

# The Taiwanese/Chinese Identity of the Taiwan People\*

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*The purpose of this article is to provide the reader with a picture of the distribution of an important political attitude of the Taiwan public—their Taiwanese/Chinese identity. The term "Taiwanese/Chinese identity" refers to whether individuals in Taiwan identify themselves as Taiwanese or Chinese. This identity is often considered a key variable in explaining how Taiwanese think about politics in general and cross-Strait politics in particular. The authors also seek to demonstrate how the distribution of Taiwanese/Chinese identity has changed in recent years. Survey data collected by the Election Study Center of National Chengchi University are used for the analysis. The results indicate that regardless of ethnic background, age, educational level, gender, and partisan identity, Taiwanese people's Chinese identity ratio declined while their Taiwanese identity rose sharply.*

**KEYWORDS:** ethnic identity; national identity; public opinion; Taiwanese/Chinese identity

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"Do you consider yourself Taiwanese or Chinese?" Thirty years ago, this was a question that few in Taiwan dared to raise in public, because it had a very clear "standard and safe" answer, and also because most people's natural reaction was: "There is no need to ask. We are certainly Chinese."

Before Taiwan's political democratization, there were no studies regarding whether the Taiwan people identified themselves as Chinese or Taiwanese. The closest studies were surveys which used respondents' ethnic background or place of origin (*shengji*) as a variable to explain the different political attitudes among the populace.<sup>1</sup> The logic behind this approach was the belief that "ethnic divergence" (*shengji fenqi*) or "ethnic awareness" (*shengji yishi*) was an important factor affecting the behavior of the Taiwan people. However, after martial law was lifted in 1987, the identity question—"Are you Chinese or Taiwanese?"—developed into a popular topic of discussion. Chang Mao-kuei and Hsiao Hsin-huang became pioneers in this field when they discussed in 1987 "self-identification" as well as the "Chinese complex" and "Taiwanese complex" of university students in Taiwan.<sup>2</sup> As a result of the heated discussion surrounding this debate, empirical political and sociological studies about this issue flourished. Over the past five years, this subject has been directly discussed in the literature, either alone or in combination with

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<sup>1</sup>E.g., Chen Wen-chun, "The Political Attitude of Secondary School Students in the Taiwan Area: Application of Aggregate Data Analysis," *Zhengzhi xuebao* (Political Science Journal) (Taipei), no. 11 (1983): 1-78 (in this article, the ethnic background of the people was implied by their mother tongues, such as the south Fujian [Fulao] dialect, Mandarin, and Hakka); Hu Fo and Yu Ying-lung, "The Voters' Voting Inclination: An Analysis of Structure and Types," *ibid.*, 225-79 (in this article, ethnic background was not a factor under consideration); Hu Fo and Yu Ying-lung, "The Voters' Partisan Choice: An Analysis of Attitudinal Inclination and Individual Background," *ibid.*, no. 12 (1984): 1-59; Lei Fei-lung et al., "The Demographic Ecological Studies of Taiwan's Supplementary Legislative Election," *ibid.*, 61-121; Lin Jia-cheng, "A Study of the Electoral Behavior in 1983," *ibid.*, 123-88; Lin Jia-cheng, "An Analysis of the Partisan Support Factor," *ibid.*, no. 13 (1985): 131-67; Chang Mao-kuei, "Provincial Origin and Nationalism," in *Zuqun guanxi yu guojia rentong* (Ethnic relationship and state identity), ed. Chang Mao-kuei et al. (Taipei: Yejiang chubanshe, 1993), 233-78.

<sup>2</sup>Chang Mao-kuei and Hsiao Hsin-huang, "The 'Chinese Complex' and 'Taiwanese Complex' of University Students: An Analysis of Self-Identification and Intermarriage Concepts," *Zhongguo luntan* (China Tribune) (Taipei) 25, no. 1 (1987): 34-52.

other variables. This issue is sometimes referred to as "ethnic identity" (*zuqun rentong*)<sup>3</sup> or "national-ethnic identity" (*guozu rentong*),<sup>4</sup> and sometimes held as a factor related to "state identity" (*guojia rentong*).<sup>5</sup> The objective of this article is not to conduct a similar study of the issue, but to use available data to trace the changes in the Taiwan people's Taiwanese/Chinese identity in recent years.

## Data

The data used in this article were obtained during four personal interview surveys of adult citizens on Taiwan conducted by the Election Study Center of National Chengchi University (NCCU) under the sponsorship of the Executive Yuan's Mainland Affairs Council (MAC). These data sources were adopted as the basis of our analysis mainly because the relatively large sample sizes of these surveys were conducive to a comparatively stable cross-statistical analysis. In fact, the MAC also commissioned a considerable number of institutions to conduct telephone interview sur-

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<sup>3</sup>Cheng Su-fen, "An Analysis of the Correlation Between Candidate Image and Voting Behavior," in *Xuanju xingwei yu Taiwan diqu de zhengzhi minzhuhua: Cong dierjie lifawei-yuan xuanju tantao* (Electoral behavior and the Taiwan area's political democratization: A discussion based on the second legislative election), a National Science Council research project report (NSC82-0301-H004-034), ed. Chen Yi-yen et al. (Taipei: Election Study Center, National Chengchi University, 1993), 62-81; Chen Wen-chun, "The Unification/Independence Issue and the Electoral Behavior of the Voters: An Analysis of the 1994 Provincial Governor/City Mayor Elections," *Xuanju yanjiu* (Journal of Electoral Studies) (Taipei) 2, no. 2 (1995): 99-136; Wu Nai-te, "Liberalism and Ethnic Identity: A Search for an Ideological Basis of Taiwanese Nationalism," *Taiwan zhengzhi xuekan* (Journal of Taiwan Politics) (Taipei), no. 1 (1996): 5-39; Yu Ying-lung, "A Political Psychological Analysis of Taiwan's Ethnic Identity," *ibid.*, 41-84; Tsai Meng-hsi, "A Study of the Changes in the Ethnic Identity, Unification/Independence Position, and Party Preference of the Taiwan People" (Master's thesis, Graduate Institute of Political Science, National Chengchi University, Taipei, 1997).

<sup>4</sup>Sun Tung-wen, "The Relationship Between National-Ethnic Identity and the Taiwan People's Attitude Toward the Hong Kong/Macau Issue," *Zhengzhi xuebao*, no. 29 (1997): 113-39.

<sup>5</sup>Wu Nai-te, "Ethnic Awareness, Political Support, and State Identity: A Preliminary Theoretical Probe into Taiwan's Ethnic Politics," in Chang, *Zuqun guanxi yu guojia rentong*, 27-51; Chen, "The Unification/Independence Issue and the Electoral Behavior of the Voters."

veys, but this data was excluded in order to ensure data compatibility.<sup>6</sup>

The samples of all these four surveys were selected according to the stratified, stepped, equiprobable sampling method before the personal interviews and the data were weighted to ensure the samples' typical demographic characteristics. The first survey, conducted from January 17 to February 20 of 1994, had a total of 1,600 valid samples; the second, conducted from June 19 to the end of August of 1995, had a total of 1,634 valid samples; the third, conducted from January 20 to March 14 of 1997, had a total of 1,610 valid samples; and the last survey, conducted from July 5 to September 5 of 1998, had a total of 1,604 valid samples.

The key variable to be discussed in this article is the Taiwanese/Chinese identity, which appeared in the original questionnaires in the following form:

In our society, some people say that they are "Taiwanese," some say that they are "Chinese," and some say that they are "both Taiwanese and Chinese." Do you think you are "Taiwanese," "Chinese," or "both Taiwanese and Chinese"?

In the following analysis, for the sake of convenience, those who replied that they were Taiwanese are referred to as having a "Taiwanese identity"; those who replied that they were Chinese are regarded as having a "Chinese identity"; and those who replied that they were both Taiwanese and Chinese are considered having a "double identity." Table 1 shows the distribution of this variable in all four surveys. In the first three surveys, the ratio of "double identity" respondents was the highest. However, the ratio of "Taiwanese identity" respondents rose gradually and in the last (1998) survey, was even slightly higher than that of "double identity" respondents. The significance of such distribution changes will be the focus of discussion in the following two sections.

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<sup>6</sup>Different interview methodology and different survey institutions may affect the variability of data. Tien Fang-hua, "The Influence of Respondents Filling in the Questionnaire by Themselves and That of Interviewers Asking Questions on the Answering Effect," *Diaocha yanjiu* (Survey Studies) (Taipei), no. 2 (1996): 59-88; William S. Aquilino and Leonard A. Lo Sciuto, "Effects of Interview Mode on Self-Reported Drug Use," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 54 (1990): 362-95.

**Table 1**

**The Distribution of the Taiwan People's Taiwanese/Chinese Identity, 1994-98**

Year	Variable	No. of Persons	%
1994	Taiwanese	461	28.8
	Both Taiwanese and Chinese	690	43.0
	Chinese	386	24.1
	No response	62	3.9
1995	Taiwanese	474	29.1
	Both Taiwanese and Chinese	746	45.6
	Chinese	344	21.1
	No response	70	4.3
1997	Taiwanese	544	33.8
	Both Taiwanese and Chinese	769	47.8
	Chinese	230	14.3
	No response	67	4.2
1998	Taiwanese	711	44.3
	Both Taiwanese and Chinese	678	42.3
	Chinese	160	10.0
	No response	55	3.4

**Source:** Data obtained from the province-wide sample surveys conducted by the NCCU Election Study Center under MAC sponsorship.

### **The Difficulty of Giving the Question a Proper Name**

For most existing survey designs, one could easily insert such a question as "Do you consider yourself Taiwanese or Chinese?" into a questionnaire. However, when proceeding to analyze the resulting respondent data, naming this variable becomes difficult. We can see from the past literature the divergence of names. The choice "whether I am a Taiwanese or a Chinese" has most frequently been referred to as "ethnic identity";<sup>7</sup> has sometimes been called "self-recognition" (*ziwo rending*)<sup>8</sup> or "national identity"

<sup>7</sup>See note 3 above.

<sup>8</sup>Chang and Hsiao, "The 'Chinese Complex' and 'Taiwanese Complex' of University Students"; Hsu Hua-yen, "Taiwan Electorate's State Identity and Partisan Voting Behavior: The Results of Empirical Studies from 1991 to 1993," *Taiwan zhengzhi xuekan*, no. 1 (1996): 85-127.

(*minzu rentong*),<sup>9</sup> and has even been referred to as "self-identification" (*ziwo rentong*) by the MAC (see figure 2).

Of all names, the most frequently used is "ethnic identity." However, when we called the "Taiwanese/Chinese" choice "ethnic identity," the term becomes confounded with the phrase "four big ethnic groups" that we usually use to refer to the Hakka, Fulao, mainlanders, and original settlers. In fact, when we talk about "ethnic politics" (*zuqun zhengzhi*), our demarcation criterion is one's place-of-origin background,<sup>10</sup> but not one's psychological identification.<sup>11</sup> The uses of "self-recognition" and "self-identification" do not easily relate their relationship with "China" and "Taiwan," so they cannot fully convey the significance of the concept. Amid all these divergences, Wang Pu-chang named the variable regarding the Taiwanese/Chinese choice as the Taiwanese identity and the Chinese identity. We consider this as the best way to avoid unnecessary confusion.<sup>12</sup>

This variable has also been combined with other variables to become a new related variable. For instance, Cheng Su-fen combined the Taiwanese/Chinese choice with different places of origin to form such a new variable as "ethnic awareness" (*zuqun yishi*) to examine whether the

<sup>9</sup>Chen Kuang-hui, "A Study of the Taiwan People's State Identity: A Discussion of Certain Concepts" (Master's thesis, Graduate Institute of Political Science, National Chengchi University, Taipei, 1997).

<sup>10</sup>More precisely speaking, it is not one's place of origin, but something similar to "status identification" (*shenfen rentong*) which Chang Mao-kuei mentioned in 1997. See Chang Mao-kuei, "On Certain Questions About 'Status Identification Politics,'" in *Minzhu gonggu huo bengkui: Taiwan ershiyi shiji de tiaozhan* (Democratic consolidation or collapse: Taiwan's challenge in the twenty-first century), ed. Yu Ying-lung et al. (Taipei: Yeqiang chubanshe, 1997), 91-116.

<sup>11</sup>For example, Chang Mao-kuei, "Taiwan's Political Transition and the Development of Ethnic Politics," *Jiaoshou luntan zhuankan* (Professor Forum Journal) (Taipei), no. 4 (1997): 37-71; Shih Cheng-feng, "Taiwan's Ethnic Politics," *ibid.*, 73-108; Wang Pu-chang, "The Formation and Manifestation of Taiwan's Ethnic Politics: An Analysis of the 1994 Taipei Mayoral Election Results," in *Minzhu zhuanxing? Taiwan xianxiang* (Democratic transition? Taiwan's phenomenon), ed. Ying Hai-kuang Foundation (Taipei: Guiguan chubanshe, 1998), 143-232.

<sup>12</sup>Wang Pu-chang, "The Integration of People from Various Provinces: A Theoretical and Empirical Study," in Chang, *Zuqun guanxi yu guojia rentong*, 53-100 (in this article, Wang pointed out that nationalism was measured by the Taiwanese/Chinese choice and the unification/independence position, although he used only the concepts of "Taiwanese identity" and "Chinese identity" in his analysis and discussion); Wang Pu-chang, "Ethnic Awareness, Nationalism, and Partisan Support," *Taiwan shehuixue yanjiu* (Taiwan Sociological Studies), no. 2 (1998): 1-45.

Taiwan people have a stronger Taiwanese awareness or a stronger Chinese awareness.<sup>13</sup> Sun Tung-wen linked the Taiwanese/Chinese choice with the unification/independence position to produce such a new variable as "national-ethnic identity" (*guozu rentong*) implying different degrees of "Chinese nationalism" and "Taiwanese nationalism."<sup>14</sup> All these different names show that this many-sided concept may also be a component element of more abstract ideas. Such an investigation is beyond the scope of this paper, however.

### Group Divergence

Using the Taiwanese/Chinese identity as a dependent variable to observe the divergence among different groups is a basic method we can employ to understand the distribution of this variable in our society. Such an approach has been taken in much of the literature.<sup>15</sup> The key variables selected for the cross analysis of background are demographic in nature, including the respondents' place of origin, gender, education, generation, resident area, profession, and even ethnic composition in families. In his master's thesis, Tsai Meng-hsi divides family background into pure Hakka, pure Fulao, pure mainlander, Hakka-Fulao intermarried, and Fulao-mainlander intermarried families. Most analyses use data obtained from conducting one or two surveys. Although Tsai's thesis analyzes data obtained over a relatively long period of time, his analysis is not built on data sampled on the same population. As the data he uses are electoral data affected by the kind of elections being held, he clearly points out that the data of the 1993 county magistrate/city mayoral elections did not include those of Taipei and Kaohsiung cities and that the data of the 1991 National

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<sup>13</sup>Cheng, "An Analysis of the Correlation Between Candidate Image and Voting Behavior."

<sup>14</sup>See note 4 above.

<sup>15</sup>Wang, "The Integration of People from Various Provinces"; Chen Wen-chun, "Ethnic Groups, Ethnic Awareness, and Political Support," in Chen, *Xuanju xingwei yu Taiwan diqu de zhengzhi minzhuhua*, 82-140; Yu, "A Political Psychological Analysis of Taiwan's Ethnic Identity"; Tsai, "A Study of the Changes"; Chen, *Taiwan diqu minzhong guojia rentong zhi yanjiu*.

Assembly election basically included only data of Taipei city and county.<sup>16</sup> The survey data we use in this article were all obtained during personal interviews conducted throughout Taiwan, which has enabled us to avoid the restrictions Tsai had in his study. Moreover, these four surveys with the same study design (including the theme, questionnaire, sampling, and interviewing methods) were all conducted by the NCCU Election Study Center under MAC sponsorship. We therefore consider worthwhile the re-undertaking of a relatively complete cross analysis of demographic characteristics regarding the Taiwanese/Chinese identity question. Important variables, including ethnic background, age, education, gender, and partisan identity, will be examined separately.

### *Ethnic Background and the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity*

Table 2 contains the distribution of the respondents' Taiwanese/Chinese identity by their ethnic background, including Hakka, Fulao, and mainlanders.

*The Hakka's Taiwanese/Chinese identity:* When our interviewers asked Hakka respondents whether or not they were Taiwanese or Chinese, the respondent would often respond "a Taiwanese" before the question was completed. Thus, we may not be able to know the exact percentage of Hakka respondents among all samples for this round of surveys. If the question we ask is "Are you a Hakka, a Fulao, or . . .?", we can more accurately find out the percentage of Hakka respondents. This experience reminds us that the Hakka has special characteristics as an ethnic group. The distribution of their political attitudes is not unquestionably the same as the other group of Taiwanese, the Fulao.

Proof of this is found in the distribution shown in table 2. The Hakka's Taiwanese/Chinese identity was in between that of the Fulao and mainlander respondents. The Taiwanese identity ratio of Hakka respondents was 15 to 20 percentage points higher than that of mainlander respondents, but 10 to 15 percentage points lower than that of Fulao respondents. Their Chinese identity ratio was slightly higher than that of Fulao respond-

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<sup>16</sup>Tsai, "A Study of the Changes," 22.



**Table 2**  
**Ethnic Background and the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity, 1994-98**

Year	Ethnic background (%)	Taiwanese identity (%)	Double identity (%)	Chinese identity	No. of persons	Chi-square test
1994	Hakka	22.3	49.0	28.7	150	df = 4
	Fulao	35.8	45.7	18.5	1,150	$\chi^2 = 167.36$
	Mainlanders	5.9	38.4	55.6	222	p < .001
1995	Hakka	28.6	47.7	23.7	158	df = 4
	Fulao	35.1	48.2	16.7	1,123	$\chi^2 = 114.77$
	Mainlanders	9.2	46.7	44.0	244	p < .001
1997	Hakka	28.6	57.1	14.3	167	df = 4
	Fulao	41.3	47.0	10.8	1,120	$\chi^2 = 129.12$
	Mainlanders	11.1	53.4	35.4	230	p < .001
1998	Hakka	44.8	46.9	8.3	244	df = 4
	Fulao	52.0	41.3	6.7	1,052	$\chi^2 = 131.86$
	Mainlanders	18.1	53.0	28.8	230	p < .001

**Source:** Data obtained from the province-wide sample surveys conducted by the NCCU Election Study Center under MAC sponsorship.

ents (the difference was below 10 percentage points) but far lower than that of mainlander respondents (a 20-25 percentage point difference).

Table 2 also demonstrates that the Taiwanese/Chinese identity of individual ethnic groups had shown a certain change in trend during this period. This will be discussed systematically with other variables later.

*The Fulao's Taiwanese/Chinese identity:* Among all ethnic groups, the Taiwanese identity ratio of Fulao respondents was the highest. Such a result is unsurprising. However, in all four surveys, Fulao respondents identifying themselves as Taiwanese accounted for more than 50 percent in 1998 only. During the first three surveys, over 40 percent of Fulao respondents identified themselves as both Taiwanese and Chinese. The "double identity" idea indicates that when the respondents were considering the Taiwanese/Chinese choice, they might have two or more different ideas. Some of them might have different ideas about the set relationship between Taiwanese and Chinese; that is, Taiwanese as a subset of Chinese, Taiwanese and Chinese are two independent sets without any overlap, or

they are two overlapping sets.<sup>17</sup> Some may consider the question from the historical or cultural perspective, and some others from the geographical or political perspective.<sup>18</sup> This is the reason why we can see from table 2 that a considerable proportion of Fulao respondents living in Taiwan chose to identify themselves as Chinese (over 15 percent in 1994 and 1995, but declining to slightly higher than 5 percent in 1998).

*The Taiwanese/Chinese identity of mainlanders:* All four surveys revealed that of all ethnic groups, mainlander respondents have the strongest Chinese identity. In 1994, as high as over 50 percent of mainlander respondents had Chinese identity, although the ratio declined to about 30 percent in 1998. Mainlander respondents also have the weakest Taiwanese identity. In 1994, mainlander respondents' Taiwanese identity ratio was as low as less than 6 percent, although this ratio rose gradually to less than 20 percent in 1998. However, the double identity ratio of mainlander respondents increased markedly. During the 1997 and 1998 surveys, over 50 percent of all mainlanders had a double identity. Thus, double identity has become the mainstream opinion among mainlanders.

Many mainlanders were born or grew up in mainland China. Although having spent the greater part of their life in Taiwan, their emotional ties link them to mainland China; their Chinese identity, therefore, continues to exist. Through political socialization, most of their children have inherited the same values, including the importance of the Chinese identity. This is the reason why in these surveys, a relatively high proportion of mainlander respondents identified themselves as Chinese.

*The attitude of the aborigines:* Although we usually say that the Taiwan people consist of "four big ethnic groups," the aborigines or "original

<sup>17</sup>For discussion of this kind, see Huang Kuo-chang, *Zhongguo yishi yu Taiwan yishi* (Chinese awareness and Taiwanese awareness) (Taipei: Wunan tushu chubun gongsi, 1992).

<sup>18</sup>It is not difficult to understand that when such factors as history, language, and ethnicity are also involved, explanations of the identity issue will become even more complicated. Of two persons having the same identity, one may contemplate the question from two dimensions (e.g., historical and geographical) and say that "I am both Taiwanese and Chinese" while meaning that he/she is a Chinese when considering the history of Taiwan and he/she is also a Taiwanese because he/she lives in Taiwan. The other may consider the question from a single angle (either geographical or historical) and say that "I am a Taiwanese" or "I am a Chinese."

settlers" actually account for a very low percentage. We, therefore, have not included this group in our separate analysis of the four surveys. To find out the distribution of their Taiwanese/Chinese identity, we picked out all aborigines from our samples of the four surveys for analysis. Of the fifty-nine total aborigines, twenty-two (37.3 percent) considered themselves as Taiwanese, thirteen (22 percent) regarded themselves as Chinese, and twenty-four (40.7 percent) identified themselves as both Taiwanese and Chinese. Thus, the Taiwanese/Chinese identity of the aborigines is more close to that of the Hakka and Fulao, but rather different from that of the mainlanders. However, as each of the four surveys had too few aborigine respondents, we lack reliable distribution statistics for each year necessary for further analysis.

#### *Age and the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity*

Using age as a variable to observe effects on human behavior is a rather common practice in surveys. In fact, this indicates that "time" is a factor affecting human behavior and age is an appropriate index of time. From a quantitative perspective, age represents accumulation of information or experience; and from a qualitative perspective, age may represent life experience across different spans. Both quantitative accumulation or qualitative divergence of information and experience can certainly cause behavioral difference. Therefore, observing the attitude and behavioral divergence of respondents of different ages in surveys can provide the researchers with a preliminary understanding of the effects of time on the persons under study.

The data of all four surveys in table 3 show the same trend: older people have a stronger Taiwanese identity. This result is contradictory with the following common sense-based general expectation: "Taiwan and mainland China are separated for a long time. Short of substantial contact, the younger the Taiwan people are, the less possible that they would identify themselves as Chinese. The younger people should have a stronger Taiwanese identity than the older ones." From the data in table 3, we can see that the Chinese identity ratio of younger respondents was even slightly higher (about 2-3 percentage points) than that of the middle-aged. While not yet statistically significant, this difference did exist.

**Table 3**  
**Age and the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity, 1994-98**

Year	Age	Taiwanese identity (%)	Double identity (%)	Chinese identity (%)	No. of persons	Chi-square test
1994	20-29	20.7	55.1	24.2	439	df = 8
	30-39	31.6	45.9	22.5	420	$\chi^2 = 47.66$
	40-49	31.1	42.3	26.5	252	p < .001
	50-59	41.4	34.1	24.6	185	
	Over 60	34.2	35.5	30.3	242	
1995	20-29	15.4	61.5	23.1	433	df = 8
	30-39	29.4	51.3	19.3	430	$\chi^2 = 116.55$
	40-49	39.2	44.3	16.5	267	p < .001
	50-59	44.5	33.7	21.9	166	
	Over 60	37.7	30.8	31.5	235	
1997	20-29	20.4	65.2	14.4	404	df = 8
	30-39	31.8	55.2	13.0	421	$\chi^2 = 121.64$
	40-49	41.0	46.5	12.5	307	p < .001
	50-59	47.2	38.8	14.0	174	
	Over 60	50.4	26.6	23.1	237	
1998	20-29	33.6	55.3	11.1	380	df = 8
	30-39	39.1	51.5	9.4	395	$\chi^2 = 77.30$
	40-49	54.4	35.5	10.2	320	p < .001
	50-59	58.5	36.1	5.4	183	
	Over 60	54.0	31.0	15.0	258	

**Source:** Data obtained from the province-wide sample surveys conducted by the NCCU Election Study Center under MAC sponsorship.

Another presumption about people's attitudes may probably better explain the "abnormal" phenomenon shown by table 3. When discussing the unification/independence position of the Taiwan people, one of the authors gave the following explanation to a similar situation: Although short of a timetable, Taiwan's official stand is to seek unification. This position is frequently popularized both in official documents and in the process of school education. The youngest voters who have just left school or are still studying in educational institutions are the most affected by this kind of political socialization; hence, they would take a position close to this "mainstream" value. However, the process of political socialization continues on into the adult period. People will receive new political information and pursue

new political studies. After Taiwan's democratization brought about complete freedom of speech, various "non-mainstream" values (for instance, Taiwan independence) have been freely propagated in society. Under these circumstances, the pro-unification stand of the young generation in Taiwan (the result of the socialization of schools) has been gradually shifting toward Taiwan independence (the revision of the new political socialization). Therefore, when they grow older, their unification position becomes weaker and their independence stand becomes stronger.<sup>19</sup> This is a Taiwan life cycle which may also be applied to the relationship between people's age and their Taiwanese/Chinese identity. The "we are Chinese" value has long been emphasized by the government, educational institutions, and the media. Most young people whose political attitude is still deeply influenced by school education naturally have a comparatively strong Chinese identity. However, their exposure to the "we are Taiwanese" concept after they have left school might lead them to develop a stronger Taiwanese identity. This socialization process may continue on for a long period of time. Thus, as they grow older, their Taiwanese identity also grows stronger.

Table 3 indicates that the distribution of the people's Chinese identity according to age in each survey are more or less alike. The chi-square tests of all four years have reached the statistically significant level ( $p < .001$ ). However, we can believe that the figures in the "Chinese identity" column have made little contribution to the chi-square test values in table 3, because there was little difference in the Chinese identity ratios of various age groups except that the "over sixty years old" group consisted of a relatively high Chinese identity ratio. Of the respondents over sixty years old, we naturally find a relatively stronger Chinese identity among the mainlanders.

The double identity ratio has declined with age. Double identity is the

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<sup>19</sup>Liu I-chou, "Generational Divergence in Unification/Independence Position," in *Liang'an guanxi wenti minyi diaocha xueshu yantaohui lunwenji* (A collection of papers presented at the Symposium on Cross-Strait Relations Opinion Polls), 4-3-1—4-3-21. The symposium was co-sponsored by the MAC and the NCCU Election Study Center in Taipei on May 17-18, 1997.

mainstream opinion among young people, over 50 percent of whom identified themselves as both Taiwanese and Chinese. However, the mainstream opinion among the older people was for a Taiwanese identity. We believe that the increase in the ratio of people having the Taiwanese identity can also explain the distribution trend of double identify among people of various age brackets. The overall decline of the Chinese identity ratio and the overall rise of the Taiwanese identity ratio will be discussed later.

### *Education and the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity*

Educational background is usually an index of one's ability to absorb and use information. We expect that people with a higher educational level will have more political information and more elaborate political thinking. The educational background of respondents is, therefore, an important variable in our understanding of people's political attitudes. Table 4 contains a cross analysis of the respondents' educational background and their Taiwanese/Chinese identity.

Table 4 demonstrates that respondents' Taiwanese identity ratio declines with their educational level. In the face of the Taiwanese/Chinese choice, the better educated the people are, the less they identify themselves as Taiwanese, but the more they chose a double identity. About 50 to 60 percent of the respondents who have received senior high school or vocational education said that they were both Taiwanese and Chinese. On the other hand, the Chinese identity ratio also rose among those with higher educational levels, although the rising trend is not particularly obvious. Therefore, no matter what their educational background is, there is always a certain proportion of people identifying themselves as Chinese.

We have already mentioned that people who are better educated are more capable of elaborate thinking. When asked the question "Are you Taiwanese or Chinese?", well-educated people will very likely also take historical, cultural, and ethnic factors into consideration and say that they are Chinese, but the less-educated would more possibly think about the question from a single direction.

### *Gender and the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity*

The attitude and behavioral divergence between men and women is a

**Table 4**  
**Education and the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity, 1994-98**

Year	Education	Taiwanese identity (%)	Double identity (%)	Chinese identity (%)	No. of persons	Chi-square test
1994	Elementary & below	43.6	35.9	20.4	500	df = 8 $\chi^2 = 90.73$ p < .001
	Junior secondary	32.6	47.5	19.9	237	
	Senior secondary & vocational	23.6	51.0	25.4	431	
	Junior college	17.2	47.4	35.4	198	
	University & above	17.5	48.8	33.7	171	
1995	Elementary & below	49.5	34.4	16.2	464	df = 8 $\chi^2 = 134.10$ p < .001
	Junior secondary	33.7	48.2	18.1	233	
	Senior secondary & vocational	19.2	55.0	25.8	482	
	Junior college	17.8	55.1	27.1	185	
	University & above	19.4	54.2	26.4	181	
1997	Elementary & below	57.4	29.5	13.1	416	df = 8 $\chi^2 = 151.63$ p < .001
	Junior secondary	34.0	46.3	18.8	209	
	Senior secondary & vocational	29.8	56.5	13.7	471	
	Junior college	21.6	60.0	18.4	199	
	University & above	19.8	66.6	13.6	245	
1998	Elementary & below	62.1	30.2	7.6	486	df = 8 $\chi^2 = 105.90$ p < .001
	Junior secondary	50.3	40.2	9.5	261	
	Senior secondary & vocational	37.3	52.5	10.2	455	
	Junior college	30.4	52.4	17.2	190	
	University & above	30.5	56.8	12.7	154	

**Source:** Data obtained from the province-wide sample surveys conducted by the NCCU Election Study Center under MAC sponsorship.

constant theme of social science surveys. The data in table 5 indicates that during these four surveys, the mainstream opinion of both men and women was double identity, with only a small difference of 1 to 3 percentage points. Women expressing a Taiwanese identity accounted for a slightly higher percentage than men expressing the same identity, although the dif-

**Table 5**  
**Gender and the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity, 1994-98**

Year	Gender	Taiwanese identity (%)	Double identity (%)	Chinese identity (%)	No. of persons	Chi-square test
1994	Male	34.6	45.5	29.9	793	df = 2
	Female	35.7	44.2	30.0	740	$\chi^2 = 30.97$ p < .001
1995	Male	26.6	49.1	24.3	805	df = 2
	Female	34.2	46.2	19.6	747	$\chi^2 = 11.98$ p < .003
1997	Male	32.5	50.6	16.9	800	df = 2
	Female	38.2	49.0	12.8	743	$\chi^2 = 8.24$ p < .02
1998	Male	42.7	45.4	11.9	795	df = 2
	Female	49.2	42.0	8.7	754	$\chi^2 = 8.33$ p < .02

**Source:** Data obtained from the province-wide sample surveys conducted by the NCCU Election Study Center under MAC sponsorship.

ferences were all less than 10 percentage points; and men with the Chinese identity also accounted for a slightly higher percentage than women with the same identity but the differences were more or less than 5 percentage points. Thus, the distribution of the Taiwanese/Chinese identity among men and that among women are slightly different. However, we would rather emphasize their similarities: their mainstream opinion was double identity and within both groups the Taiwanese identity ratio was higher than the Chinese identity ratio.

#### *Partisan Identity and the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity*

The most convenient way to distinguish Taiwan's major political parties is to look into their stance on cross-Strait relations. Similarly, the most convenient way to distinguish the supporters of these parties is to ask them their unification/independence position. The pro-unification position is closely related to the pro-New Party (NP) attitude while Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) supporters likely favor Taiwan independence. Such a correlation also appears in the Taiwanese/Chinese identity. As the



Taiwanese/Chinese identity is very closely related to the unification/independence position of the people, we are not surprised to find a considerably high correlation between the people's unification/independence position and their partisan identity. This finding clearly matches the results of many preexisting studies.<sup>20</sup>

In table 6, we can see that the 1994 data showed no difference from the earlier literature, but the data of the following three surveys shows that changes have recently taken place. Throughout the four surveys, double identity remained the mainstream opinion of Kuomintang (KMT) supporters. However, the percentage of KMT supporters identifying themselves as Chinese decreased gradually while that of KMT supporters identifying themselves as Taiwanese increased gradually. In 1994 and 1995, the percentage of KMT supporters having a Chinese identity was higher by more than 15 percentage points than that of KMT supporters having a Taiwanese identity. In 1997, the two groups were almost equal in size. In 1998, the situation was reversed abruptly: the Taiwanese identity ratio of KMT supporters was higher by more than 15 percentage points than their Chinese identity ratio. This drastic change will be given a systematic comprehensive analysis later in this paper.

DPP supporters have always had a very clear Taiwanese identity. This is in line with the general understanding that DPP members consist mainly of the Fulao and Hakka (which together are usually referred to as Taiwanese). Table 6 indicates that the percentage of DPP supporters who have a Taiwanese identity was always as high as over 50 percent (from 52 to 62 percent). The percentage of DPP supporters with a double identity and that of DPP supporters with a Chinese identity were also quite stable, accounting for about 30 to 40 percent and less than 10 percent respectively.

NP supporters had the same mainstream opinion as KMT supporters. Among them, those with a double identity accounted for between 46.4 and 69.9 percent during these four surveys, much higher than the ratios of KMT

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<sup>20</sup>Chen, "Ethnic Groups, Ethnic Awareness, and Political Support"; Yu, "A Political Psychological Analysis of Taiwan's Ethnic Identity"; Chen, *Taiwan diqu minzhong guojia rentong zhi yanjiu*, 64-65; Tsai, "A Study of the Changes," 39-40; Wang, "Ethnic Awareness, Nationalism, and Partisan Support."

**Table 6**  
**Partisan Identity and the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity, 1994-98**

Year	Partisan identity	Taiwanese identity (%)	Double identity (%)	Chinese identity (%)	No. of persons	Chi-square test
1994	KMT	18.3	44.9	36.8	358	df = 6
	DPP	53.9	35.8	10.3	117	$\chi^2 = 86.97$
	NP	13.5	46.4	40.1	57	p < .001
	Others	32.3	45.9	21.8	1,006	
1995	KMT	19.0	46.6	34.4	363	df = 6
	DPP	61.4	32.8	5.8	113	$\chi^2 = 137.20$
	NP	4.1	51.4	44.5	65	p < .001
	Others	32.5	49.6	17.9	1,012	
1997	KMT	23.6	52.7	23.7	421	df = 6
	DPP	52.1	39.0	8.9	197	$\chi^2 = 113.03$
	NP	9.8	69.9	20.3	106	p < .001
	Others	40.4	48.4	11.2	819	
1998	KMT	34.0	48.5	17.5	441	df = 6
	DPP	59.5	35.9	4.6	256	$\chi^2 = 89.11$
	NP	18.4	59.6	22.0	53	p < .001
	Others	49.9	42.6	7.5	799	

**Notes:**

1. KMT = Kuomintang; DPP = Democratic Progressive Party; NP = New Party.
2. The category of "others" includes those who were neutral, those who had no partisan identity, supporters of other political parties, and those who gave no response to this question.

**Source:** Data obtained from the province-wide sample surveys conducted by the NCCU Election Study Center under MAC sponsorship.

supporters having double identity. Another important group of NP supporters are those with a Chinese identity. In 1994 and 1995, over 40 percent of NP supporters identified themselves as Chinese. However, in 1997 and 1998, the ratio abruptly dropped by half, to slightly higher than just 20 percent. This reflected an opposite trend of change in the percentage of NP supporters identifying themselves as Taiwanese. From 1995 to 1998, the proportion of NP supporters with a Taiwanese identity increased markedly, although in absolute value was always the smallest among the three kinds of identity ratios. The significance of this change will also be discussed later.

The category of "others" includes nonpartisans and supporters of other political parties. Their choice of the Taiwanese/Chinese identity lay between that of KMT and DPP supporters. They constitute the gray area between the two parties and a major field of competition during elections.

On the whole, we discover from the foregoing cross analysis the following group divergence:

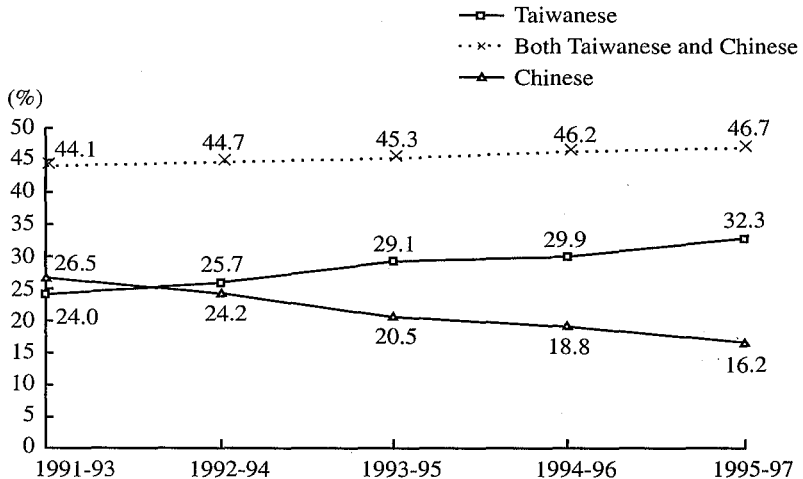
1. The highest Taiwanese identity ratio was found among the Fulao, followed by the Hakka and the mainlanders. However, the double identity ratio and the Chinese identity ratio were in reverse order, with the mainlanders taking the lead over the Hakka and the Fulao.
2. Both the middle-aged (aged forty to fifty-nine) and the elderly (over sixty) had a higher Taiwanese identity ratio than the young people (under thirty-nine) and the divergence among them was considerable. The elderly had the highest Chinese identify ratio but the divergence between them and the other two groups was small.
3. The educational level of respondents was inversely proportional to their Taiwanese identity ratio, but directly proportional to their Chinese identity ratio.
4. Women had a slightly higher Taiwanese identity ratio than men.
5. DPP supporters had the strongest Taiwanese identity, followed in descending order by "others," KMT supporters, and NP supporters. However, double identity ratios and Chinese identity ratios were found, from the highest to the lowest, among NP supporters, KMT supporters, "others," and DPP supporters.

### **The Trend of Changes**

The above-mentioned "Taiwanese/Chinese identity" variable and other commonly used demographic variables all reached the statistically significant level (the lowest criterion is  $p < .02$ ). However, we must remember that the existence of these correlations does not necessarily indicate cause-and-effect linkage. To find out the causal relations between

**Figure 1**

**The Three-Years-per-Period Moving Average Lines Regarding the Taiwan People's Self-Identification as Taiwanese, Chinese, or Both Taiwanese and Chinese**



**Source:** Tsai Meng-hsi, "A Study of the Changes in the Ethnic Identity, Unification/Independence Position, and Party Preference of the Taiwan People" (Master's thesis, Graduate Institute of Political Science, National Chengchi University, Taipei, 1997), 33. The original figure in Tsai's thesis contained only data from 1991 to 1996. We thank Mr. Tsai for providing us with the additional 1995-97 data.

the Taiwanese/Chinese identity and other independent variables, we need study designs that are more elaborate (which would include, for instance, conducting follow-up surveys of fixed samples). The data that we use in this article were not obtained through such designs, but we can still discern from them some valuable change patterns.

An important contribution of Tsai Meng-hsi's thesis was to observe changes that took place over a relatively long period.<sup>21</sup> Tsai adopted the method of the moving average. He set three years as a period, obtained the average of the years in each period, and then used the moving averages thus obtained to draw the moving average lines (see figure 1). The most notable

<sup>21</sup>Tsai, "A Study of the Changes," 29-33, 41-48.

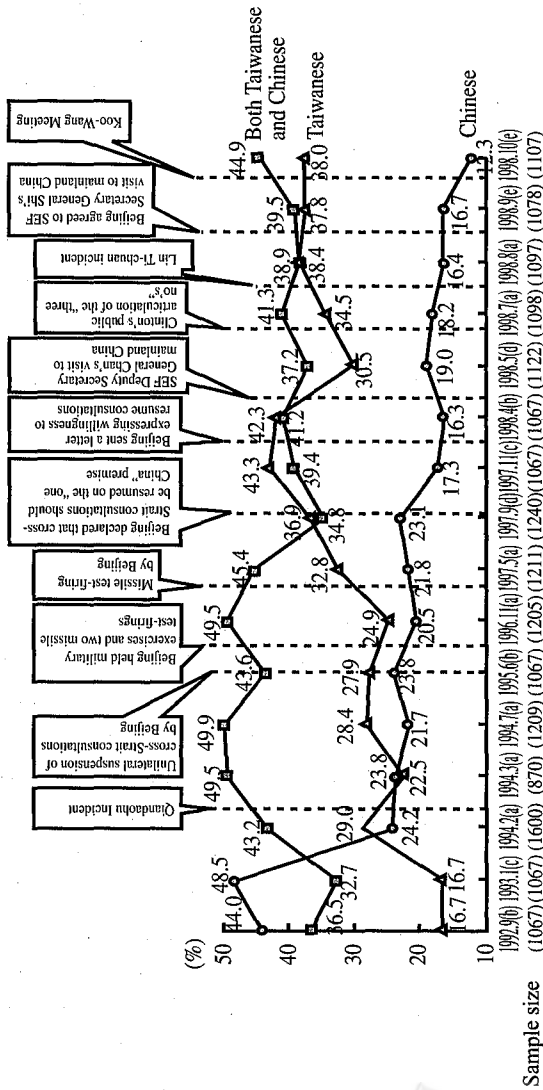
benefit of this data-processing method is that the effect of excessively biased samples of any year can be excluded and thus a curve relatively close to actual changes can be obtained. Figure 1 shows that in the years from 1991 to 1997, respondents' Chinese identity notably declined, their Taiwanese identity rose slightly (statistically insignificant), and their double identity remained considerably stable. Figure 1 may not be able to reflect Taiwan's situation because the data Tsai used had limitations as mentioned previously. The data from four province-wide surveys that we use in this article does not have such a problem, but we prefer not to use the same analytical method as Tsai's because our data was collected over only four points of time and thus the advantage of using the moving average method may be quite small.

Another long-term trend analysis that deserves attention is noted by the MAC in figure 2. The lines in this figure were drawn according to the data obtained from MAC-sponsored opinion polls conducted by various institutions. The strongest feature of this figure is that it covers many points of time. However, since these polls were conducted by different institutions, we cannot exclude the possibility of errors due to differences in polling methods (e.g., the sampling method, the definition of valid samples, and encoding principles) and the institutional effect (different institutions may incur different reactions from the respondents). The existence of these errors may modify the long-term trend lines and mislead the readers.

Basically, we agree to the MAC attempt to use specific incidents, such as the Qiandaoahu (Thousand Island Lake) incident, the missile test-firing, the murder of Kaohsiung city councilwoman Lin Ti-chuan in mainland China, and the Koo (Chen-fu)-Wang (Daohan) meeting, to explain the attitude changes of the Taiwan people. However, when the data in use might have the aforementioned systemic errors, the interpretations might be inaccurate. Moreover, repeated interviews of fixed samples (panel data) are necessary for making valid deductions about attitude changes caused by various incidents. In fact, the opinion polls in figure 2 failed to meet this demand. We therefore suggest a compromising approach, that is, to analyze the results of surveys conducted by the same institution. We believe that this may probably help improve the accuracy of our findings.

To facilitate the observation of trends, the data in tables 2, 3, 4, 5, and

**Figure 2**  
**The People's Attitude Towards Self-Identification**



Sample size (1067)(1067) (1600) (870) (1209) (1067) (1205) (1211) (1240)(1067) (1067) (1122) (1098) (1097) (1078) (1107)

Survey units: (a) Election Study Center, NCCU (02-29387134), (b) Burke Marketing Research, Ltd. (02-25181088), (c) China Credit Information Service, Ltd. (02-87873266), (d) Public Opinion Research Center, National Sun Yat-sen University (07-5252000), (e) Public Opinion Research Section, National Chung Cheng University (05-2720411).

Survey methods: Personal interviews during the February 1994 survey only, and telephone interviews during all the rest.

Survey objects: Adults aged 20-60 in the Taiwan area.

Data source and chart-maker: MAC, Executive Yuan.

6 have been transformed into figures 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, 5-1, 5-2, 5-3, 6-1, 6-2, 6-3, and 7-1, 7-2, 7-3 according to the Taiwanese identity, the Chinese identity, and the double identity, respectively.

From these figures showing the reactions of different groups of respondents at four different points of time, we discover the following trends:

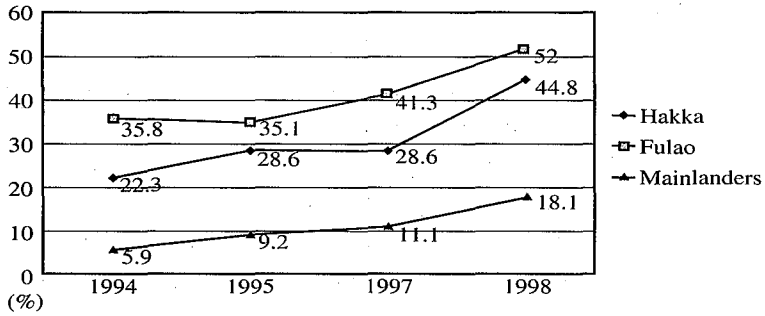
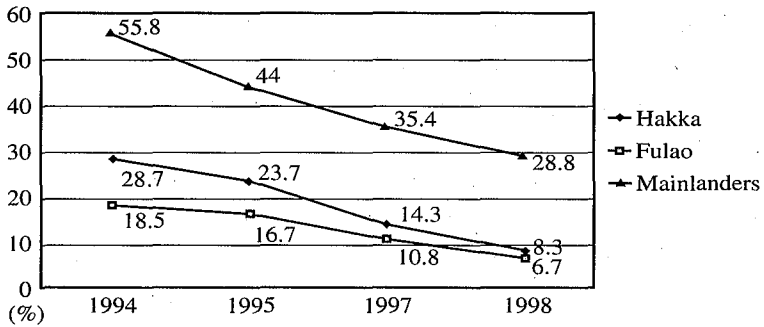
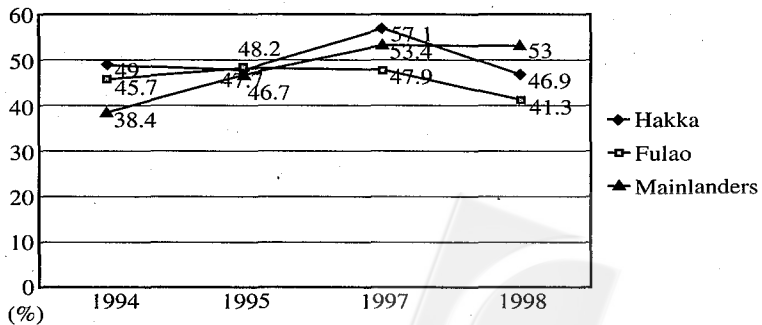
First, the Taiwanese identity ratio has continued to rise sharply, regardless of ethnic groups (figure 3-1), age (figure 4-1), educational background (figure 5-1), gender (figure 6-1), and partisan identity (figure 7-1).

Second, there was a corresponding decline in the Chinese identity ratio, which was even more conspicuous than the rise in the Taiwanese identity ratio. Similarly, this trend existed among all groups of respondents, regardless of their ethnic background (figure 3-2), age (figure 4-2), educational level (figure 5-2), gender (figure 6-2), and partisan identity (figure 7-2).

Third, the double identity ratio rose and fell according to a specific pattern, rising slightly from 1994 to 1997, but falling thereafter from 1997 to 1998. Similar changes took place among various groups of respondents (figures 3-3, 4-3, 5-3, 6-3, and 7-3).

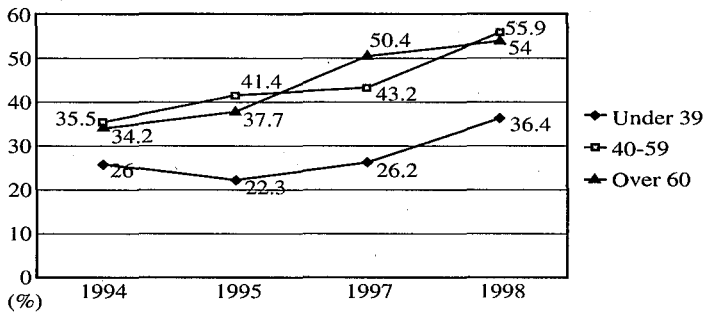
Fourth, since the Taiwanese identity ratio, the Chinese identity ratio, and the double identity ratio of every group of respondents totalled 100 percent, the third figure of each demographic characteristics was decided by the previous two figures (for instance, figure 3-3 was decided by figures 3-1 and 3-2). From these figures, we discover that the direction of change began with a switch from the Chinese identity to the double identity among some people, and later some switched even further to the Taiwanese identity. At the same time, some people who had originally identified themselves as both Taiwanese and Chinese also switched to a Taiwanese identity. Thus, the shift from a Chinese identity to a Taiwanese identity occurred gradually. Evidence of this can be found in the data of male respondents. In 1995 their Chinese identity ratio dropped a drastic 5.6 percentage points over the previous year, but in the same period their Taiwanese identity ratio declined by only 2 percentage points while their double identity ratio increased by 3.6 percentage points.

To begin to predict the significance of this trend for the future, we have selected two groups of respondents—mainlander respondents aged

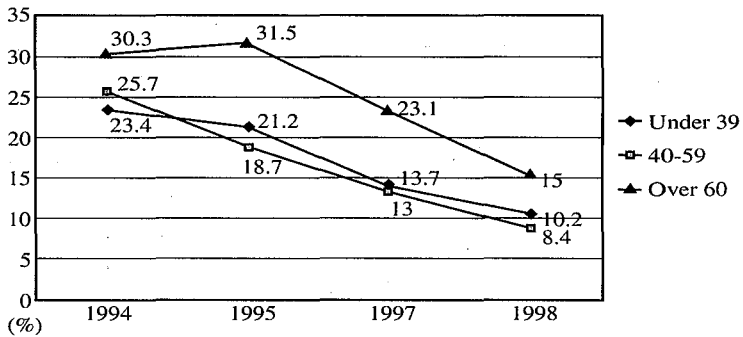
**Figure 3-1****Ethnic Background and the Taiwanese Identity****Figure 3-2****Ethnic Background and the Chinese Identity****Figure 3-3****Ethnic Background and the Double Identity**



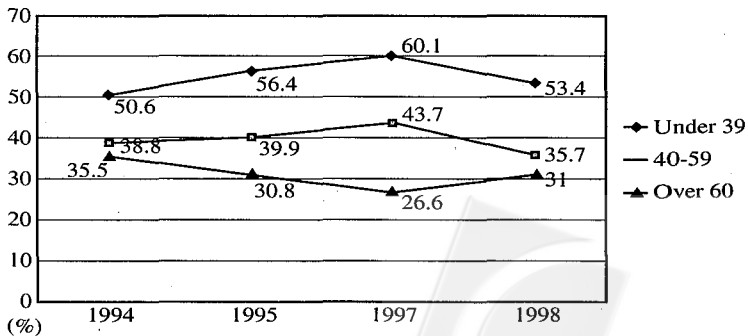
**Figure 4-1**  
**Age and the Taiwanese Identity**



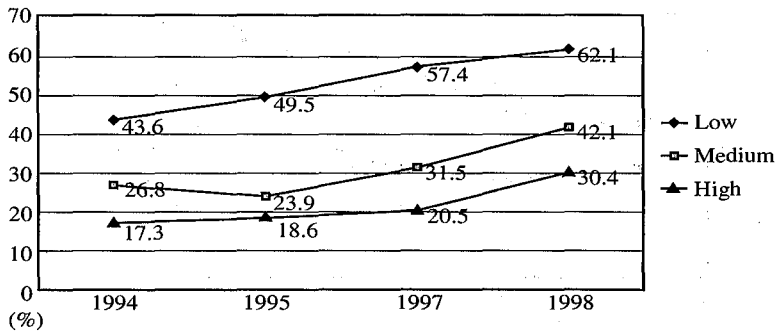
**Figure 4-2**  
**Age and the Chinese Identity**



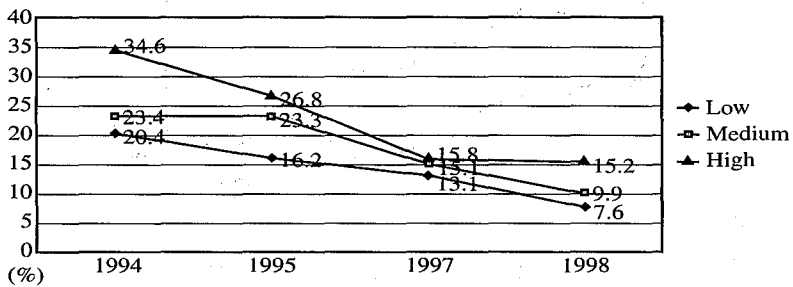
**Figure 4-3**  
**Age and the Double Identity**



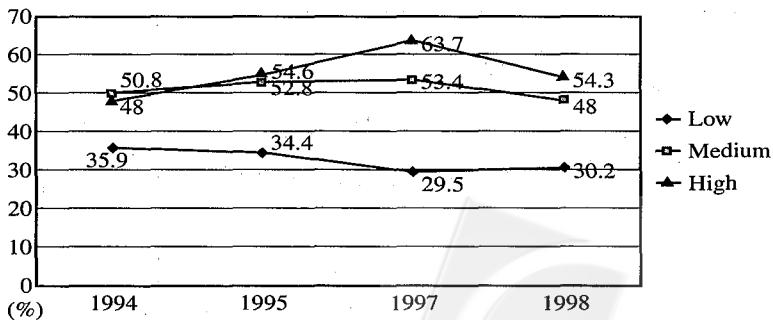
**Figure 5-1**  
**Education and the Taiwanese Identity**



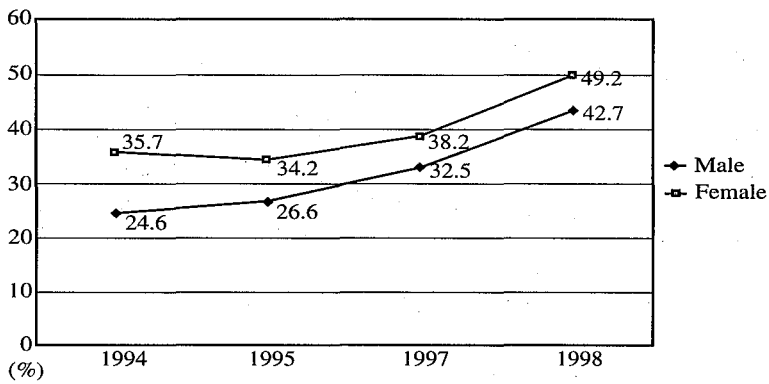
**Figure 5-2**  
**Education and the Chinese Identity**



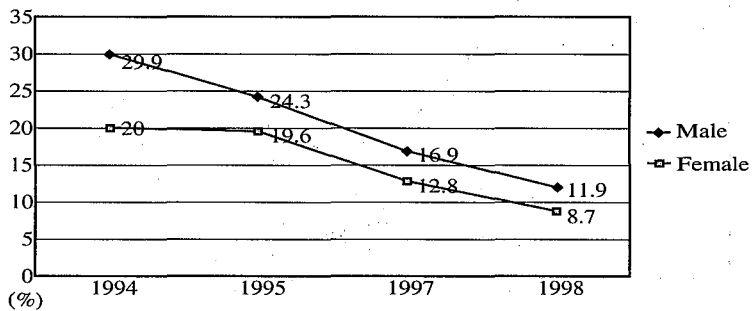
**Figure 5-3**  
**Education and the Double Identity**



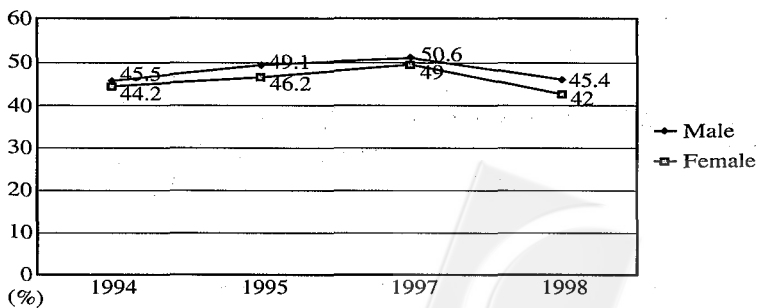
**Figure 6-1**  
**Gender and the Taiwanese Identity**



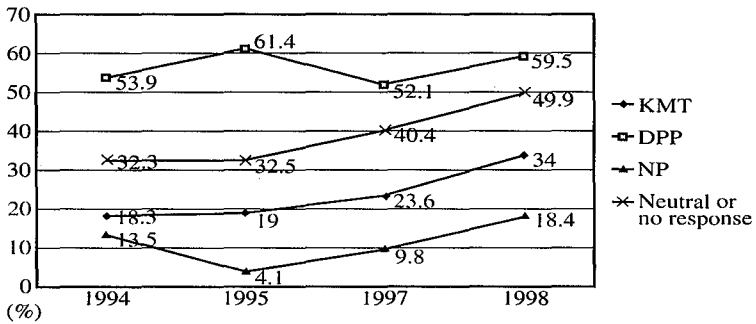
**Figure 6-2**  
**Gender and the Chinese Identity**



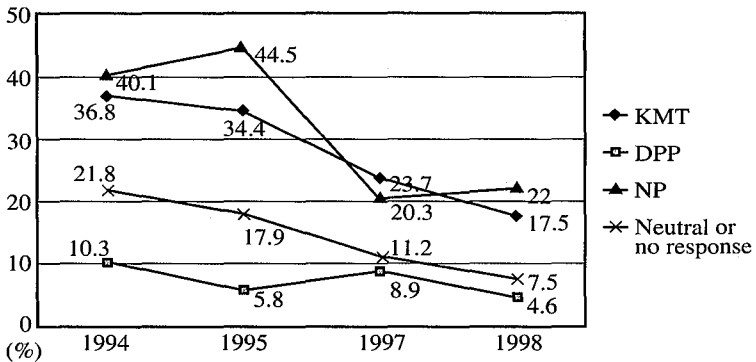
**Figure 6-3**  
**Gender and the Double Identity**



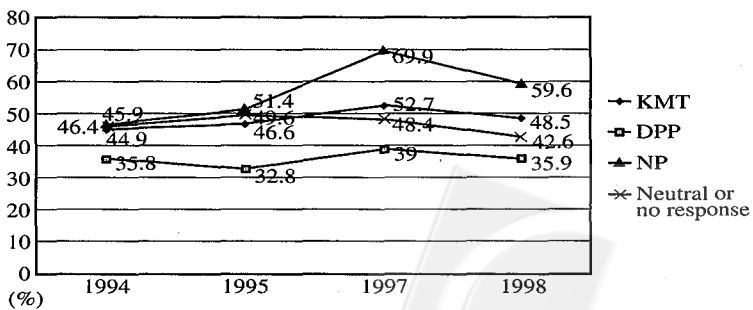
**Figure 7-1**  
**Partisan Identity and the Taiwanese Identity**

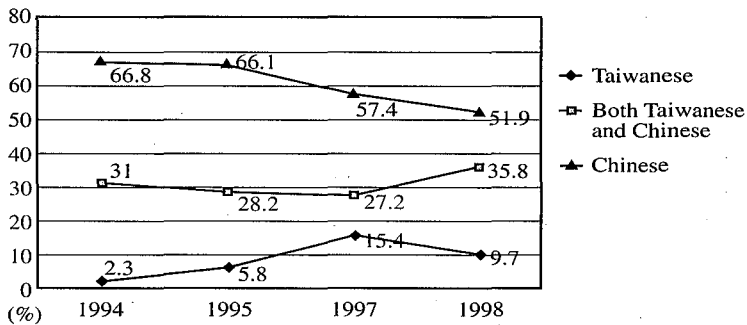


**Figure 7-2**  
**Partisan Identity and the Chinese Identity**



**Figure 7-3**  
**Partisan Identity and the Double Identity**

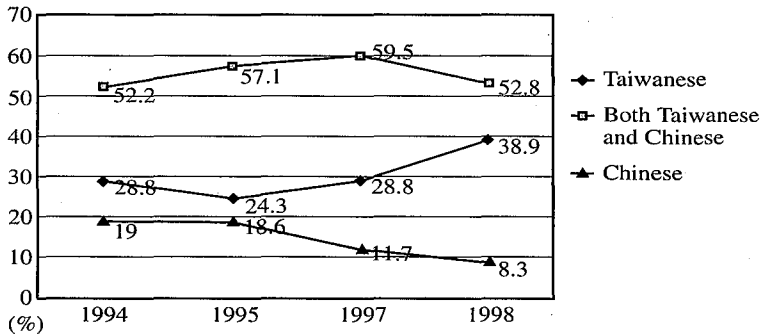


**Figure 8****The Taiwanese/Chinese Identity of the Mainlanders over the Age of 60**

sixty or over and Taiwanese respondents under thirty-nine—whose identity shifts are the best indexes to the attitude changes of the Taiwan people. While the group of mainlander respondents aged sixty and over should have theoretically had the strongest inclination to identify themselves as Chinese, their Chinese identity ratio declined by about 15 percent—most of which became a portion of the double identity ratio and only a small part of which was absorbed into the Taiwanese identity ratio (see figure 8). This is one more piece of evidence supporting the argument of an overall declining trend toward a Chinese identity. If this change is also an indication of a growing consensus among Taiwan residents, Taiwan's domestic politics in the future should see less ethnic conflict.

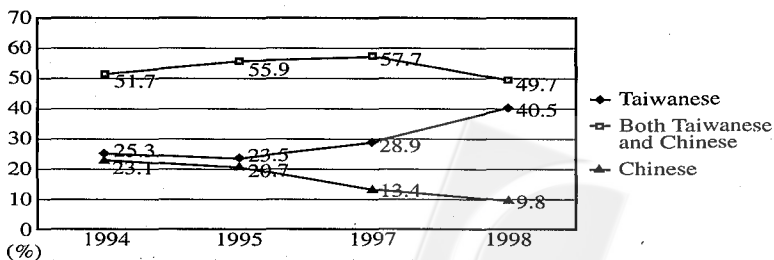
Among the Taiwanese respondents under thirty-nine years old (which in 1997 accounted for 34.7 percent of the total population in Taiwan and 50.9 percent of the voting population), the abrupt rise in the Taiwanese identity ratio and the sharp decline in the Chinese identity ratio mirrored a trend shown by all samples (see figure 9). When this cohort ages, and if we further assume a continuous trend in periodic effect on public opinion (e.g., the continuation by the PRC of its high-handed strategy toward Taiwan), we can expect the identities will converge toward the Taiwanese-only category.

To further understand the effects of age on the Taiwanese/Chinese identity, we conduct a rather straightforward cohort analysis. What we want to know is whether a collective change occurred among the people of

**Figure 9****The Taiwanese/Chinese Identity of Taiwanese Under the Age of 39**

the same age bracket during 1994-98. Were there any differences among the old, the middle-aged, and the young? We divided the 1994 respondents into three groups: those aged thirty-nine and younger, those aged forty to fifty-nine, and those over sixty. Our data set allows us to observe the collective attitudinal change of each age cohort as they progress through the years.

Figure 10 shows the attitude changes of the youngest group (twenty to thirty-nine in 1994 but twenty-four to forty-three in 1998) from 1994 to 1998. Their Taiwanese identity ratio remained more or less the same from 1994 to 1997, but rose abruptly to 40.5 percent in 1998; their Chinese identity ratio declined and almost all those who had given up their Chinese identity adopted the double identity.

**Figure 10****Identity Changes of Those Under the Age of 39 in 1994 (1994-98)**

**Figure 11**  
**Identity Changes of Those Aged 40-59 in 1994 (1994-98)**

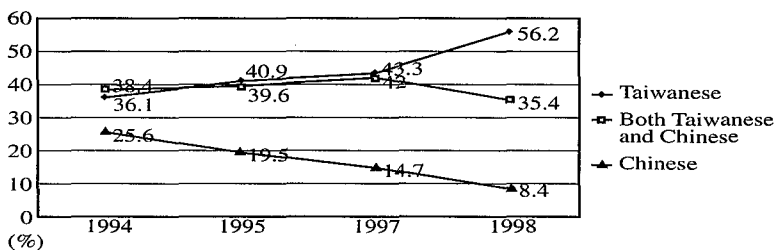
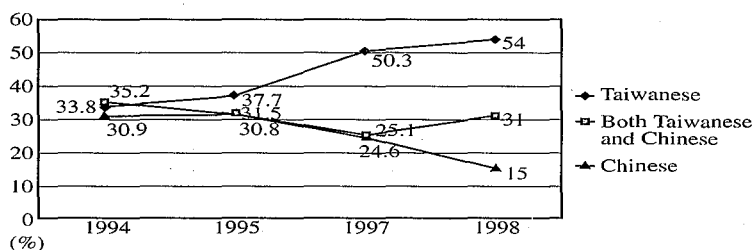


Figure 11 indicates the attitude changes of the middle-aged group (forty to fifty-nine in 1994 but forty-four to sixty-three in 1998) over the same period. Their Taiwanese identity ratio gradually rose while their Chinese identity ratio declined rapidly. The changes in their double identity ratio rose first and then fell. The ratio rose because some of those who had identified themselves as Chinese switched their choice to the double identity and fell because some of the people who had identified themselves as both Taiwanese and Chinese decided later to consider themselves as Taiwanese.

The attitude changes among respondents over sixty years of age were similar to those of middle-aged respondents: their Taiwanese identity ratio also rose, but not at the same points in time (see figure 12). The elderly began to switch from a Chinese to a Taiwanese identity in 1995 while the middle-aged switched in 1997. The reason for this, we surmise, is that the younger the people were, the lesser their social and economic status, and thus the lesser their stakes if Taiwan is losing ground to the PRC, and the better they could adapt to mainland China's behavior toward Taiwan in those years. However, the elderly and middle-aged people were different: their identity trends probably reflected their worries about mainland China's behavior.

Why were there such obvious changes in the Taiwan people's Taiwanese/Chinese identity in these years? The MAC's interpretation of public opinion as responses to specific incidents is generally valid. We believe that the influences of these incidents on the Taiwan people's attitudes may accumulate. That is why we can see a wholesale decline of the

**Figure 12****Identity Changes of Those Over the Age of 60 in 1994 (1994-98)**

Chinese identity ratio and an overall rise of the Taiwanese identity ratio; there are no zigzag patterns in the public opinion change. To find out exactly how and what factors or incidents contributed to the public opinion changes, more detailed analyses of data collected in correspondence with the development of cross-Straits relations will be necessary.

### Conclusion

The objective of this article is to discuss the changes in the Taiwan people's Taiwanese/Chinese identity from 1994 to 1998. For this exploration, we used data from four personal interviews conducted by the NCCU Election Study Center under MAC sponsorship. We first analyzed the demographic differences between the people having a Taiwanese identity and those having a Chinese identity. Our major discoveries, which mostly correspond with the results of other empirical studies, include the following:

The highest Taiwanese identity ratio was found among the Fulao, followed by the Hakka and the mainlanders. The double identity ratio and the Chinese identity ratio were in reverse order, with the mainlanders taking the lead over the Hakka and the Fulao. Both the middle-aged (aged forty to fifty-nine) and the elderly (over sixty) had a higher Taiwanese identity ratio than the young people (under thirty-nine) and the divergence among them was considerably large. The elderly had the highest Chinese identity ratio but the divergence between them and the other two groups was small. The educational level of respondents was inversely proportional to their



Taiwanese identity ratio, but directly proportional to their Chinese identity ratio. Women had a slightly higher Taiwanese identity ratio than men. If we observe the identify issue from the perspective of partisan support, DPP supporters had the highest Taiwanese identity ratio, followed in a descending order by the "others," KMT supporters, and NP supporters. However, the double identity ratios and the Chinese identity ratios, from the highest to the lowest, were found among NP supporters, KMT supporters, "others," and DPP supporters.

We have analyzed the trends shown by these four opinion polls. Our major conclusion is that the Taiwan people have shown a clear tendency to move from having a Chinese identity toward exhibiting a Taiwanese identity. Our data indicate that regardless of ethnic background, age, educational level, gender, and partisan identity, the Taiwan people's Chinese identity ratio declined while their Taiwanese identity rose sharply. On the whole, the changes took place gradually, characterized by a switch from the Chinese identity to the double identity and then a switch from the double identity to the Taiwanese identity. This progressive move of identities is just a deduction of ours; it is not directly supported by the data due to the limitations of the survey data.

Are the Taiwanese/Chinese identity changes mentioned in this article significant for domestic politics and cross-Strait relations? As for domestic politics, before the 1998 Taipei mayoral election, President Lee Teng-hui proposed the "new Taiwanese" slogan when campaigning for Ma Ying-jeou. By including the mainlanders into the "Taiwanese" category, this slogan urged those who originally belonged to the "Taiwanese" category to expand their "we group feeling" to all mainlanders living in Taiwan. Naturally, this new "we group feeling" was helpful to attracting support for mainlander candidates. According to our analysis in this article, the Taiwan public, whether they are identified with Taiwanese, Chinese, or both, have shown a trend to move away from a Chinese identity and toward a Taiwanese identity. The Taiwanese are having a stronger Taiwanese identity and the mainlanders have gradually switched from a Chinese identity to a double identity, and some have even switched further to a Taiwanese identity. This Taiwanese identity convergence trend is the real index for the formation of the "new Taiwanese." In the long run, if other conditions

remain unchanged, the trend to converge on a Taiwanese identity will remain the same and there will be less differences in the distribution of the Taiwanese/Chinese identity. When the whole society gradually forms a consensus on the issue, the so-called "new Taiwanese" might all become "old Taiwanese."

The aforementioned attitudinal change can be quite significant in the cross-Strait relations. Increased economic, social, educational, and cultural exchanges in the past decade across the Taiwan Strait have certainly increased Taiwan people's awareness of the symbiosis of Taiwan and Chinese mainland. This awareness is also reflected in a number of Taiwan official documents stating that the China that Taiwan can identify itself with is a cultural, historical, and geographical one. Because much of the cross-Strait relationship is seen on Taiwan from a political prism, events since 1994 certainly have had dampening effects on Taiwan people's Chinese identity. This collective mentality can be viewed as the larger context in which President Lee made his "special state-to-state" statement on July 9, 1999. Despite the verbal invective from the PRC and much diplomatic pressure from the United States in the wake of the statement, Taiwan people have been overwhelmingly supportive of the statement, according to various public opinion surveys. Clearly, there exists a strong "we" sense in Taiwan. This does not mean that the trend toward Taiwanese identity will necessarily lead to confrontation with the PRC, however. For one thing, the trend is not fixed; it can be varied or even reversed once there is a qualitative improvement in the content and atmosphere in cross-Strait political relationship. For another, nonpolitical exchanges across the Taiwan Strait serve as a centripetal force on Taiwan toward the Chinese mainland. For yet another reason, the matter of war and peace is an extremely complicated one. International structure, domestic politics of relevant players in any sort of cross-Strait conflict, nationalism, and some unforeseeable factors will all have various impacts on the decisions of leaders to pursue war or maintain stability and peace. The trend toward Taiwanese identity in public opinion on Taiwan is far from, in our assessment, being a determining factor in war-or-peace decisions across the Taiwan Strait. Yet, we do believe that the idea of "one China in the future" as proposed by the ROC government will certainly require some degree of Chinese identity on the part of the Taiwan people.