Ethnic Conflict and Democratic Consolidation in Taiwan: Dissolving the Logic of Nation-State and Democratic Policies*

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In the process of Taiwan's democratization, some have intentionally provoked ethnic conflict and made it an issue. If such a phenomenon continues, there will be difficulties in consolidating Taiwan's democratic system. In this article, the author will examine whether the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan possesses the following conditions needed for democratic consolidation: a structural change in people's ethnic identities; increased support for the democratic system; the formation of a power-sharing political culture; and a shift of campaign appeals from ethnic conflict to other topics. The research findings indicate that recent developments in Taiwan's political culture will ensure further consolidation of democracy in the future.

Keywords: ethnic conflict; democratic consolidation; cultural consolidation; nationalizing state policies; democratic policy; conflict displacement; crosscutting; unidimensionality

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Since the overthrow of the authoritarian Portuguese government in 1974, a "third wave" of democratization has been proceeding, with more than forty countries involved.[1] Since the mid-1980s, the Republic of China on Taiwan has also experienced a transition from author-

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[1]Larry Diamond, "Is the Third Wave Over?" *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 3 (July 1996): 20.

itarian rule to a democratized regime. To facilitate such changes, the ruling Kuomintang (KMT, Nationalist Party) has instituted changes in its relations with civilian organizations, government departments, and other political parties. Compared with the changes in other countries, Taiwan's democratization has the following distinct characteristics: (1) Taiwan's regime transition has involved not re-democratization but democratization, because Taiwan, unlike some Latin American and East European countries, is a society with no prior democratic experience; (2) the transition has not been carried out by a military authoritarian regime but through one-party authoritarianism; (3) Taiwan's democratic changes have been accomplished without a serious economic crisis or a popular demand to change the existing economic system, which has enabled the ruling party to continue to win considerable support; (4) although potential ethnic conflict has motivated the democratic reform (i.e., Taiwanization integrated with democratization), the lack of consensus among different political parties has created difficulties in furthering reform; and (5) Taiwan's authoritarian transition has not only involved a legitimacy crisis for the ruling regime, but has also called into question the state's legitimacy, its sovereignty claims, the limits of its jurisdiction, and the citizenship issue.[2]

Democracy, as Winston Churchill famously observed, is the worst form of government, except for "all the others."[3] What he really meant to say is that democracy is by far the best choice among all political systems. As a member of the third-wave democracies, Taiwan has made a great effort to enhance its democratic reform, and its future developments in this regard will attract worldwide attention. It is this author's basic argument that democracy can be consolidated only when there is an accommodating political culture, such as public acceptance of the democratic system. This is especially true if conflicting parties take democracy as their "overlapping consensus" in dealing with interparty disputes.[4] Therefore, although there are four types of theories on democratic consolidation, this article will focus mainly on the fourth type: cultural consolidation.

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[2]Hung-mao Tien and Yun-han Chu, "Taiwan's Democratic Political Reforms, Institutional Change and Power Realignment," in *Taiwan in the Asia-Pacific in the 1990s*, ed. Gary Klintworth (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1994), 2-3; Yun-han Chu, "Taiwan's Unique Challenges," *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 3 (July 1996): 69-71.

[3]Samuel P. Huntington, "Democracy for the Long Haul," *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 2 (April 1996): 10.

[4]On the building of overlapping consensus in a pluralistic society, see John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), part 1.

In Taiwan's democratization process, some people have intentionally provoked ethnic conflict and made it an issue. If such a phenomenon continues, there will be difficulties in consolidating Taiwan's democratic system. Whether political elites have downplayed the issue of ethnic conflict in recent years is a major concern of this article, and this author will examine the question from the following four angles: whether democracy has been generally accepted in Taiwan; whether ethnic conflict has been alleviated; whether the interest of minority nationalities has been protected to a certain extent; and whether there have been new topics in the election campaigns that can effectively undercut political conflict. The research findings indicate that a political culture favorable to democratic consolidation has been developing in Taiwan, which will in turn benefit Taiwan's political development.

Types of Democratic Consolidation

In this article, democracy will be defined in a broad context. According to Joseph Schumpeter, democracy is an arrangement by which the alternation of state leadership comes about through regular electoral means.[5] However, Terry Lynn Karl argues that such a definition tends to commit the fallacy of electoralism.[6] In his opinion, the completion of democracy should also include citizens' eligibility for public offices, their freedom to form and join mass organizations, and the establishment of political responsibility system.[7] In short, enforcement of democracy should have the effect of further advancing people's basic rights.

Generally speaking, the conversion of an authoritarian government to a democratic one is made in two stages: the "installation of a democratic government" by which the ruling power is transferred from military men to democratically elected civilian leaders (i.e., the transition of the government); and the effective functioning of a democratic system (i.e., the consolidation of democracy).[8]

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[5]Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1950), 269.

[6]Terry Lynn Karl, "The Hybrid Regimes of Central America," *Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 3 (July 1995): 73.

[7]Terry Lynn Karl, "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America," *Comparative Politics* 23, no. 1 (October 1990): 2.

[8]Guillermo O'Donnell, "Transitions, Continuities, and Paradoxes," in *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Per-*

J. Samuel Valenzuela defines democratic consolidation from a negative perspective and gives the following four negative indicators for democratic consolidation: the existence of nondemocratically generated tutelary powers who attempt to exercise broad supervision of the government and its policy decisions; the existence of what can be called reserved domains of authority and policymaking; the majority discriminations in the electoral process; and the practice of not using electoral means as the only way to constitute governments.[9] Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan define democratic consolidation as follows: behaviorally, a democratic regime in a territory is consolidated when no significant national, social, economic, political, or institutional actors spend significant resources attempting to create a nondemocratic regime or secede from the state; attitudinally, a democratic regime is consolidated when a strong majority of public opinion holds the belief that democratic procedures and institutions are the most appropriate way to govern the collective; and constitutionally, a democratic regime is consolidated when governmental and nongovernmental forces alike become subject and accustomed to the resolution of conflicts within the bounds of the specific laws, procedures, and institutions sanctioned by the new democratic process.[10] In other words, the important conditions for a consolidated democracy include the establishment of a representative system by which people's individual rights can be protected; civilians can assert control over the military, which maintains neutrality and is not involved in politics; and the observance of democratic rules in political competition involving various social, economic, and political organizations.

In recent years, scholars of competitive politics have focused on democratic consolidation, approaching the process from two dimensions: whether to place emphasis on the elites or the divergence of values among the masses and different ethnic groups, and whether to emphasize the role of intermediary organizations. From these two dimensions, they have formulated four types of theories on democratic

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spective, ed. Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O'Donnell, and J. Samuel Valenzuela (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 18.

[9]J. Samuel Valenzuela, "Democratic Consolidation in Post-Transitional Settings: Notion, Process, and Facilitating Conditions," in Mainwaring, O'Donnell, and Valenzuela, *Issues in Democratic Consolidation*, 62-70.

[10]Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 2 (April 1996): 16.

Figure 1
Types of Democratic Consolidation

		Intermediary Organizations	
		Emphasized	Not Emphasized
	Elites	Party Consolidation	Elite Consolidation
Targets of Analysis			
	Masses	Structural Consolidation	Cultural Consolidation

consolidation: party consolidation, elite consolidation, structural consolidation, and cultural consolidation (see figure 1).

The party consolidation pattern emphasizes the role played by intermediary organizations in society, i.e., political parties. For example, in his study of democratization in some South European countries, Leonardo Morlino concluded that if institutions are only partially legitimized, then the role of parties and other institutions which penetrate and dominate society will be necessary for consolidation. For example, the Italian experience may be labeled as party consolidation.[11] Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully further point out that democratic consolidation in Latin American countries relies on the establishment of institutionalized party systems, because such systems facilitate governability. In their opinion, an inchoate party system will give more space to populists and weaken parliamentary functions, thus endangering political stability.[12]

The elite consolidation pattern emphasizes the interaction and alliance among political elites, such as reason for them to make compromises while formulating political reform projects. For example, Adam Przeworski focuses on the relationship between political elites' interactions and their own interests. In his opinion, political elites can be classified into four categories in the democratization process: hard-liners, reformers, moderates, and radicals. The former two are

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[11]Leonardo Morlino, "Consolidation and Party Government in Southern Europe," *International Political Science Review* 16, no. 2 (April 1995): 161-62.
[12]Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995), 21-25.

authoritarian, while the latter two are oppositional. Under the elite consolidation pattern, Przeworski believes that under free and contested elections, an equilibrium can be achieved in the process of democratic consolidation.[13] Michael Burton and others maintain that the existence of elite settlements (such as the establishment of the parliament system) and the elite convergence (those in opposition abandon their anti-establishment activities) have the effect of gradually eliminating disunity and conflict in society which help to maintain political stability.[14]

The structural consolidation pattern underlines the importance of class structure in political system transition, especially the role played by the labor class in democratization. For example, some scholars have argued that the bourgeoisie have contributed little to democratization because they usually take a "wait-and-see" attitude toward the movement and do not express their support until a strong and forceful labor organization comes to the fore. For example, in Western countries the change in power equilibrium among different classes following the institution of the capitalist system has enabled the lower classes (factory workers and rural laborers) to liberate themselves from the original feudalistic system and stand together in fighting for their own democratic rights.[15]

The cultural consolidation pattern focuses on the impact of cultural factors on democratic consolidation, such as people's political identity, their judgment on different political operational models and on various policies.[16] Based on their studies of voters' viewpoints

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[13]Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 19-26.

[14]Michael Burton, John Higley, and Richard Gunther, "Introduction: Elite Transformation and Democratic Regime," in *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe*, ed. John Higley and Richard Gunther (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 20-35.

[15]Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyne Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy* (London: Polity Press, 1992), 46-47.

[16]From the point of view of substantive content, Gabriel A. Almond classifies political culture into three categories: system culture, process culture, and policy culture. The system culture of a nation consists of the distributions of attitudes toward the national community, the regime, and the authorities. These include the sense of national identity, attitudes toward the legitimacy of the regime and its various institutions, and attitudes toward the legitimacy and effectiveness of the individual political incumbents. The process culture of a nation includes attitudes toward the self in politics (e.g., parochial-subject-participant), and attitudes toward other political actors (e.g., trust, cooperative competence, hostility). Policy culture consists of the distribution of preferences regarding the outputs and outcomes of politics, the ordered among different groupings of such political values as welfare, security, and liberty. See

on policies, Tse-min Lin and others pointed out that the process of conflict displacement is necessary for democratic consolidation. For example, in the early stages of the political system's transition, elites should be able to focus on a greater variety of issues which will replace the dispute over supporting an authoritarian regime.[17] Robert Putnam notes that because of the difference in political cultures, there are different political operational models in north and south Italy. North Italy is noted for its political pluralism, a high degree of political participation, and mutual trust among different political groups. In other words, a typical model of democracy has been in operation there. In south Italy, however, societal resources have been distributed in accordance with people's social relations, the degree of voluntary political participation is low, and different political groups have lacked sufficient mutual trust.[18] Larry Diamond points out that political culture is a very important intervening variable in democratization and has a return effect on various societal changes. A culture upholding democracy will enable a country to continue to follow the democratic system even if it encounters crises or problems. Take India and Costa Rica, for example, where economic crisis and problems have not caused a cessation of their democratic rule.[19]

Ethnic Conflict and Democratic Consolidation

In the democratization process, many countries have encountered problems. Two of the most widely cited obstacles are the dangers posed by ethnic conflict and public dissatisfaction with slow economic improvement.[20] As this article is limited by space, it will not examine the relationship between democratization and economic development,[21]

Gabriel A. Almond, "The Intellectual History of the Civic Culture Concept," in *The Civic Culture Revisited*, ed. Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba (Boston: Little Brown, 1980), 27-28; and Gabriel A. Almond, *A Discipline Divided* (New Bury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1990), 153.

[17]Tse-min Lin, Yun-han Chu, and Melvin Hinich, "A Spatial Model of Political Competition in Taiwan," *World Politics* 48, no. 4 (July 1996): 453-56.

[18]Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), 86-99.

[19]Larry Diamond, "Causes and Effects," in *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*, ed. Larry Diamond (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1992), 422-26.

[20]Linz and Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracy," 23.

[21]For the impact of democratization on economic development, see Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, *The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions* (Princeton:

but will focus on ethnic identity, which is in the sphere of cultural consolidation. The questions I would like to examine include why countries with ethnic identity problems tend to encounter ethnic conflict in the democratization process, and whether there is any way for different ethnic groups to live together peacefully if they do not seek their own independence.

Elections force political leaders to compete for votes. In many situations, the easiest way to win votes is to appeal to tribal, ethnic, and religious constituencies,[22] because the election system itself is to some extent a mobilization of bias which may suppress some potential conflicts while distinguishing some others.[23]

In recent years, Taiwan scholars have made a series of studies on the background and essence of ethnic conflict. Some have even explored the relationship of such a conflict with liberalism and constitutionalism.[24] This article will focus on the question of how such conflicts manifest themselves in our daily political activities. Based on individualism, the democratic system enables every person to enjoy the civil rights of exchanging interests and making compromises with others, while ethnic politics is emotional in nature and lacking in characteristics such as compromise.[25] Therefore, it can be said that the democratic system has an instrumental function, while ethnic politics

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Princeton University Press, 1995); Karen L. Remmer, "New Theoretical Perspective on Democratization," *Comparative Politics* 28, no. 1 (October 1995): 103-22; Omar G. Encarnacion, "The Politics of Dual Transitions," ibid., no. 4 (July 1996): 477-92; and Cheng-tian Kuo, "A Structuralist View of Democratization and Economic Development in East Asia" (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, August 1996).

[22]Huntington, "Democracy for the Long Haul," 6.

[23]Elmer E. Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America* (Hinsdale, Ill.: Dryden Press, 1960), 71.

[24]For the background and essence of Taiwan's ethnic conflicts, see Wu Nai-te, "A Preliminary Theoretical Probe into Taiwan's Ethnic Politics," in *Zuqun guanxi yu guojia rentong* (Ethnic relationship and national identity), ed. Chang Mao-kuei et al. (Taipei: Yeqiang chubanshe, 1993), 27-52; Chang Mao-kuei, "Place of Origin and Nationalism," ibid., 233-78; and Chao Kang, "New or Old Nationalism?" *Taiwan shehui yanjiu jikan* (Taiwan: Radical Quarterly in Social Studies) (Taipei), no. 21 (January 1996): 1-72. For the study of the political theories on ethnic conflict, see the following two papers presented at the Symposium on Taiwan's Democratization Beyond the Twentieth Century held in Taipei on July 7-8, 1996: Chiang Yi-hua, "National Identity under the Free and Democratic System" and Hsiao Kao-yan, "National Identity, Nationalism, and Constitutional Democracy: The Development and Reflections of Contemporary Political Philosophy."

[25]Wang Pu-chang, "Taiwan's Democracy and Ethnic Politics" (Paper presented at the Symposium on the Building and Consolidation of Taiwan's Democracy sponsored by the Taiwan Study Foundation, Taoyuan, February 1995), 3-7.

has an expressive function. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan point out that a nation-state policy often has a different logic than a democratic policy. Supporters of the former policy pursue nationalizing state policies which are aimed at increasing cultural homogeneity and send messages that the state should be "of and for" the nation. In contrast, democratic policies emphasize a broad and inclusive citizenship that accords equal individual rights to all.[26]

Yet, it is not impossible for a country to realize democracy while it encounters ethnic conflict. As we can see, only a few democracies have been confronted with serious ethnic conflicts, Canada being one instance. In most other democracies, historical, clan, and cultural differences do not prevent different ethnicities from living peacefully under the principles of freedom, democracy, and equality; the United States is a good example.[27] In another example, different ethnicities in Switzerland and South Africa have not caused any setbacks to their democratic rule. In South Africa, democracy continues to be in operation even after state leadership was transferred to the colored people. This has been possible because the people in these countries have a high respect for democracy.

In this article, the author will examine whether the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan possesses the following conditions needed for a consolidated democracy: a structural change in its people's ethnic identity; increased public support for the democratic system; the formation of a power-sharing political culture; and a shift of campaign appeals from ethnic conflict to other topics.

An Analysis of Two Surveys in Taiwan

Changes of Taiwan Residents' Ethnic Identity

The information prepared in table 1 is based on two questionnaire surveys conducted by National Chengchi University's Election Study Center after the 1992 and 1995 legislative elections. The following question was given: "Some people identify themselves as 'Taiwanese' and others as 'Chinese.' Do you think you are 'Taiwanese,' or 'Chinese,'

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[26]Linz and Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracy," 23-24.

[27]Wu Nai-te, "Liberalism and Ethnic Identification," *Taiwan zhengzhi xuekan* (Journal of Taiwan Political Science) (Taipei), no. 1 (1996): 24.

or both?'' In 1992, 19.8 percent of the respondents regarded themselves as ''Taiwanese,'' 29 percent as ''Chinese,'' and 45 percent as both. In 1995, however, the above figures changed to 30.1 percent, 18 percent, and 47.3 percent, respectively.[28] The percentage of those who regarded themselves as ''Taiwanese'' had increased by 10.3 percentage points, while those who considered themselves ''Chinese'' decreased by 11 percentage points. This change can be attributed to the military menace of mainland China, Taiwan's achievements in its pragmatic diplomacy, its people's awareness of the remarkable gap in living standards between the two sides, and increasing international support for Taiwan's membership in international organizations. Although we cannot draw the conclusion from the survey results that no one in Taiwan regards themselves as ''Chinese,'' we have every reason to believe that the decrease in the number of people who regard themselves as ''Chinese'' will alleviate Taiwan's ethnic conflict.

The sources for the information prepared in table 2 are the same as those in table 1. Table 2 is based on the following questions, which were designed to gather people's opinions on ethnic harmony in Taiwan: ''Do you think that ethnic harmony in Taiwan is better, worse, or the same compared with one year ago? Do you think that ethnic harmony will be better, worse, or the same in the coming year?'' On the first question, 26 percent believed that there had been some improvement, 15.6 percent maintained it was worse, and 38.6 percent felt it was the same. On the second question, 23.6 percent took an optimistic view, 8.4 percent were pessimistic, and 35.3 percent thought the situation would not change much. This result indicates that the Taiwan people are generally optimistic about lessened ethnic conflict in Taiwan.

Changes in Taiwan Residents' Conceptions of Democracy

As indicated in our questionnaire, democratic politics has four

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[28]After the 1992 and 1995 legislative elections, the Electoral Behavior Study Group of the Graduate Institute of Political Science, National Taiwan University also conducted a questionnaire survey concerning ethnic identity. Although the statistics are somewhat different from those obtained by the Election Study Center of National Chengchi University, the general opinion gathered was largely the same. The questions given by Taiwan University included ''Do you identify yourself as Chinese or Taiwanese?'' In 1992, 27.2 percent considered themselves Taiwanese and 33.4 percent as Chinese, while 33.8 considered themselves both Taiwanese and Chinese. In the 1995 investigation, however, 35.7 percent of those interviewed regarded themselves as Taiwanese, 20 percent as Chinese and 40.4 percent as both. Those regarding themselves as Taiwanese thus increased by 8 percentage points, while those regarding themselves as Chinese decreased by 13 percentage points.

Table 1

Changes of Ethnic Identity in Taiwan: A Comparison Between 1992 and 1995

	1992		1995		
	Number of Respondents	%	Number of Respondents	%	Rate of Changes
1. Taiwanese ethnic identification	302	19.8	447	30.1	+ 10.3
2. Chinese ethnic identification	442	29.0	267	18.0	− 11.0
3. Both Chinese and Taiwanese identification	685	45.0	703	47.3	+ 2.3
4. No opinion	94	6.2	68	4.6	− 1.6
Total number of respondents	1,523		1,485		

Source: Survey report prepared by National Chengchi University's Election Study Center on the 1992 and 1995 legislative elections.

Table 2

Taiwan Residents' Evaluation of the Development of Ethnic Harmony (1995)

	Better		Worse		Same	
	Number of Respondents	%	Number of Respondents	%	Number of Respondents	%
Compared with 1994	387	26.0	293	15.6	573	38.6
Possible future development	351	23.6	125	8.4	524	35.3
Total number of respondents: 1,485						

Sources: Survey report prepared by National Chengchi University's Election Study Center on the 1992 and 1995 legislative elections.

major elements: people's sovereign rights, basic rights of freedom, a society ruled by law, and party politics. The four questions given in table 3 are designed to examine Taiwan people's attitudes toward these democratic indices. By our standards, those who maintained that politics should involve everybody and not just better-educated

Table 3
Changes in Taiwan Residents' Conceptions of Democracy

Negative View on the Following Concepts	1992		1995		Rate of Changes
	Number of Respondents	%	Number of Respondents	%	
The government should be administered by well-educated people	519	34.0	606	40.8	+6.8
There should be restrictions on political speeches	601	39.5	636	42.8	+3.3
It is more important to have a good leader than to have good laws and systems	653	42.9	650	43.8	+0.9
There is no need to check the government with opposition parties	826	54.2	848	57.1	+2.9
Total number of respondents	1,523		1,485		

Sources: Survey report by National Chengchi University's Election Study Center on the 1992 and 1995 legislative elections.

people demanded higher sovereign rights; those who opposed restrictions on people's political statements had a greater sense of rights of freedom; those who valued rule by law over the role played by political leaders favored the principle of legalization; and those who placed high credit on the role played by opposition parties would better accept party politics.

From table 3, we find that in both the 1992 and 1995 surveys, the percentage of people favoring party politics was higher than that in other items (54.2 percent in 1992 and 57.1 percent in 1995). The percentage of those supporting people's sovereign rights was the lowest, with 34 percent in 1992 and 40.8 percent in 1995. Overall, we can see that about half of Taiwan's residents have accepted the above four indices of democracy.

Table 4 is the survey results on evaluations of democratization in Taiwan in recent years and in the foreseeable future. Of all the respondents, 78.5 percent agreed that progress had been made in recent

Table 4
Taiwan Residents' Evaluations of Democratization: 1995

Answer	Progress		No Progress		No Comment	
	Number of Respondents	%	Number of Respondents	%	Number of Respondents	%
Compared with previous years	1,165	78.5	123	8.3	197	13.2
Possible future development	857	57.7	227	15.3	400	27.1
Total number of respondents: 1,485						

Source: Survey report prepared by National Chengchi University's Election Study Center on the 1995 legislative election.

years, 8.3 percent argued that there had been a retrogression, and 13.2 percent answered "don't know." When asked about possible future development, 57.7 percent foresaw further progress, 15.3 percent warned against retrogression, and 27.1 percent answered "don't know." Apparently, most of Taiwan's residents are satisfied with the existing political system and are, to some extent, optimistic about Taiwan's future democratic development.

Ethnic Identity and Conceptions of Democracy:
An ANOVA Analysis

In studying the question of whether different ethnic groups have different conceptions of democracy, we singled out one element of democracy through factor analysis and examined the related coefficient between this factor and the questions we gave. For this, see table 5.

After an examination of the one-way ANOVA analysis of different ethnic groups on their conception of democracy, we found that there is not much difference between different ethic groups (F prob. > 0.5). In other words, although their ethnic identity is different, they all accept the democratic system. For this, see table 6.

The Culture of Shared Political Power
with Minority Ethnic Groups

If political power is held for an extended period by a majority ethnic group, leaving minority groups outside the decisionmaking circle,

Table 5
Taiwan Residents' Conceptions of Democracy: A Factor Analysis

The Value of Democracy	First Factor
Question 1: Some people say that political affairs are rather complicated and should be handled by well-educated people, while others argued that everybody has the right to administer politics as they are everybody's affairs. What's your opinion?	.624
Question 2: Some people hold the view that there should be no restrictions on people's political speeches, while others maintain that there should be some restrictions. What's your opinion?	.585
Question 3: Some say that it is more important to have good political leaders than to have good laws and systems, while others hold a diametrically different view. What's your opinion?	.622
Question 4: Some hold the view that the government should be supervised by strong opposition parties, while others argue that the existence of opposition parties would only result in political instability. Do you think we need strong opposition parties?	.678

Final Statistics

Factor	Eigenvalue	Cum pct
1	1.57895	39.5%

Source: Survey report by National Chengchi University's Election Study Center on the 1995 legislative election.

Table 6
Different Ethnic Groups' Conceptions of Democracy: An ANOVA Analysis

ANOVA	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F Prob.	F-value Test
Difference between groups	2.348	2	1.1714	1.21	0.297
Difference within group	1362.281	1412	0.9648		
Total difference	1364.629	1414			

Source: Survey report by National Chengchi University's Election Study Center on the 1995 legislative election.

Table 7
The Distribution of Popular Votes at Various Levels of Metropolitan Areas in the 1995 Legislative Election

	KMT	DPP	NP
Ratio of total votes	0.4606	0.3317	0.1295
Taipei	0.3012	0.3594	0.2862
Kaohsiung	0.4089	0.3208	0.1119
Provincial cities	0.3864	0.3745	0.1616
County cities	0.4686	0.3236	0.1328
Towns (*Zhen*)	0.5289	0.3426	0.0579
Townships (*Xiang*)	0.5670	0.3136	0.0466

Source: Yun-han Chu and Yu-tzung Chang, "A Betrayal of the KMT: A Deconstruction and Reconstruction of Taipei Voters' Party Identity" (Paper presented at the second annual meeting of the Chinese Association of Political Science, Taipei, December 1995), 3.

there will be difficulties in maintaining stable democratic politics.[29] The best way to avoid such a situation is to build up a mutual security system among political elites in which minority ethnic groups' basic rights can be guaranteed.[30] Under the ROC's current election system, can minority ethnic groups play the role of a "minority veto"? The answer may be found from the results of the most recent legislative election.

Table 7 contains the vote ratios obtained by the three major political parties—the KMT, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), and the New Party (NP)—in the 1995 legislative election. Support for the KMT mainly came from townships and villages (over 50 percent of the votes in those areas), while the ratio of support obtained in municipalities was significantly lower. The DPP obtained over 30 percent of the votes in both metropolitan and rural areas, while NP support mainly came from the cities.

As far as the voters' social background is concerned, the KMT won more support from those who had received an education below the senior high level, those engaged in manual labor, housewives, and aged or disabled people. The DPP won greater support from areas in which a high percentage of population had commercial occupations.

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[29]Donald L. Horowitz, "Democracy in Divided Societies," *Journal of Democracy* 4, no. 4 (October 1993): 29.
[30]Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), 108-11.

The NP had support from people belonging to two extreme categories: salaried classes with high education, and the aged and retired.[31]

In recent years, the KMT's dominance in political affairs has gradually declined, while the number of DPP and NP supporters has increased. Such a development has forced the KMT to be "tolerant" and make "compromises" in political decisions, thus giving rise to a political culture of power-sharing based on political tolerance and trust among different parties.

The Appearance of Crosscutting Topics

It is disadvantageous to democratization if a society is focused on a certain topic for a prolonged period of time, resulting in the unidimensionality of conflict. This can be changed if political elites can effectively mobilize the masses in having them focus on new topics whose solutions would require the joint effort of antagonistic groups.

While there has been heated debate in Taiwan recently over ethnic identity, there has also been a strong demand for an end to the dominance of politics by tycoons and organized crime syndicates.[32] For example, in spite of their divergence in some areas, the DPP and the NP fully cooperated with each other in the process of formulating a law requiring government employees to report their properties. They cooperated again in the election of the speaker and vice speaker of the Legislative Yuan and in exercising the right of agreement for premier nominations. These instances of cooperation have to some degree alleviated the conflict between different ethnic groups.

Conclusion

It is interesting to find that the high tide of nationalism since the mid-1980s has not brought about increased regional conflicts, compared to the Cold War period, when the East and the West camps armed

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[31]Teh-fu Huang and Yu-tzung Chang, "Toward a Three-Party Competition System?— Democratic Consolidation and Changes of the Political Party System in Taiwan," *Zhengzhi xuebao* (Journal of Political Science) (Taipei) 23 (1994): 197-225.

[32]Chu Yun-han, "Party Competition, Conflict Structure, and Democratic Consolidation" (Paper presented at the Symposium on Taiwan's Democratization, Party Politics, and Elections sponsored by the Electoral Behavior Study Group of the Graduate Institute of Political Science, National Taiwan University, Taipei, July 1994), 2.

their own allies.[33] In fact, conflict can be avoided if different ethnic groups have mutual respect in terms of proposals and basic rights and are willing to sincerely solve their differences. The formation of such a culture will enhance consolidated democracy.

While the formation of an adequate political culture is one of the important factors contributing to Taiwan's democratic consolidation, the most important task is to alleviate conflict between different ethnic groups. Political elites and the masses should make joint efforts to build up a political system which will enable minority ethnic groups to have the opportunity to participate in political affairs.

The following conclusions on Taiwan's democratic consolidation can be made: first, in spite of their individual ethnic identities, Taiwan's residents already have a high consensus on the value of democracy. Second, the ratio of those who identify themselves as Taiwanese has increased remarkably in recent years, while those identifying themselves as Chinese has significantly decreased. Third, the different political parties each have their own fixed power base. From the recent elections, we find that residents from the mainland have held representative seats proportionate to their number, and the NP, which has the ideology of "great China" and has comparatively fewer members, has gradually been able to play an important role in certain issues. Such cooperation will help build a political culture of power sharing and mutual trust. Finally, increased attention to social justice and security has also left less space for contention on ethnic conflict. Such a development convinces us that democracy can be further consolidated in Taiwan.

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[33]Ted Gurr and Barbara Harff, *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994), 10-13.