cratic politics in Taiwan and the United States.

Dwight Dyer
University of California, Berkeley
E-mail: <ddyer@uclink.berkeley.edu>

Memories of the Future: National Identity Issues and the Search for a New Taiwan. Edited by Stéphane Corcuff. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2002. 312 pages. Cloth: ISBN 07656-0791-3, price: US$64.95; Paper: ISBN 07656-0792-1, price: US$24.95.

The awakening of the Taiwanese consciousness since the onset of democratization has made identity politics the most salient issue on the island of Taiwan. Combining a historical approach with an analysis of survey data, this collection of essays explores the image of Taiwanese national identity, the movement by which the island's residents searched for this conceptualization, and the resulting implications for domestic politics and cross-Strait relations.

The book begins with a presentation of the historical roots of the identity question in Taiwan, appropriately including the rule of the Qing dynasty (清朝) and the Japanese colonial authority, the tragic "228 incident," and the early independence movement. The argument is that the emergence of a Taiwanese identity was a response not only to the early misrule by the Kuomintang (KMT, or the Nationalist Party, 國民黨) but also to the KMT view of what it meant to be Chinese. While pro-independence activists generally view the Shimonoseki Treaty of 1895 as the original separation of Taiwan from China, the outbreak of ethnic tension since 1947 has perpetuated the perception by local residents of the KMT as a new foreign regime and occupying force. A lasting ethnic cleavage between "mainlanders" and "Taiwanese" became the major division within society. To maintain their claim that they were the sole legitimate rulers of China, Taipei's ruling elites imposed harsh authoritarian rule coupled with intense propaganda efforts to "re-Sinicize" local residents, attempting to foster the "greater China identity." Activities that might arouse local identities and promote Taiwan independence were censored and suppressed.

With the rapid democratization that began in the late 1980s, the island's residents began to reflect on their national identity. Among the most important questions raised were: What is China? Who is Chinese? And, is it possible to be culturally Chinese but politically Taiwanese? The six chapters in Part II (The Transition of National Identity) and Part III (Perspectives on Ethnicity and Taiwanese Nationalism) provided extensive analyses on these issues from different perspectives. But in the end, these essays all converge on the same conclusion: that there is an increasing Taiwanese national identity and a decreasing acceptance of the "greater China identity." This change even affects the mainlander group who has traditionally been the staunch supporter of the "greater China identity." As national consciousness has risen on the island, the term "Taiwanese" has been transformed from an ethnic term for "native Taiwanese" to a political term for "citizen of Taiwan."

It is therefore not surprising to see that the number of Taiwanese nationalists—those who strongly support the island's independence from China—has been growing over the years, while the number of Chinese nationalists favoring unification has been declining. This does not mean the pursuit of the island's *de jure* independence is the preferred choice because the military threats from across the Taiwan Strait continue to be a serious concern. A significant number of the islanders are in fact "pragmatists" who are undetermined about Taiwan's future status, with their decisions contingent on the impending conditions.

These findings have important implications for cross-Strait relations. First, with a rising national identity among the general population, Taiwan has become an "ethnic Chinese state"—a sovereign political community with Chinese culture and ethnicity. Beijing's leaders may be displeased by Lee Teng-hui's (李登輝) "two-state theory" (兩國論) and Chen Shui-bian's (陳水扁) "one country on each side" (一邊一國) articulation yet China's plan for cross-Strait interactions and unification will have to take this new reality into consideration. Secondly, Beijing's leaders have offered few incentives to encourage Taiwan to accept unification while engaging in constant diplomatic and military intimidation. Beijing's regular menaces have discouraged the island residents from supporting Taiwan's formal separation from China, but have helped to strengthen Taiwanese identity and have hardened the determination of political leaders to resist China's claim to the island.

Finally, a common pitfall that often plagues an edited volume like this is that the chapters lack thematic unity. This volume does not suffer from this weakness as much as one would expect, however, although a clear definition of national identity would certainly strengthen its cohesiveness. Overall, the editor and his colleagues have done an impressive job in explaining the transformation of individual and collective identities throughout Taiwan's history. As such, this book takes a significant step toward the understanding of the Taiwanese national identity and it deserves a place in any major library in comparative politics and international relations.

T.Y. Wang (王德育)
Professor
Department of Politics and Government
Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois
E-mail: <tywang@ilstu.edu>

C.E.P.S.