatemalan people but which move the topic of debate to areas where the PRC receives considerable international criticism. This, we can say, is the result of the ECFA and KMT government directives as it seeks reconciliation with the PRC.

Of further interest is Hu's assertion that the press office was trying to focus on Taiwan's economic assistance. By economic assistance I took it that she meant the recent increase in trade and also Taiwan's development and financial assistance to the country. As will be discussed later in this chapter, this puts it into competition with the PRC on a topic that gives it little chance of being able to compete. Hu was asked to provide examples of what information she sent to the domestic media in Guatemala and she produced similar generic CNA copy to that which Monica Wu had produced during her interview at the Taiwan Embassy in El Salvador (see Appendices E and F). The research in El Salvador found that newsworthiness was the main issue for the lack of uptake by domestic media organisations, and criticism was aimed at the Press Office for not understanding editorial priorities. The same can be said of the Press Office at the embassy in Guatemala.

On the issue of erroneous reporting, I asked Hu to provide further details of the work done by her department. She produced an article from the 8th February 2011 issue of *Siglo Veintiuno* that the Press Office had recently worked on, and confirmed that this was an extreme version of what they encounter. The front page headline read: 'They ask for the removal of obstacles to Chinese Investors' and referred to an article in the issue by Lix and Larios (2011). The same edition also had an editorial on page eight entitled 'The dilemma of the two Chinas' (*Siglo Veintiuno*, 2011). Hu talked me through the various issues that Taiwan had with the articles, and explained that the embassy decided that it would be best if Ambassador Sun wrote a response to *Siglo Veintiuno*, given the seriousness of what had been said (Hu, 2011). To Hu's recall, this was the only time that Sun had written a response himself, the creation of media flak normally being carried out by the press office staff. It was printed on page eight of the 19th February 2011 edition, and was entitled 'Taiwan's Desire' (Sun, 2011a).

Ambassador Sun is regularly cited in the press in Guatemala.¹⁰⁰ However, almost all of his appearances have come in the form of interviews or as part of reports by journalists from press conferences. This gives a clear indication of the level of concern that Taiwan's embassy had for *Siglo Veintiuno's* comments. The article from the 8th February edition compared Guatemala's commercial relations with the PRC to that of Costa Rica, and through some well-chosen financial experts insinuated that it was the lack of diplomatic relations between the two countries that prevented Guatemala from optimising the economic opportunities of the PRC's economy. In particular, the article established that it was a lack of visa flexibility that prevented investors from the PRC coming to Guatemala, despite it having a larger economy than Costa Rica. The editorial that followed this article stated that, "since the time of military rule and into the democratic era, the Chinese island (of Taiwan) has remained faithful to Guatemala." However, it noted that the FTA signed between Taiwan and Guatemala in 2005 was largely symbolic and had seen minimal increases in commerce. The editorial concluded that, "the Taiwanese have significant amounts of investment in our country, but they cannot compete with their Chinese counterparts whose expansion is starting to be evident across the globe." (*Siglo Veintiuno*, 2011)

The articles thereby insinuated that continuing diplomatic relations with Taiwan was hampering the economic progression of Guatemala and inferred that Guatemala would be better served if the alliance were to end. The articles did not directly criticise Taiwan, however Hu (2011b) confirmed that it was necessary to respond to such publications quickly, and that it be done by high authority because the continuation of diplomatic relations was fundamental to Taiwan. Ambassador Sun's article the following week contained information about the work done by the Taiwanese in Guatemala and provided some impressive figures of bilateral trade

¹⁰⁰ Content analysis of Guatemala's four main newspapers between 2008 and 2012 reveals that Ambassador Sun has been cited in 50 separate *El Periodico* articles, 54 from *La Hora*, 57 from *Siglo Veintiuno*, and 84 from *La Prensa Libre*.

growth. The editors of *Siglo Veintiuno* however doctored the Ambassador's prose when creating their subheading, "It has not been our spirit to impose obstacles to countries wishing to establish relations with China." If one reads to the final paragraph of the article, what the Ambassador actually said is, "It has not been our spirit to impose obstacles to countries wishing to establish commercial relations with China." (*Siglo Veintiuno*, 2011) The omission of the word 'commercial' is clearly intentional by the editors as they seek to consolidate their own agenda. This change turns the emphasis of Ambassador's article from economics to politics, Taiwan's greatest vulnerability and area of overriding concern.

Despite giving regular coverage of Taiwan's public diplomacy activities in Guatemala, the cases of *El Periodico* and *Siglo Veintiuno* demonstrate how little influence Taiwan has within Guatemala's contemporary news media who appear intent on pursuing an agenda more favourable to PRC integration. Guatemalan editors have turned down requests to publish stories about Taiwan sent by the Press Office at the Embassy presumably because of a lack of newsworthiness, and they have refused to back down when publishing stories of considerable negativity regarding Taiwan. Most blatantly however, they have deliberately manipulated copy to suit their agenda.

For public diplomacy therefore, Taiwan's attempt to manufacture positive public sentiment through the Guatemalan media has been blighted by problems since the end of the armed conflict and the movement to fledgling democracy. While praise has tended to come in smaller inconspicuous articles, the biggest news stories have been wholly negative. This has been mostly due to the general waning of political and military influence over media content (Rockwell and Janus, 2003), a movement that has resulted in greater critical appraisal of the political establishment. Given that Taiwan's public diplomacy preoccupation remains with the satisfaction of politicians in Guatemala, such negative attention is not critical to Taiwan's diplomatic incumbency. However, as democracy consolidates in the

country, politicians may be more inclined to listen to public opinion, but whether this impacts the diplomatic relationship depends on the role and power of the media in years to come.

The Challenge to Taiwan's Diplomatic Incumbency

Despite agreeing a diplomatic truce in 2008, the PRC continues to apply pressure to Taiwan's diplomatic relationship with Guatemala. This has primarily taken the form of commercial diplomacy. The Bank of Guatemala reports that imports from the PRC in 2011 reached US\$1.1 billion. This, in comparison to the US\$28.8 million exported to the PRC, gave the PRC a 97.5% total trade surplus (Munoz, 2012). The main products being imported from the PRC are manufactured goods such as cars, music players and telephones, where as the main exports to the PRC are coffee beans, sugar, fish and other food products. Indeed, it is the economic potential of the PRC that dominates its coverage in the Guatemalan domestic media. Although some media organisations are more sceptical than others, newspapers *Siglo Veintiuno* and *La Hora* have both appeared keen to stress how Guatemala's lack of formal diplomatic relationship fundamentally hinders Guatemala's ability to export to the PRC's growing domestic market.

Since early 2010 a group of wealthy Guatemalans who are set to profit from greater engagement with the PRC and its representative organisations have targeted the Guatemalan media through a publicity campaign. The campaign has sought to portray Guatemala as being economically restrained by its diplomatic relationship with Taiwan. This has been directed by the *Camara de Cooperacion y Comercio China – Guatemala* (4CG; China – Guatemala Chamber of Cooperation and Commerce), a non-governmental organisation established in 2006 to facilitate economic and cultural interaction between the two countries (4CG, 2012). Economic interests dominate the focus of this private organisation, and their website focuses on the forthcoming Third Commercial Exhibition of PRC companies in Guatemala City in

September 2012 (the first being in 2009 and the second in 2011). It also highlights Guatemala's delegation to the Shanghai Expo 2010 (4CG, 2012). One of the most frequently quoted names in the Guatemalan media on this topic in the past three years has been Pedro Barnoya, the former Secretary General and now Vice-President of the 4CG.¹⁰¹

At present the President of the 4CG is Rodrigo Barrios Colom, the nephew of former President of Guatemala Alvaro Colom (2008 – 2012) (Flores, 2011). This was discussed by Manuel Flores, the FMLN politician in El Salvador who mediated between the PRC and the FMLN government there. Thus, while the ASAC in El Salvador is under political stewardship, the 4CG is a non-governmental organisation, although it has direct links to high government. This is a crucial symbolic difference between Guatemala and El Salvador, and one that demonstrates the continuing influence of Taiwan within Guatemalan political life. Furthermore, given Taiwan's anxiety that greater economic relations with the PRC should not result in political affiliation, this set-up allows both the PRC and Taiwan to continue the face-saving facade that politics and economics can be kept separate.

At the time of writing it remained to be seen how new Guatemalan President Otto Perez Molina would engage with the 4CG. However, he did state while President-elect that growing trade relations with the PRC would be one of his priorities as President (see Orozco, 2011). However, Perez Molina is a retired army General, and a right-wing conservative in his political outlook. Thus, it is unsurprising that he also added the caveat that Taiwan had not remonstrated against Guatemala's establishing these new business relationships with the PRC, and that Taiwanese Foreign Minister Timothy Yang would be arriving in the coming days to meet him (cited in Orozco, 2011).

¹⁰¹ Between 2010 and February 2012 Barnoya was interviewed 12 times by *Siglo Veintiuno* on PRC trade issues.

The PRC performs no public diplomacy in Guatemala that corresponds to its activities elsewhere. For example, it has no infrastructure, development assistance, education or medical diplomacy in the country. However, what it has done is allow a trade surplus to develop through its control of Chinese imports and exports, placing tariffs on Guatemalan goods yet mandating its CCPIT to engage with Guatemalan trade representatives. This commercial diplomacy tactic has ensured a sizable amount of Chinese goods have entered the Guatemalan market yet starved the Guatemalan export-focused business community of opportunities to export to the PRC, thus creating desire amongst influential business owners for improved ties with the PRC (see Lix and Larios, 2011; Munoz, 2012; *Siglo Veintiuno*, 2011). What is more, it has ensured that debate regarding diplomatic recognition of the PRC and Taiwan has been firmly focused on economic positives and negatives rather than political suitability.

To counter growing trade relations with the PRC, the Taiwan Embassy has increased its trade relations with Guatemala too. Chen addressed the shortcomings of Guatemala-Taiwan trade, and explained how the Embassy planned to improve the situation.

When we got a new Ambassador to Guatemala [in 2008], he realised that although we signed a Free Trade Agreement in 2005 there had not been much improvement in trade, so the ambassador decided that we should also have a Chamber of Commerce for Taiwan. This was inaugurated in Aug 2010 (Chen, 2011).

Therefore, since 2008 the Taiwan Embassy has sought to counter growing Chinese commercial activity by staging events for Taiwanese companies in Guatemala. Indeed, in spring 2012, four Taiwanese companies will visit Guatemala for talks with the Vice-Minister of Economy around investment opportunities (Ancheyta, 2012). However, the reality is that being drawn into an economic

competition with the PRC is an insurmountable task given the comparative resources at the two governments' disposal. Furthermore, it has the potential to deflect government and public attention away from Taiwan's public diplomacy, the fact that Taiwan is a democracy and the PRC is not, and instead reduce the debate on diplomatic recognition to quantifiable economics.

Conclusion

The loyalty of the Guatemalan political establishment to Taiwan has been greater than that of its Central American neighbours and this chapter has demonstrated a number of social and political reasons for why this has been so. Thus, while El Salvador, Nicaragua and Panama have all at least investigated switching relations to the PRC in recent years (see *China Post*, 2009; Eaton, 2006; Keegan, 2006b), there is no evidence to suggest that Guatemala has undertaken such a process. Indeed, it remains 'Taiwan's friend'. As such, while other Central American Republics have consolidated competitive multiparty democracy with powerful options on the left and right of the political spectrum, socialist and indigenous issues remain substantially under-represented on Guatemala's political landscape where the system is more reflective of inter-elite battles for power (Rockwell and Janus, 2003). Thus, it appears that it is a political system like Guatemala's that is most suiting to the diplomatic recognition of Taiwan.

Both the PRC and Taiwan recognise Guatemala's regional importance. It has the largest economy of any of the Central American Republics (World Bank, 2010), it is a crucial trade route into North America, and in Guatemala City it has the region's largest urban conglomeration and administrative centre. By this criterion, Guatemala is Taiwan's most formidable remaining formal diplomatic ally, yet Taiwan has displayed remarkable naivety towards Guatemala, which is also a country making socio-political changes, albeit ones less distinguished from its Central American neighbours. Indeed, it almost seems as though Taiwan was resting on its laurels

until Costa Rica recognised the PRC and Ambassador Sun subsequently kick-started some focus. This had been typified by Taiwan's almost disregard for trade relations until the PRC's arrival on the continent. As such, to fully understand Taiwan's public diplomacy in Guatemala it was important to consider the activities of the PRC as well, and to employ an objectives-based approach to the research, rather than a resources-based approach from Taipei or Beijing. This provided the perspective needed to discuss the reality of Taiwan's diplomatic relationship with Guatemala.

Ultimately this research found that Taiwan's public diplomacy and its diplomatic mission as a whole has historically been preoccupied with the satisfaction of Guatemala's government officials. As in El Salvador, the consolidation of positive public sentiment has at best a limited history. Lin puts this down to public diplomacy being, "more important [to Taiwan] in a democracy, as the government is elected by the people and so their views are therefore represented" (Lin, 2011a). Here we can see the explicit political purpose of Taiwan's public diplomacy. Thus, Taiwan's commitment to public diplomacy has risen in Guatemala as elsewhere partly in response to the expansion of democracy and civic participation in political processes in Central America (see Colburn and Cruz, 2008), but also Costa Rica's recognition of Beijing. That said, all the chapters in this thesis have concluded that Taiwan has performed its public diplomacy in such a manner that its main concern remains not with public opinion.

However, in appointing Adolfo Sun as Taiwan Ambassador to Guatemala in June 2008, there has been an attempt to redress this balance somewhat. Through the direction of Ambassador Sun, and by following his example, Taiwan's public diplomacy has become more focused on building positive public sentiment in Guatemala. This was most apparent in the conduct of Ambassador Sun himself who has appeared more eager to be public-facing than his predecessors, his speeches at education and medical diplomacy events being the most apparent.

It is essential however that in addressing this deficit of public focus, Taiwan does not lose sight of the reality that keeping good relations with foreign governments must remain its priority. For the neglecting of this risks the collapse of its traditional political support and increases the potential of PRC favouritism among influential social groups. In short, while it is interesting that Taiwan is instigating measures to normalise its style of public diplomacy, one's public diplomacy output must be a consequence of one's political requirements. Thus, it is the very fact that Taiwan is an abnormal nation-state that must determine its focus when engaging. What is more, Taiwan, and Ambassador Sun in particular, face an internal struggle if they are ensure the correct balance, for it appears that many of those in senior diplomatic roles are not recognising the extent to which Central America is a region going through considerable political and social change.

Guatemala's growing albeit still small economic relationship with the PRC must also be addressed. Indeed, while military leaders vetoed attempts to develop trade links with the PRC during the armed conflict, the reduction of the military's political power in the post-conflict era has relaxed these barriers. The result has been an influx of Chinese products into the Guatemalan market, yet the Chinese market, barring snippets of trade, remains closed to Guatemalan produce. This is a strategic ploy by the CCPIT (and therefore its parent governmental organisation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to create a desire for closer relations with the PRC in the Guatemalan business community through the creation of anxiety that Guatemala's political relations with Taiwan deny an opportunity that most other countries have the benefit of. To be sure, this is the same social group that Taiwan focuses much of its public diplomacy towards – agro-exporters, for example – and so the limiting of this group's opportunities has the potential to trigger negative sentiment towards their government's relations with Taiwan and arguably Taiwan itself. However, this focus on economics distracts from Taiwan's other work in the country and reduces

the public debate over Guatemala's diplomatic recognition to financial statistics. This may be the PRC's intention though.

This research posed the question of whether the style in which Taiwan performed public diplomacy was related to how secure its diplomatic relations with a country were. Or whether Taiwan's public diplomacy towards its formal diplomatic allies was systematically similar no matter the political environment in which it was performing. Comparing evidence from El Salvador, where the diplomatic relationship with the FMLN government is stretched, Taiwan is less focused on public sentiment there than in Guatemala. However, this is mainly the result of differences in interpretation by key individuals, namely Ambassadors Carlos Liao and Adolfo Sun. Therefore, these two case studies indicate that Taiwan's international isolation is the overriding factor in explaining its approach to public diplomacy but that the system is such that senior individuals can make hugely positive impacts.

Conclusion

This thesis has used the public diplomacy framework to understand the extent to which Taiwan convinces its small group of formal allies to maintain diplomatic relations in the face of growing competition from the PRC. Much of existing scholarship focuses on cross-strait relations or Taiwan's informal relations with the world's major powers (for example, Cooper, 2003; Henckaerts, 1996; Hickey, 2007; Rawnsley, 2000 and 2005; Tsang, 2004; Tunsjo, 2008). Meanwhile, research into Taiwan's formal relations and its presence in the underdeveloped world has a far more niche following (see Hsieh, 1985; Taylor, 1998 and 2002; Rich, 2009). What is more, much of the research on both sides has asserted that Taiwan's formal relationships continue largely as a result of state bribery and dollar or chequebook diplomacy on the part of the Taiwanese. There is some truth in this. Indeed, the bribery of Presidents in return for diplomatic recognition has been documented in two of the three case studies covered here (Arriaza, 2005; *El Nuevo Diario*, 2005; *Guatemala Times*, 2010; Segnini and Herrera, 2006; *Tico Times*, 2004). However, as Taiwan and many of its allies consolidate their young democracies, political transparency and a less restricted media environment have resulted in greater scrutiny of political leaders, making it more difficult to have a relationship based on private financial incentives. Thus, while older research by the likes of Gilbert (1963), Hsieh (1985), and Yu (1963) tells us that Taiwan's use of public diplomacy in its diplomatic allies has considerable history, it has arguably never been so vital to its international interests as it is today, given that diplomatic bribery incurs far more risk than before.

Public diplomacy, which is commonly associated with efforts by a country to create positive sentiment for itself within foreign publics and elites, is a term originally devised by the United States government to overcome the negative connotations associated with the word 'propaganda' after World War II (Cull, 2008a; Taylor, 2003; Tuch, 1990). As such, the advent of public diplomacy was an act of

propaganda in itself, such was the perceived need to manage the image of US international communications during the Cold War. However, this research has argued through its case studies that the phrase has grown to encompass more than just propaganda. One crucial expansion that has been highlighted by this research is the conceptual enlargement of public diplomacy beyond merely explicit styles of communication like international broadcasting, to include more implicit activities, which were initially considered beyond the sphere of public diplomacy, and that have since served to stretch the distance between the term and its conceptual roots. However, much of the public diplomacy of Western nation-states, and the United States in particular, still revolves around the more explicit techniques like international broadcasting and education and cultural diplomacy. This reflects the term's history with propaganda but it can also be associated with cultural divisions between Western and non-Western norms in communication (see Cohen, 1997; Hall, 1989). However, what is fundamentally important for this researcher is that public diplomacy is an act of diplomacy, and diplomacy is as much about gesture and deed as it is about word. Accordingly, this research rightfully documented the likes of development assistance, medical diplomacy and other forms of more implicit communications as public diplomacy.

It is worth reemphasising the approach taken to public diplomacy research. As the introduction to the thesis explained, an objective-based, ethnographic approach was taken, which meant that the research focus was determined by visibility on the ground, rather than the profile and remit of political institutions in the source country. Thus, fieldwork was conducted at public diplomacy's 'point of reception' in target countries rather than the more historically familiar method of 'point of conception'. Beyond, the limitations that institutionally based point of conception research can bring to our understanding of public diplomacy, the approach of this research crucially allowed its subjects, the diplomats of the PRC and Taiwan, to be observed at the same time, and with the focus being on Central America it meant

adequate focus on the competition for allies and changing dynamics within the region as a whole. As such, this research chose three neighbouring Central American Republics, two of which have relations with Taipei and one that has recently changed its diplomatic ties from Taipei to Beijing, and using an objective-based approach from within the country to which the public diplomacy is directed, sought to understand the growing political and economic presence of the PRC in a region where Taiwan has traditionally enjoyed diplomatic superiority.

The central argument of this thesis attested that public diplomacy is not an equaliser between nation-states with vastly different resource pools when the smaller nation-state is constrained by a lack of widespread diplomatic recognition. As such, analysis claiming that public diplomacy allows the PRC and Taiwan to compete, fails to understand the constraints that Taiwan's diplomatic situation puts it under. Thus, Taiwan's public diplomacy output is severely restricted by the diplomatic squeeze that it encounters abroad. This was most apparent when we saw a nullification on the part of Taiwan's diplomats to exploit perceived PRC weaknesses. This can be explained through the KMT's current trajectory of improving relations with the PRC; the legacy of a PRC diplomatic offensive during the DPP's administration (2000 – 2008); and the domestic socio-political reality of modern Taiwan.

The KMT's favouring of closer ties with the PRC and the signing of the ECFA are critical moments for both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Thus, for the KMT to highlight differences between the two countries to its formal diplomatic allies, is counterproductive to its fundamental policy of reconciliation with the mainland, as there is little doubt such attempts would antagonise the PRC and put the ECFA at risk. Moreover, to do so would go against the ideology of the party vis-à-vis China relations, for the KMT fundamentally see themselves as a Chinese political party on Taiwan. There is also the added recent history of DPP rule where attempts to differentiate Taiwan from the mainland led to a diplomatic offensive from the PRC

and the loss of several of Taiwan's formal diplomatic allies. This included Costa Rica, although as that chapter documented, San Jose's approach to Beijing was as much proactive on their part as it was PRC willingness to cooperate. As such, Taiwan's foreign policy, including its public diplomacy output, is severely restricted whatever direction it takes, meaning that the maintenance of a status-quo is probably the least damaging option.

Finally, the attempted disguise of Taiwan's wholly political motives for engaging with these countries reflects domestic socio-political tensions in Taiwan. Primarily, that Taiwan conducts its international relations as a country with a highly contested national identity vis-à-vis Chinese-ness or Taiwan-ness, and with significant portions of the KMT's authoritarian rule still classified. We therefore see what appears to be hesitancy from within the diplomatic profession over how to create allegiance to Taiwan's diplomatic cause within their modern corps. The result is a widespread failure to be frank with junior diplomats and diplomatic volunteers alike about the political emphasis of these relationships, leading to a seemingly awkward and unspecific execution of diplomatic policy.

Therefore, just like in Central America where this research documented increasing technocracy in the diplomatic profession as democracy consolidated, so to do we see this in Taiwan, where a younger generation of diplomats have appeared that are invariably not the product of KMT patronage. However, those older diplomats who began their careers in the period of martial law and who continue to occupy more senior roles are not yet of retirement age. This tension within Taiwan's diplomatic corps was evident in both Central American case studies, and is one of the key deductions of the thesis. As such, many of Taiwan's senior diplomats remain overly-fixated on political relationships in Central America and largely fail to understand the importance of public diplomacy as socio-political dynamics change in the region. While understandable, given that for decades this was an elite relationship between authoritarian regimes, the modern reality is increasing

redundancy for Taiwan's engagement model. Thus, the most comprehensive understanding of the need for a clear public diplomacy strategy came from the junior diplomatic corps, and those invariably younger in age: the agricultural engineers and Mandarin teachers. However, their lack of seniority meant that they have little say in strategy. Thus, the relationship remains built around Taiwan giving Central American governments what they want, rather than Taiwan executing a range of strategic public objectives of their own inline with Central American considerations. The reality is that no evidence was found of Taiwan having any real overarching public objectives in Central America. As such, it seems that Taiwan has been slow to realise the extent of the socio-political changes that have been underway in Central America since the end of the various armed conflicts, as its senior diplomatic corps have largely failed to adapt to the public's heightened role in political life.

Therefore, it is not enough to perform public diplomacy activities with one eye on the political establishment. Taiwan must develop a distinct strategy for its public diplomacy that seeks to deliver on public-oriented goals, for if it does not, it risks being a redundant force, with or without formal diplomatic relations, in these countries as they consolidate into competitive multi-party democracies. As such, this research sees the presence of the likes of Ambassador Sun in Guatemala as a rare breed of senior diplomat for Taiwan and one that the rest of the corps should seek to emulate.

This research also wanted to provide a clear picture of events occurring in Central America and so we must incorporate the PRC's relations with Costa Rica and its economic diplomacy with El Salvador into our analysis. Both the PRC and Taiwan conduct themselves in remarkably similar ways, and the introduction to the thesis explaining the reasons for this. However, the PRC performs public diplomacy in Costa Rica with security in regards to its international diplomatic status. This allows it to focus on building positive public sentiment in the country, rather than

being concerned with diplomatic security. However, beyond this, we see the extent of the PRC's public diplomacy projects as far beyond that which Taiwan provided to Costa Rica before relinquishing its incumbency and that which it continues to provide to its remaining incumbents. However, as the evidence on Africa also highlighted, the PRC's public investments roughly follow its foreign policy priorities, and it is the presence of Taiwan in Central America that primarily motivates the PRC's work in Costa Rica and its neighbours. However, if Taiwan continues on its current path then it may become immaterial as Central America makes socio-political changes, and the region may slip back into obscurity for the PRC, given that it can provide little of the natural resources or foreign markets that the PRC requires to continue its growth trajectory, and is not particularly important to Japan or the USA either.

The conclusion will now address more particular issues raised by the thesis. On the question of the PRC's aim to use Costa Rica as a platform to the rest of the region: there is little evidence from the other case studies that an enlarged PRC presence has changed either Taiwan's already intense preoccupation with the security of its diplomatic relations or the conduct of the Central American governments vis-à-vis Taiwan. Indeed, while Ambassador Sun in Guatemala has tried to stimulate economic relations between the two countries, trade remains minimal and incentivised by the political situation. This is somewhat the result of a lack of compatibility between the products on offer at both ends. However, it remains that the PRC is targeting the business communities of Taiwan's allies through economic diplomacy and that this social group have on the whole been willing to engage despite the policy still being in relative infancy. Thus, while the agreement of the diplomatic truce in 2008 has abated pressure on Taiwan's diplomatic relationships from the political elite, the possibility of a loss of support from underneath has grown. This is a new and challenging threat to Taiwan in

Central America, and one that a focused public diplomacy strategy could help to repel.

What is more, the PRC's relationship, and its economic diplomacy in particular, with Costa Rica has given those in favour of further integration of the PRC in other Central American republics a local case study from which to base their argument. This was best demonstrated in Guatemala by financial newspaper *Siglo Veintiuno* which emphasised the comparative disparity between Costa Rican and Guatemalan access to the developing PRC market, and thus partially blaming Guatemala's economic issues on its failure to recognise the PRC. Hence, an attempt was being made to move the debate on diplomatic relations to away from the realm of politics where the PRC image is weaker and more towards economic issues. Nevertheless, forces hostile to Taiwan have existed in Central American politics and society since the Cold War and will continue to do so. As such, it is inconclusive whether a fundamental shift in the political landscape of Central America has occurred as a result of the PRC's increased political and economic presence in the region.

The introduction to the thesis noted the extent to which the public diplomacy of the PRC and Taiwan seeks to engage with its domestic audience. This is something that is rarely considered by public diplomacy analysis. As such, the 'public' to which public diplomacy refers need not necessarily be in the recipient country but back home. This represents a break from conventional ways of thinking about public diplomacy, which tend to emphasise its use overseas (for example Melissen, 2005; Taylor, 2006 and 2008).

In the cases of the PRC and Taiwan, public diplomacy forms not an insignificant part of their governments' bids for sovereign legitimacy both domestically and internationally. Domestically, both governments have awkward social contracts with their citizens, the reasons for which come primarily from the continuation of authoritarian rule in the case of the PRC or unresolved issues

regarding the period of martial law in Taiwan. Thus, public diplomacy offers both countries an opportunity to demonstrate that they are responsible and compassionate international actors who represent the values of their publics accurately, without having to directly address issues of repression from their not so distant pasts.

This thesis has contributed to our critical understanding of how the PRC and Taiwan use public diplomacy in Central America inline with their wider foreign and domestic policy goals. As the only remaining region of the world where Taiwan is the diplomatic incumbent in the majority of nation-states, Central America represents the last opportunity for academia to provide on-going assessment of the dynamics of such diplomatic relationships. In addition, this study has contributed to the field of strategic communications, and our understanding of public diplomacy in particular, documenting how the strategy is utilised by international actors in line with their interests. While the past five years have witnessed an intensification of the PRC's interest in the region, Taiwan has also tried to extend its diplomatic mission, and the result has been public diplomacy activity reaching a level never before seen by either country in this part of the world.

Opportunities for Further Research

This PhD has created a number of opportunities for further academic pursuit. These can be split into three sections: areas of this study with the potential for expansion; the enlarging of the framework to address other issues; and, the expansion of this framework to other case studies.

The first opportunity is to conduct a comparative content analysis of the media in different Central American countries vis-a-vis the representation of the PRC and

Taiwan. This was briefly investigated as a possible additional methodology for this project but was dropped after a pilot was run in Costa Rica using the framework of De Vreese et al (2001) to assess the manner in which the Costa Rican daily newspaper *Nacion* represented the PRC in the six months before and after diplomatic recognition in June 2007. Ultimately, it was decided that content analysis was more suited to the resource-based approach to public diplomacy research, and that objective-based research like what has occurred here would not receive significant extra input from undertaking such a project. This is because conclusions would have been speculative as it is not possible to confirm a direct link between the content of the media and the objectives of a nation-state.

In any case, the results of the pilot were inconclusive as the PRC was the subject of a disproportionate number of political, economic and social stories in the latter half of 2007 in comparison to the first half as a result of the lead-up to the Beijing Olympics of 2008; and while this is of interest, it skewed the study from its original intention of assessing the impact of diplomatic recognition and subsequent public diplomacy on media content. Not necessarily related to the Beijing Olympics but related to the decision not to use content analysis, was that there was no way to deduce whether a positive or negative result was the consequence of the Costa Rican government's decision to diplomatically recognise Beijing, resulting in any conclusions being speculative. That said, content analysis remains a valuable research tool, and under a different theoretical framework and criteria may make a worthwhile contribution to our understanding of the PRC and Taiwan in Central America.

Secondly, this research has offered comparisons between the country case studies. However, the opportunity exists to do so in a more rigorous capacity. This thesis compared the activities of Taiwan in El Salvador and Guatemala and highlighted a number of differences including the relative security of the diplomatic relationship, the priorities and styles of the different ambassadors and the attempt to

consolidate public sentiment by public diplomats. What is more, the actions of Taiwan and the PRC in Central America and the reasons for this were offered in conclusions. However, it would be interesting for direct comparisons to be made between the public diplomacy conducted by Taiwan across its remaining formal diplomatic allies, and even between its formal diplomatic allies and those Western countries that it counts as informal allies. In this instance, the study could be enlarged to include other Central American Republics, the case study of Panama being of particular interest given its connection to world trade as a result of the Panama Canal. This would probably involve relinquishing the case study approach and taking a look at the activities of the PRC and Taiwan through a more policy-based structure.

Furthermore, how the PRC engages in public diplomacy with countries after they have renounced diplomatic ties with Taiwan is also of interest. Beyond Costa Rica, one can list the Caribbean Islands of Dominica and Grenada as potential case studies along with a host of African Republics, the most pertinent of which being Malawi – who announced ties with Beijing in 2008 but which had been a loyal ally of Taiwan since the country's independence (see Chirombo, 2010) – because of their appearance not to be swing state. All of this would further enhance the depth and quality of research being conducted in a field that remains considerably under-examined.

Finally, this moves the discussion to the issue of swing states, and the extent to which they do or do not receive a different style of diplomatic engagement from the PRC and Taiwan. Given that this research concluded that the PRC performs public diplomacy towards Costa Rica in a style befitting a country without continual preoccupations over the security of its diplomatic relationship, it remains to be seen whether the same can be said for the PRC in Grenada and Dominica, or in a variety of African Republics, where there is a history of 'swinging' between Taiwan and the PRC. What is more, there is the seemingly unique case of Haiti, an ally of Taiwan,

which has received substantial aid from both Taiwan and the PRC after the large earthquake in 2010, despite it being an ally of Taiwan. Therefore, while the PRC has appeared principled on non-involvement in Taiwan's allies it appears as though there is a limit to such a principle, and that this limit is based on international image. Thus, it may be that the modern and more pragmatic PRC's keenness to keep domestic and international criticism to a minimum, and legitimise its international behaviour, is in the process of usurping the One China principle which has been a mainstay of its policy since 1949.

Appendix A: Questions for Costa Rican Ambassador to the United Kingdom

Questions for Her Excellency Ms Pilar Saborio, Ambassador of Costa Rica to the United Kingdom. Tuesday 5th April 2011, 11am, Costa Rican Embassy, 14 Lancaster Gate, London.

Q1 – Can you provide me with a brief history of your time in the Costa Rican diplomatic service?

Q2 – Within the Costa Rican diplomatic service what is the general feeling towards China and Taiwan?

Q3 – Costa Rica stopped its diplomatic recognition of Taiwan in 2007 in favour of recognising the People's Republic of China (PRC). What were the reasons for this change?

Q4 – How is the movement of Costa Rica's embassy in Israel from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv related to the recognition of China?

Q5 – In what capacity does Costa Rica continue an informal relationship with Taiwan?

Q6 – Has the Costa Rican government received criticism from other Central American states for recognising China?

Q7 – A recently released *wikileaks* cable states that China has lavished gifts on Costa Rica in an attempt to gain a larger profile in the region. To what extent is this true?

Q8 – When Costa Rica recognised China, Taiwan had a technical mission (the ICDF) in your country with a number of on-going projects. China said it would continue these, what is the reality of this situation?

Q9 – To what extent does ideological sentiment play a role in the status quo regarding diplomatic recognition of China and Taiwan in Central America?

Q10 – Does recognising Taiwan represent an immaturity in foreign policy?

Q11 – What is the potential of Costa Rica or any other Central American Republic being a 'swing state'?

Appendix B: Information about Interviewees

Bibliography Reference	Interviewer's Location	Date of Interview	Name of Interviewee	Nationality	Position	Organisation	Location	Language
Rojas, 2010	UK	14/12/2010	Rojas, Pablo	Costa Rican	Head of Association	Association of Ex-scholarship holders Costa Rica- China	[by email]	E
Hu, 2011a	UK	09/01/2011	Hu, Ariel	Taiwanese	Mandarin Teacher at Universidad Nacional de El Salvador	Taiwan ICDF	[By telephone]	E
Lin, 2011a	UK	14/01/2011	Lin, Kuo-chung	Taiwanese	Head of Press Office	Taipei Representative Office UK	London	E
Holtz, 2011	CR	02/02/2011	Holtz, John	USA	Journalist	Inside Costa Rica	Escazu	E
Claramunt, 2011	CR	03/02/2011	Claramunt, Carmen	Costa Rican	Department of Scholarships	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica	San Jose	E/S
Vargas, 2011	CR	03/02/2011	Vargas, Esteban	Costa Rican	Conservationist	Sun Sun Lodge	Sarapiqui	E
Rodriguez Holkemeyer, 2011	CR	04/02/2011	Rodriguez Holkemeyer, Patricia	Costa Rican	Professor of Asian Studies	(UCR) Universidad de Costa Rica	Escazu	E
Delgado, 2011	CR	05/02/2011	Delgado, Mauricio	Costa Rican	Anthropologist	School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)	Puerto Viejo	E
Lin, 2011b	CR	07/02/2011	Lin, Hsiao	Taiwanese	Manager	China Association of Costa Rica	San Jose	E/S
Rivero, 2011	CR	07/02/2011	Rivero, Sergio	Costa Rican	Student	Renmin University	[by telephone]	E
Castro Fernandez, 2011	CR	09/02/2011	Castro Fernandez, Ronald	Costa Rican	Historian	UPeace (United Nations Universidad por la Paz)	Ciudad Colon	E
Achio, 2011	CR	09/02/2011	Achio, Mayra	Costa Rican	Head of Confucius Institute	UCR	San Jose	E/S
Mayorga, 2011	CR	09/02/2011	Mayorga, Armando	Costa Rican	Editor in Chief	<i>Nacion</i>	San Jose	E/S
Rodriguez, 2011	CR	10/02/2011	Rodriguez, Saskia	Costa Rican	International Cooperation Coordinator	(MIDEPLAN) Ministerio de Planificacion Nacional y Politica Economica de Costa Rica	San Jose	E
Monterrosa, 2011	ES	14/02/2011	Monterrosa, Rolando	El Salvadoran	Head of Opinion	El Diario de Hoy	San Salvador	E
Wu, 2011	ES	15/02/2011	Wu, Monica	Taiwanese	Head of Press Office	Taiwan Embassy	San Salvador	E
Lee, 2011	ES	15/02/2011	Lee, Carlos	Taiwanese	Head of Taiwan ICDF El Salvador	Taiwan ICDF	San Salvador	E
Huang, 2011	ES	15/02/2011	Huang, Gustavo	Taiwanese	Agricultural Engineer	Taiwan ICDF	San Salvador	E
Flores, 2011	ES	16/02/2011	Flores, Manuel	El Salvadoran	Mayor of Quezaltepeque	(FMLN) Frente Farabundo Marti por la Liberacion Nacional	Quezaltepeque	S
Wang, 2011	ES	17/02/2011	Wang, Yi-fei	Taiwanese	Mandarin Teacher	(UEES) Universidad Evangelica de El Salvador and Taiwan ICDF	San Salvador	E/S

Anonymous, 2011a	ES	17/02/2011	anonymous	El Salvadoran	Head of Department	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	San Salvador	E
Anonymous, 2011b	ES	19/02/2011	anonymous	El Salvadoran		Museo de la Historia de Guerra Civil Salvadoreña	Perquin	S
Rosales, 2011	GT	23/02/2011	Rosales, Dinora	Guatemalan	Coordinator of International Exchange	Universidad Rafael Landivar	Guatemala City	E
Sanchez, 2011a	GT	24/02/2011	Sanchez, Lisandro	Guatemalan	Lecturer in Architecture	Universidad Rafael Landivar	Guatemala City	E
Alpirez, 2011	GT	24/02/2011	Alpirez, Ana Carolina	Guatemalan	Editor in Chief	El Periodico	Guatemala City	E
Anonymous, 2011c	GT	25/02/2011	anonymous	Guatemalan	Journalist		Guatemala City	E
Chen, 2011	GT	02/03/2011	Chen, Daniel	Taiwanese	Third Secretary	Taiwan Embassy	Guatemala City	E
Hu, 2011b	GT	02/03/2011	Hu, Rosa	Taiwanese	Head of Press Office	Taiwan Embassy Guatemala	Guatemala City	E
Sanchez, 2011b	GT	08/03/2011	Sanchez, Esmeralda	Guatemalan	Director of Policy Formation	(SEGEPLAN) Secretaría de Planificación y Programación de la Presidencia	Guatemala City	S
Pan, 2011	GT	15/03/2011	Pan, Roberto	Taiwanese	Head of Taiwan ICDF Guatemala	Taiwan ICDF	Guatemala City	E/S
Vasquez, 2011	UK	18/03/2011	Vasquez, Luis	El Salvadoran	Director	Catholic Relief Services (CRS) El Salvador	[By email]	S
Saborio, 2011	UK	05/04/2011	Saborio, Pilar	Costa Rican	Ambassador to UK	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica	London	E

Participant Consent Form

Title of Research Project: Public Diplomacy in Central America: The Rise of the People's Republic of China.

Name of Researcher: Mr. Colin R. Alexander

Please initial the box if you agree with the statement to the left

- 1 I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

- 2 I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without any negative consequences for my decision. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

- 3 I understand that the information I provide during my participation in this research may be used in an academic publication and that my name may be attributed to it.
OR
- 4 I understand that I reserve the right to remain anonymous for all or part of my participation in this research.
- 5 I agree to take part in the above research project and will inform the principal investigator should my contact details change.

Name of participant
(or legal representative)

Date

Signature

Name of person taking consent
(if different from lead researcher)

Date

Signature

To be signed and dated in presence of the participant

Lead researcher

Date

Signature

To be signed and dated in presence of the participant

Copies:

Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, the information sheet and any other written information provided to the participants. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be kept with the project's main documents which must be kept in a secure location.

Appendix D: Details of PRC Ambassador Li Changhua's Quarterly Addresses in *Nacion*

(correct as of 24th November 2011).

Harvard Reference	Date of Appearance	Title (in English)
(Li, 2010a)	27 th July 2010	Sino – Costa Rica Relations
(Li, 2010b)	1 st Oct 2010	Passive Development
(Li, 2011a)	4 th Jan 2011	United on the Challenges of Climate Change
(Li, 2011b)	23 rd Mar 2011	A New Period for the Sino – Costa Rican Friendship
(Li, 2011c)	12 th July 2011	Successes of the Chinese Communist Party
(Li, 2011d)	31 st Oct 2011	An Open, Democratic and Friendly China

Appendix E: Taiwan Embassy in El Salvador Press Release, week beginning Monday 21st February 2011

Taiwan dona US\$100.000 a Nueva Zelandia [Taiwan donates US\$100,000 to New Zealand]

Taipei, (CNA) En representación del gobierno de la República de China (Taiwan), el ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, Timothy C.T. Yang, donó el miércoles 23 la cantidad de US\$100.000 a Nueva Zelandia para ayudar a los damnificados de un devastador terremoto que azotó el previo día a ese país oceánico.

La donación fue recibido por el director de la Oficina de Comercio e Industria de Nueva Zelandia en Taipei, Sr. Stephen Payton, quien agradeció profundamente al gobierno de Taiwan por la generosa donación, así como por el rápido envío de un grupo de rescate por parte del gobierno de Taiwan a su país para participar en las operaciones de rescate de emergencia.

El Sr. Payton reveló que transferiría el dinero donado a la Sociedad de la Cruz Roja de su país a la brevedad posible para ayudar a los damnificados del seísmo, que ha clamado la vida de unas 70 personas, además de dejar a otras 200 personas desaparecidas.

Por su parte, el canciller Yang le manifestó al Sr. Payton la solidaridad del gobierno y pueblo de Taiwan a los victimas Nuevo zelandeses del aterrador cataclismo.

Un grupo de rescate de la Agencia *Nacional* de Bomberos de Taiwan, integrado por 24 experimentados rescatadores, partió en horas de la noche del martes 22 rumbo a Nueva Zelandia para participar en las operaciones de rescate de emergencia en ese país insular en el Océano Pacífico Sur.

Pdte. Ma insta a más rápida reforma política en China [President Ma insists that political reform in China be quicker]

Taipei, (CNA) El presidente Ma Ying-jeou ha expresado su deseo de que China acelere su paso para realizar la reforma política basada en la democracia y el imperio de la ley y proteger los derechos humanos, al momento de mantener su prosperidad económica, según un informe de prensa dado a conocer por el Palacio Presidencial el lunes 21.

El Primer Mandatario hizo dicho llamamiento en un momento en que el mundo está viendo cómo se están originando las olas de protestas clamando por reformas políticas en países árabes, denominadas por la prensa como la "Revolución del Jazmín", que se está extendiendo también a China.

"El presidente Ma cree que la democracia y los derechos humanos son los valores comunes del mundo, la extensión de una idea de la cultura china basada en el bienestar del pueblo, y un indicador importante para medir las relaciones entre los dos lados del Estrecho de Taiwan", dijo Chen Yung-feng, director encargado de los asuntos públicos del Palacio Presidencial, en una conferencia de prensa.

"Ante la nueva era de democratización en el mundo, se debe tartar bien a los activistas prodemocracia con una nueva mente y con clemencia, y debemos convertir a la democracia y a los derechos humanos en el único lenguaje para los pueblos de los dos lados del Estrecho para siempre", fue citado Ma.

Mientras tanto, Tsai Ing-wen, la presidenta del opositor Partido Democrático Progresista (PDP), también expresó el mismo día su interés y su apoyo a la "Revolución del Jazmín", que ya se está extendiendo a China.

En una asamblea del comité de dirigentes del PDP en la legislatura, Tsai dijo que las evoluciones en el Medio Oriente y los movimientos de democracia en China eran cambios importantes tanto para la tendencia interNacional como para su partido.

"Ante una fuerte China, la promoción de la democracia y de los derechos humanos es equivalente a la protección de los valores de Taiwan", indicó Tsai.

"Ahora, tales valores (de democracia) están siendo propagados al Medio Oriente y China, por lo que creo que el PDP debe expresar su interés y apoyo", puntualizó Tsai.

Appendix F: Taiwan Embassy in El Salvador Press Release, week beginning Monday 14th March 2011

Taipei en lista de ciudades turísticas potenciales [*Taipei in list of underestimated tourist cities*]

Taipei, (CNA) Taipei figura entre las ciudades más subestimadas del mundo en términos de viajes, según un artículo publicado en el sitio web de Yahoo! Travel.

El artículo, titulado "las Ciudades Más Subestimadas del Mundo", dijo que Taipei ya no es una ciudad sofocada por el aire contaminado como en las décadas de los 80 y los 90.

"Hoy en día, Taipei es una de las capitales más agradables de Asia, con acres de espacio verde y sistemas de conveniente transporte público", dijo el artículo en el sitio web de viajes del motor de búsqueda.

Para los entusiastas de las actividades al aire libre, hay mucho que ver en Taiwan, por ejemplo, el excelente Parque *Nacional* de Yangmingshan, las famosas fuentes termales en Beitou, los agradables senderos que rodean las montañas, y las cómodas y seguras rutas ribereñas para los ciclistas, dijo Jennifer Chen, autora del artículo.

Sin embargo, añadió Chen, la mayor atracción de Taipei sigue siendo sus exquisitas comidas.

"En Taipei uno puede encontrar unas de las mejores comidas chinas del mundo, desde los puestos callejeros hasta los restaurantes de lujo. No tengan miedo si no hablan el mandarín, pues los amables ciudadanos de Taipei están siempre ansiosos de ayudar a todos los visitantes", indicó Chen.

Otras ciudades en la lista incluyeron también a Detroit, Tucson, Providence, Filadelfia y Denver en Estados Unidos, Nara en Japón, Antwerp en Bélgica, Bolgna en Italia, Galway en Irlanda, Glasgow en Escocia, Adelaide en Australia, Valparaíso en Chile, Kotor en Montenegro, Mérida en México y Bratislava en Eslovaquia.

El artículo dijo que estas ciudades eran especialmente interesantes para los viajeros que les gusta explorar nuevos lugares.

También en la lista estuvieron Hangzhou en China, Calgary en Canadá, Bordeaux en Francia, Durban en Sudáfrica, Montevideo en Uruguay, Dusseldorf en Alemania, Valencia en España y Granada en Nicaragua.

Pdte. Ma y su esposa se unirán a recaudación de fondos para Japón [*President Ma and his wife will unite to collect funds for Japan*]

Taipei, (CNA) El presidente Ma Ying-jeou adelantó el jueves 17 que tanto él como su esposa participarán el viernes 18 en un programa de televisión de call-in con el objetivo de recaudar fondos para ayudar a los ciudadanos nipones que resultaron damnificados por el

super-fuerte seísmo y el masivo tsunami subsecuente que azotaron implacablemente a Japón el 11 de marzo.

La primera dama Mei-ching Chow de Ma, quien se encuentra actualmente de vista en Nueva Zelanda, acortará su visita a fin de tomar parte en el mencionado evento caritativo que tendrá lugar bajo los auspicios conjuntos de la Sociedad de la Cruz Roja de Taiwan y las tres empresas de televisión del país, a saber: la CTS, la CTV y la PTS, dijo Ma al momento de recibir en audiencia a una delegación del capítulo de Taiwan de los Clubes de Leones InterNacionales.

El Primer Mandatario aprovechó la ocasión para hacer un llamado a todos sus compatriotas para que realicen llamadas telefónicas al referido programa de televisión para hacer sus respectivas doNaciones a la población japonesa víctima de uno de los terremotos más cataclísmicos en la historia de su país.

"Espero que el público en general pueda demostrar su espíritu de compasión y solidaridad y ayudar a Japón a superar sus momentos más difíciles", manifestó el presidente Ma.

Inmediatamente después de que Japón fue azotado por el terremoto de magnitud 9,0 y el maremoto subsecuente el 11 de marzo, Taiwan se ofreció a enviar a un equipo de rescate a las zonas de desastre y a donar 100 millones de dólares taiwaneses (unos 3,44 millones de dólares americanos) para ayudar a ese país vecino a realizar sus operaciones de rescate, puntualizó Ma.

Refiriéndose al desastre nuclear generado por el devastador sismo y el tsunami subsecuente, Ma recalcó que Taiwan tendrá que adoptar todas las medidas de precaución aunque todas las evaluaciones basadas en las informaciones meteorológicas demuestran que es imposible que la contaminación radioactiva vaya a llegar a Taiwan.

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