

European Integration Models and Cross-Strait Sovereignty Disputes

David W. F. Huang

Abstract

The European integration model has been proposed to resolve the sovereignty dispute between Taiwan and China. But it is not clear as to “which” European integration model is to apply to the cross-strait dispute. Commentators usually equate European integration with functional integration, as if the latter is “sufficient” to explain the whole experience of European integration. Yet, not only is functional integration itself contested, but the European integration model is also not an undisputed single model. I argue that functional integration cannot resolve the cross-strait sovereignty dispute. On the contrary, the resolution or alleviation of sovereignty disputes is a prerequisite for functional integration. In order to alleviate the sovereignty dispute, I suggest we apply key concepts of Moravcsik’s “liberal intergovernmentalism (LI) to the analysis of critical factors influencing the cross-strait sovereignty dispute. A subregional integration project that includes Hong Kong, Macau, and parts of China and Taiwan is proposed. Since this project meets Mattli’s demand and supply conditions for any regional integration to succeed, it can be one of the alternatives that alleviate the sovereignty dispute between Taiwan and China.

Key Words: neo-functionalism, liberal intergovernmentalism, One China principle, spillover effect, regional integration.