

Political Attitudes, Political Participation, and Hong Kong Identities After 1997

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Over the past two decades, the political implications stemming from the cultural identities of people in Hong Kong have been an important research topic in the study of the city's reunification with China. Due to the peculiar historical conditions of Hong Kong's development, past research has generally focused on the dichotomy of a "Hongkongese" vs. a "Chinese" identity. The present article, however, argues that this dichotomous approach can no longer capture the central issue of the identity question in today's Hong Kong. Because of economic, social, and political integration, Hong Kong identity is no longer necessarily defined in terms of its distinctiveness from China. Rather, multiple Hong Kong identities can be constructed based on different understandings of the relationship between Hong Kong and the mainland. This article illustrates these arguments via a review of opinion polls in Hong Kong after 1997 which have shown that

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Hong Kong people increasingly identify with China. More important, analysis of a survey conducted in 2004 confirms the existence of multiple Hong Kong identities. The findings also show that people holding different Hong Kong identities have different sets of political attitudes and beliefs. Nevertheless, political participation—especially with regard to issues that link Hong Kong to China—is driven by a "Hong Kong Chinese" identity. The existence of multiple identities in Hong Kong has implications for future discussions of identity and patriotism.

KEYWORDS: local identity; national identity; political participation; political attitudes; Hong Kong.

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In the early 1980s, the upcoming return of Hong Kong to China led to many questions, particularly about the local culture and identity of the Hong Kong people. For instance, Hong Kong people became fixated on articulating what was distinctive about the city for fear that its characteristics might soon fade away. Academic researchers quickly caught up with this search for specificity about Hong Kong identity.¹ Reflecting the political and social conditions, the major concern in much of this body of research has been how being "Hongkongese" differs² from being "Chinese."

Amidst the debate on democratic reform in the city in early 2004, a group of academics and middle-class professionals attempted to articulate the "core values" of Hong Kong.³ This movement was a response to the

¹Representative book-length studies include: Lau Siu-kai and Kuan Hsin-chi, *The Ethos of the Hong Kong Chinese* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1988); Ackbar Abbas, *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); and Eric Ma, *Culture, Politics, and Television in Hong Kong* (London: Routledge, 1999).

²Both "Hongkongese" and "Hong Konger" were used in the literature as a label for Hong Kong people's local identity. For simplicity, the term "Hongkongese" will be used throughout this article.

³In June 2004, nearly three hundred academics, professionals, and business people signed a declaration on "protecting the core values of Hong Kong." The declaration listed the following core values of Hong Kong: democracy, human rights, rule of law, fairness and justice, peace and fraternity, transparency and credibility, pluralism and toleration, respect for the individual, and professionalism. The declaration can be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.hkcorevalues.net>.

Chinese government's discourse of patriotism, which sought to impose on Hong Kong people an alien definition of what constitutes a "good citizen."⁴ Once again, efforts to define Hong Kong came to the fore when the former colony was perceived as facing the threat of annihilation.

The political and social conditions in the city have already changed profoundly, however. Hong Kong is now a Special Administrative Region (SAR, 特別行政區) of China. Socially and economically, the trend is also toward greater integration with the mainland. At this historical juncture, the question of identity for Hong Kong people has become more complicated. As one newspaper editorial opined, "[Hong Kong people's] national identity is growing all the time—but it should be one which has Hong Kong characteristics."⁵ The question is no longer merely about the distinctiveness of Hong Kong, but rather how Hong Kong can be different from, yet simultaneously still part of, China.

What remains unchanged is the significance of the problem of identity. The way people understand themselves affects the way they behave and understand the world. For Hong Kong people, their national and local identities are likely to shape their understanding of the relationship between Hong Kong and China, the way Hong Kong should develop its democratic system, and a range of other social and political issues. In short, the development of Hong Kong people's identities is intricately related to the social and political development of the city.

Against this background, we propose to revisit the conceptual and methodological assumptions underlying an important body of research on the question of Hong Kong identity conducted in the past two decades. Based on representative surveys, this body of research has provided us with invaluable insights into the political and social implications of Hong Kong people's identities. However, we contend that the assumptions

⁴For a collection of major news reports and newspaper commentary articles surrounding the debates, see Ming Pao, ed., *Aiguo zhenglun* (The debate on patriotism) (Hong Kong: Ming Pao Publishing, 2004).

⁵"National Pride—With Hong Kong Characteristics," *South China Morning Post*, October 5, 2003.

underlying the way the method has been employed need to be reviewed. More specifically, instead of focusing on a singular "Hong Kong identity" in contrast with a "Chinese identity," we propose to examine a plurality of Hong Kong identities defined in terms of how the relationship between Hong Kong and China is understood. Of particular importance will be the political implications of an arguably emerging "Chinese of Hong Kong" identity.

Conceptually, this article follows cultural theorist Stuart Hall in defining identities as "points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for [people]."⁶ What this definition emphasizes, first of all, is the relationship between public discourse and identities. The meanings of and interrelationships between identity categories, such as the categories of "Hongkongese" and "Chinese," do not exist naturally. Instead, identity categories are constructed and contested through public discourse. Hence, for individuals within a society, the question of identity is a question of selecting the identity categories (i.e., the subject positions) offered in public discourse to attach to.⁷

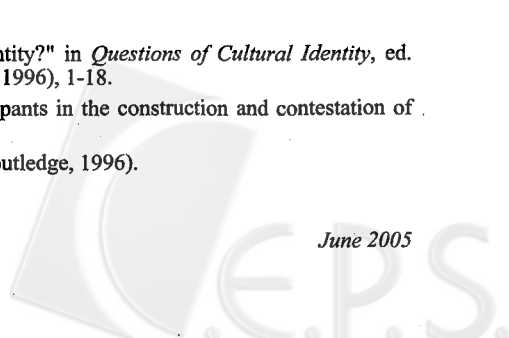
It follows that, as public discourse changes, old identity categories may take up new meanings. The way the categories relate to each other may also change, and new identity categories may rise in prominence. Therefore, identity is never fixed once and for all. It is best understood as a process, as *identification*.⁸ Nevertheless, at a given point in time, people attaching themselves to different identity categories should differ from each other systematically in terms of their attitudes, beliefs, and values. Studying these overall patterns of values and beliefs will give us important insights about the politics of identity in a given society.

The beginning sections of this article briefly review the historical development of Hong Kong identities, and how local researchers have studied

⁶Stuart Hall, "Introduction: Who Needs Identity?" in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay (London: Sage, 1996), 1-18.

⁷Certainly, citizens can also be active participants in the construction and contestation of identity categories in public discourse.

⁸Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity* (London: Routledge, 1996).



the topic in the past. The discussion explicates and substantiates some of the arguments made above. Specific research questions are then formulated for the analysis of a survey conducted in the city in March 2004, amidst the debate on patriotism and democratic reform. The implications of our findings are discussed at the end.

Hong Kong vs. China: Brief History of a Dichotomy

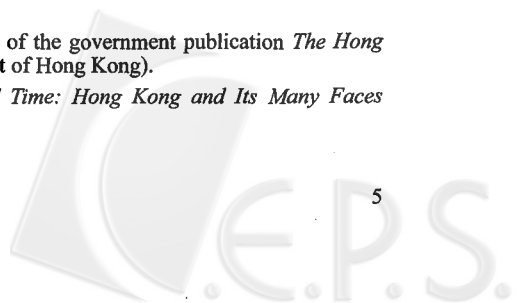
When cultural identity is concerned, the post-WWII history of Hong Kong can be seen as one of de-nationalization followed by re-nationalization. Hong Kong began developing as a refugee society in the late 1940s as mainland Chinese fled the civil war and, later, natural disasters and political chaos that plagued China for decades. Until 1980, the colonial government maintained a "touch-base policy" on illegal immigration from the mainland. Anyone who could get past the security forces at the border and arrive at the city center would automatically gain the right of abode. The population grew rapidly as a result. According to government statistics, the number of Hong Kong citizens rose from about 1,600,000 in 1946 to more than 3,700,000 in 1966.⁹

Many of these early refugees originally planned to return eventually to China when the situation there improved. Hong Kong was seen as a place of transit.¹⁰ The colonial system and its lack of opportunities for local political participation also hampered the development of a sense of collective identity and affective ties to the local society.

However, contrary to the hopes of the early refugees, the situation in China did not improve quickly. Instead, when China was embroiled in the Cultural Revolution, the economy of Hong Kong took off. At the same

⁹The figures were taken from various volumes of the government publication *The Hong Kong Annual Report* (Hong Kong: Government of Hong Kong).

¹⁰Richard Hughes, *Borrowed Place, Borrowed Time: Hong Kong and Its Many Faces* (London: A. Deutsch, 1976).



time, the early refugees' children, born and/or raised in the city, grew up and contributed to the formation of a more "local" population, that is, a population that had a strong orientation toward their own local society.¹¹ By the end of the 1970s, Hong Kong people were well aware of the vast and growing economic and cultural differences between their own city and the mainland. Social and economic developments also provided a "surplus economy" for a local popular cultural industry to flourish. Cantonese pop music, movies, and television dramas provided the symbolic resources and discursive categories for the formation of a distinctive local identity.¹²

The identity question became prominent, however, only as Britain and China entered into negotiation over the future of the city. For sociologist Allen Chun, a cultural crisis appeared in Hong Kong at that time as it "became suddenly apparent ... that Hong Kongers really had no identity as a *people* in the sense of being bounded by shared assumptions and values."¹³ And as cultural studies scholar Ackbar Abbas put it, the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984 and the Tiananmen (天安門) massacre in 1989 "confirmed a lot of people's fears that the Hong Kong way of life with its mixture of colonialist and democratic trappings was in imminent danger of disappearing."¹⁴ To deal with the crisis and the threat of disappearance,

¹¹The development of local orientation was reflected by the development of the press system in Hong Kong. Up till the 1970s, the Hong Kong press system was marked by a party-press parallelism, with newspapers siding either with the PRC or the KMT regime in Taiwan. Driven by the development of a local society and the negotiation on the future of Hong Kong, the scenario changed in the late 1970s. Many Hong Kong newspapers began to turn inward and focused more on local politics and social issues. For fuller accounts, see Joseph Man Chan and Chin-chuan Lee, *Mass Media and Political Transition: The Hong Kong Press in China's Orbit* (New York: Guild Press, 1991); Chin-chuan Lee, "Media Structure and Regime Change in Hong Kong," in *The Challenge of Hong Kong's Reintegration with China*, ed. M. K. Chan (Hong Kong, Hong Kong University Press, 1997), 113-38; and Chin-chuan Lee, "The Paradox of Political Economy: Media Structure, Press Freedom, and Regime Change in Hong Kong," in *Power, Money, and Media: Communication Patterns and Bureaucratic Control in Cultural China*, ed. Chin-chuan Lee (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2000), 288-336.

¹²Ma, *Culture, Politics, and Television in Hong Kong*; and Joseph Man Chan, "Mass Media and Sociopolitical Formation in Hong Kong, 1942-1992," *Asian Journal of Communication* 2, no. 3 (Spring 1992): 106-29.

¹³Allen Chun, "Discourses of Identity in the Changing Spaces of Public Culture in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore," *Theory, Culture & Society* 13, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 51-75.

¹⁴Abbas, *Hong Kong*, 7.

it was important to pin down what "Hong Kong" and "Hongkongese" really meant, with China being the reference point against which Hong Kong was defined.¹⁵

Social and political conditions, therefore, not only explain why the questions of Hong Kong culture and identity were raised, but also influenced how the questions were framed. The distinctiveness of Hong Kong was largely a matter of its differentiation from China. This was so for Hong Kong people at large as well as for academics. In 1985, Lau Siu-kai and Kuan Hsin-chi conducted a population survey in which respondents were asked to choose between "Hongkongese" and "Chinese." The two researchers found "an astonishingly large proportion of respondents (59.5 percent) identified themselves as" Hongkongese.¹⁶ At the same time, they found that people who defined themselves as Hongkongese held a less instrumentalist and interventionist view of the government and had higher levels of political interests and involvement.¹⁷

Many researchers adopted the same approach later. Most of them recognized the fact that identifying with Hong Kong and with China was not mutually exclusive. They therefore modified the original survey item by adding certain "middle categories" for respondents to choose from.¹⁸ Yet the way the data were analyzed remained largely unchanged. Respondents were almost always separated into only two groups by combining the middle categories with either the "Chinese" or the "Hongkongese" category. The results from various studies were largely consistent with each

¹⁵In the terminology of cultural studies, China was the "constitutive outside" when Hong Kong people defined themselves in the 1980s. For the concept of "constitutive outside" in the study of identities, see Hall and Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity*. For analyses of Hong Kong identities that stress the role of Chinese as the "constitutive outside," see Ma, *Culture, Politics, and Television in Hong Kong*; and Elaine Chan, "Defining Fellow Compatriots as 'Others'—National Identity in Hong Kong," *Government and Opposition* 35, no. 4 (Fall 2000): 499-519.

¹⁶Lau and Kuan, *The Ethos of the Hong Kong Chinese*, 2.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 178-86.

¹⁸There are different ways to phrase the middle categories. Examples include "Hongkongese first and Chinese second" together with "Chinese first and Hongkongese second," "Hong Kong's Chinese" together with "China's Hongkongese," and "primarily Chinese" and "primarily Hongkongese."

other. "Hongkongese" and "Chinese" differed from each other mainly in political values rather than in social or moral values. "Hongkongese" were more liberal, more supportive of democracy, more supportive of local autonomy, less supportive of the concept of "one country, two systems," and less nationalistic than "Chinese."¹⁹ Timothy Ka-ying Wong even posited liberalism as an "explanation" of Hong Kong identity, as it "strengthens Hong Kong people's ethnic identification and weakens their national identification."²⁰

In methodological terms, it is remarkable how the conventional survey item on identity was not seen as a double-barreled question, that is, a single question measuring two things: identifying with Hong Kong and identifying with China. As "Hongkongese" and "Chinese" were treated as forming a dichotomy, any positive meanings of "identifying with Hong Kong" became conflated with the negative meanings of "not identifying with China."

This problem is most conspicuous when, in the early 1990s, researchers using the conventional item found that "Hongkongese" were more likely to consider emigration.²¹ That is, people who identified them-

¹⁹Lau Siu-kai, *Hongkongese or Chinese: The Problem of Identity on the Eve of Resumption of Chinese Sovereignty over Hong Kong*, Occasional Paper no. 65 (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, 1997); Elaine Chan, "Political Identity and Nation-Building in Hong Kong," in *Political Participation in Hong Kong*, ed. Joseph Y.S. Cheng (Hong Kong: The City University of Hong Kong Press, 1999), 99-119; Michael DeGolyer, "Political Culture and Public Opinion," in *The Other Hong Kong Report 1997*, ed. Joseph Y.S. Cheng (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1997), 169-206; Eric Ma and Anthony Y.H. Fung, "Re-Sinicization, Nationalism, and the Hong Kong Identity," in *Press and Politics in Hong Kong: Case Studies from 1967 to 1997*, ed. Clement Y.K. So and Joseph Man Chan (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1999), 497-528; Timothy Ka-ying Wong, "Identity in the 2000 Legislative Elections," in *Out of the Shadow of 1997? The 2000 Legislative Council Election in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region*, ed. Kuan Hsin-chi, Lau Siu-kai, and Timothy Ka-ying Wong (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2002), 161-86; and D. Y. F. Ho, A. W. L. Chau, and C. Y. Chin, "Ideological Orientation and Political Transition in Hong Kong: Confidence in the Future," *Political Psychology* 24, no. 2 (June 2003): 403-13.

²⁰Timothy K.Y. Wong, "The Ethnic and National Identities of the Hong Kong People: A Liberal Explanation," *Issues & Studies* 32, no. 8 (August 1996): 105-30.

²¹Wong Siu-lun, "Political Attitudes and Identity," in *Emigration from Hong Kong*, ed. Ronald Skelton (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1995), 147-76; DeGolyer, "Political Culture and Public Opinion"; and Wong, "The Ethnic and National Identities of the Hong Kong People."

selves with the society were more likely to abandon the place. This seemingly odd finding was often interpreted as showing that the Hong Kong identity was more instrumental than affect-based: Hong Kong people identified with the society for the material gains it offered, but they did not develop strong emotional attachment to the place.²² However, this argument is questionable, and there is a lack of concrete evidence showing that Hong Kong people who migrated to other countries indeed had little affective attachment to the society. Instead, it seems more plausible and straightforward to say "not identifying with China" was driving Hong Kong people away from the city. This latter argument is consistent with the fact that, when researchers employed alternative measures for identifying with or "sense of belonging" to Hong Kong, they found a negative relationship between Hong Kong identity and tendency to emigrate.²³

Of course, the issue here is not just methodological. The construction and use of a survey item involve assumptions that need to be examined. We are not denying the utility of the conventional survey item. It served researchers well on different topics, with migration probably an exception. What we want to point out is that the assumptions underlying how the item was used—that "Hongkongese" and "Chinese" form a dichotomy and "identifying with Hong Kong" basically means "not identifying with China"—were merely reflecting the public discourse during the transition period. From the 1980s onward, political debates in Hong Kong continually pitted the interests of Hong Kong people against the will of Chinese leaders. Into the mid-1990s, local politicians and political parties were even differentiated into "pro-China" and "pro-democracy" camps. This distinction illustrates the set of binary oppositions inscribed in public dis-

²²See Wong, "Political Attitudes and Identity." For a similar account of instrumental identity and "flexible citizenship" of Hong Kong migrants in North America, see Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logic of Transnationality* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999).

²³Dominic Abrams, S. Hinkle, and M. Tomlins, "Leaving Hong Kong? The Roles of Attitude, Subjective Norm, Perceived Control, Social Identity, and Relative Deprivation," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 23, no. 2 (March 1999): 319-38; Wong, "Political Attitudes and Identity"; and Wong, "The Ethnic and National Identities of the Hong Kong People."

course at that time, with Hong Kong, democracy, freedom, modernity, and economic development on one side, and China, authoritarianism, conservatism, backwardness, and traditionalism on the other. As pointed out at the beginning of the article, the meanings of and relationships between identity categories are constructed in public discourse. Here, we can argue that public discourse during the transition period has provided the basis for researchers to deploy the conventional survey item in a way that emphasizes a dichotomy between Hong Kong and China. The problem is whether, seven years after the transfer of sovereignty, "China vs. Hong Kong" is still a proper framework for an analysis of Hong Kong identity.

The Problem of National Integration

There is a need to reconsider the way the question of Hong Kong identity is framed because of continual integration between Hong Kong and the mainland. In fact, economic and social integration between the two places stretched back to the late 1980s, with cross-border marriage and relocation of the manufacturing industry being its early phenomena. Over the years, social interaction between Hong Kong people and mainlanders has become much more widespread and regular, and has proceeded through a wider range of social institutions (e.g., all kinds of businesses, education, religion, etc.). There has also been the development of a Greater-China popular cultural industry. Talents from Hong Kong, mainland China, and Taiwan are nowadays often treated as a single pool of resources, while the three places form a single emerging market.²⁴ At the most mundane level, low prices of goods in the mainland have attracted many Hong Kong

²⁴For an analysis of television in the Greater China market, see Joseph Chan, "Television Development in Greater China: Structure, Exports, and Market Formation," in *New Patterns in Global Television: Peripheral Vision*, ed. John Sinclair et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 126-60; also see Joseph Man Chan, "Transborder Broadcasters and TV Regionalization in Greater China: Processes and Strategies," in *Transnational Television Worldwide: Globalisation and Transnationality in the Media*, ed. Jean Chalaby (London: I. B. Tauris, March 2005).

people to spend their weekends and holidays in the towns just across the border. At the other end, restrictions on visits by mainlanders to Hong Kong have also been loosened.

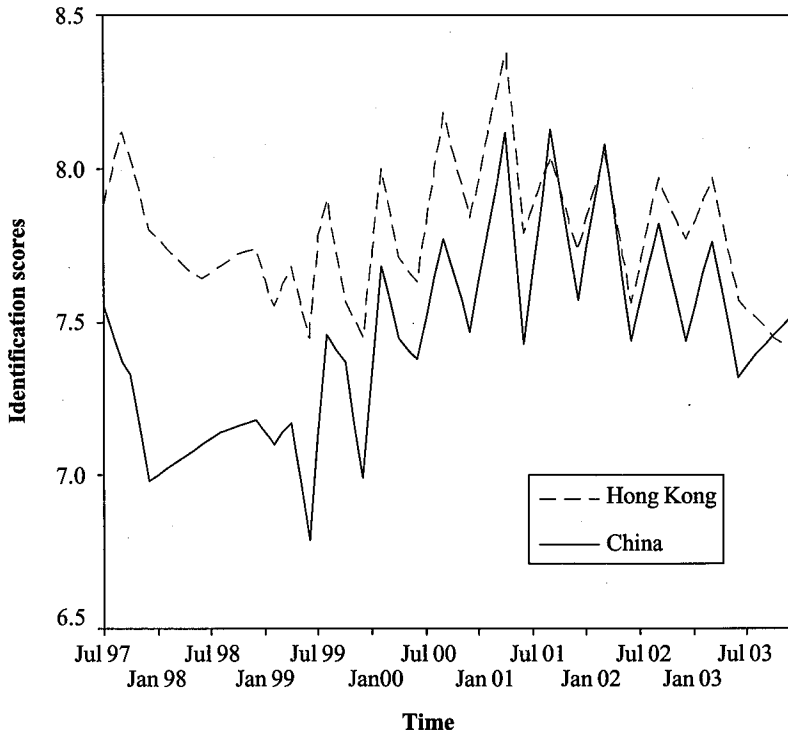
However, until recently, more substantive forms of political integration did not follow the transfer of sovereignty. Though the Hong Kong media often played a guessing game concerning how the Chinese government pulled strings behind political matters in the city, China succeeded in at least appearing to be hands-off and adhere to the principle of "one country, two systems." For example, from 1997 to 2003, most academics and professional journalists recognized that the Chinese government has not directly intervened into and suppressed freedom of the press in the SAR.²⁵

The absence of open intervention into Hong Kong matters on the part of China was at least partially due to the lack of the need for such intervention in the first few years after the handover. In that period, due to Hong Kong's own economic crisis, economic and social issues displaced political development from the public and government agenda in the city.²⁶ There were no serious conflicts of interest between Hong Kong and China. The situation led to Hong Kong people's increasingly positive impression of the Chinese government. Opinion polls even showed that, since August 2001, Hong Kong people's trust in the Chinese government has surpassed their

²⁵This does not mean that the Hong Kong media were under no political pressure, but the political pressure was exercised informally and with the major aim of inducing self-censorship. In any case, the overall judgment given by scholars and journalists was generally positive. See Heike Holbig, "Hong Kong Press Freedom in Transition," in *Hong Kong in Transition*, ed. Robert Ash, Peter Ferdinand, Brian Hook, Robin Porter, and Ferdinand Ash (London: Routledge, 2003), 196-209; and Lau Tuen-yu and To Yiu-ming, "Walking a Tight Rope: Hong Kong's Media Facing Political and Economic Challenges since Sovereignty Transfer," in *Crisis and Transformation in China's Hong Kong*, ed. Ming K. Chan and Alvin So (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2002), 322-42. For an article that gave a more negative evaluation of press freedom in Hong Kong, see Willy Woo-lap Lam, "The Media in Hong Kong: On the Horns of a Dilemma," in *Political Communications in Greater China*, ed. Gary D. Rawnsley and Ming-yeh T. Rawnsley (London: Curzon, 2003), 169-89.

²⁶Agnes S. Ku, "Postcolonial Cultural Trends in Hong Kong: Imagining the Local, the National, and the Global," in Chan and So, *Crisis and Transformation in China's Hong Kong*, 343-62; Francis L. F. Lee and Joseph Man Chan, "Jingji yadao minzhu? Huigui hou de yixie mindiao shuju fenxi" (Economics trumped democracy? Analysis of post-handover poll data), *Twenty-first Century* (online edition), no. 24 (March 2004). <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/21c/>.

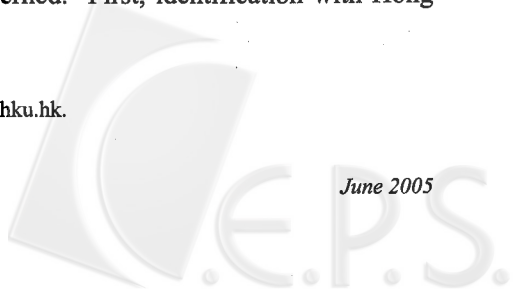
Figure 1
Identification with Hong Kong and China after 1997



trust in the Hong Kong government.²⁷

The situation also led to Hong Kong people's increasing identification with China. Figure 1 shows the identification scores obtained by a series of polls conducted by the Public Opinion Program at the University of Hong Kong. The survey questions in these polls were not the conventional identity item discussed earlier. Rather, respondents were asked to evaluate their identification with Hong Kong and China separately on a 0-10 scale. Two important results can be discerned. First, identification with Hong

²⁷The results are available at <http://hkupop.hku.hk>.



Kong and with China fluctuated together. In fact, the Pearson correlation coefficient between the two variables is a highly significant .72 ($p < .001$). This put into question whether we should treat identifying with Hong Kong and with China as competing with each other.

Second, there was an increase over time in Hong Kong people's identification with China. The score stood high at 7.46 in August 1997, apparently a temporary effect of the handover itself. It soon declined and reached 6.98 in December of the same year.²⁸ The lowest point was 6.79 in June 1999. The score has been increasing since then, however, reaching 8.13 in April 2001. Throughout the same period, Hong Kong people's identification with their own city fluctuated but did not register an overall increase or decline.²⁹ As a result, the gap between the two scores closed. In September 2001, identification with China was even slightly higher than identification with Hong Kong.³⁰

However, the gap between identification with Hong Kong and with China reemerged in the second half of 2002 and the first half of 2003. This is not difficult to understand. In September 2002, the Hong Kong government proposed to enact security laws based on Article 23 of the Basic Law.³¹ The Article 23 debate involved a conflict between concerns for national integrity and concerns for local civil liberty. Hence it is likely to have re-ignited Hong Kong people's concern with the difference between

²⁸For a similar illustration of the quick decline of nationalist feeling among Hong Kong citizens after the handover, see Anthony Fung, "What Makes the Local? A Brief Consideration of the Rejuvenation of Hong Kong Identity," *Cultural Studies* 15, no. 3-4 (Winter 2001): 591-601.

²⁹When a "time" variable is constructed (in terms of number of months after the transfer of sovereignty), it registered a significant positive relationship with identification with China (Pearson $r = .52, p < .01$). However, there is no similar positive relationship between identification with Hong Kong and "time."

³⁰It was only "nominally higher," though, as the difference between the two scores was not statistically significant.

³¹Article 23 of the Basic Law states that: "The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall enact laws on its own to prohibit any act of treason, secession, sedition, subversion against the Central People's Government, or theft of state secrets, to prohibit foreign political organizations or bodies from conducting political activities in the Region, and to prohibit political organizations or bodies of the Region from establishing ties with foreign political organizations or bodies."



Hong Kong and the mainland. On the other side, Chinese officials were also bothered by Hong Kong people's reluctance to support the legislation, and they questioned Hong Kong people's patriotism.

The re-emergence of the identification gap shown in figure 1 thus illustrates the likely impact of political debates that pit the interests of Hong Kong against those of China. However, it does not mean such national-local conflicts will simply lead Hong Kong to return to the pre-hand-over situation in which China and Hong Kong formed a simple dichotomy. As Hong Kong is already a part of China, when attempting to defend their own way of life, Hong Kong people can no longer completely dismiss the importance of national integrity. Politicians who opposed security legislation claimed that they were not being unpatriotic; they claimed that they were simply "being patriotic in Hong Kong's way."³²

The question of patriotism was raised again in early 2004, when the debate on democratic reform in Hong Kong began. Democrats in the city were calling for the direct election of the Chief Executive in 2007 and for all sixty seats of the legislature to be directly elected in 2008.³³ Because the Hong Kong SAR government failed to push forward security legislation, the Chinese government no longer relied on the Hong Kong government as its agent. Instead, it adopted a high-key position and "directed" the debate. In addition to reiterating the principle of gradual development and the priority of "prosperity and stability," the Chinese government also argued, by republishing a speech of the late Deng Xiaoping (鄧小平), that the city has to be governed by "patriots." Some Chinese officials cited Deng's statement that popular elections might not produce leaders who "love the country and love Hong Kong." Other officials raised the stakes further by criticizing "tendencies of Hong Kong independence" in the city. This

³²The phrase was later adopted by a civic association as the title of an anthology of commentary articles written about the debate on Article 23. See Yip Kin-man, ed., *Yi Xiang-gang de fangshi jixu aiguo* (To be patriotic in Hong Kong's way) (Hong Kong: New Power Network, 2003).

³³Currently, the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong government is elected by a selection committee with members appointed by the Chinese government, while only half of the sixty seats in the legislature are returned through democratic elections.

criticism made a one-sided insistence on the distinctiveness of Hong Kong politically incorrect. In the public arena, national unity is a premise that cannot be challenged. The question of Hong Kong identity is therefore a question of "difference within (national) unity."

Of course, reconciling Hong-Kong-ness with Chineseness is not a new question that has arisen only in the past few years because of current political controversies. Anthropologists, who are more sensitive toward the ever-changing, incoherent, and blurred nature of cultural identities, have long recognized the importance of Chineseness to Hong Kong people. Writing in the mid-1990s, Gordon Mathews argued that Hong Kong identity was often understood by Hong Kong people themselves as "Chineseness plus something," wherein the something could refer to economic development and affluence, Westernization and cosmopolitanism, or democracy and freedom.³⁴ He also pointed out that democracy and Chineseness were not necessarily separate for Hong Kong people. Despite the dominant public discourse at the time, some of the strongest supporters of democracy in the city were also those who defined themselves as Chinese. This point echoed Helen Siu's contention in an earlier article that Chinese leaders worried about Hong Kong and South China not because the people there did not consider themselves Chinese.³⁵ On the contrary, the problem was that they took their Chineseness too seriously, and attempted to re-define Chineseness in their own ways.

There is no doubt that most Hong Kong people regard themselves as belonging to a Chinese cultural community, but they are more reluctant to regard themselves as belonging to a political community headed by the Chinese Communist government. This disjuncture between the cultural and the political is the most fundamental problem in the development of national identity among Hong Kong people.³⁶ Studies have shown that

³⁴Gordon Mathews, "Heunggongyahn: On the Past, Present, and Future of Hong Kong Identity," *Bulletin for Concerned Asian Scholars* 29, no. 3 (Fall 1997): 3-13.

³⁵Helen F. Siu, "Cultural Identity and Politics of Difference in South China," *Daedalus* 122, no. 2 (Spring 1993): 19-43.

³⁶This is premised on the argument that national identity is both cultural and political. See Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991).

Hong Kong people have positive feelings toward cultural symbols such as the Great Wall, but the political implications and power of these symbols are limited. Toward symbols related to the PRC, such as the national flag and anthem, Hong Kong people have mostly negative or ambivalent feelings.³⁷

Currently, the only kind of symbols that are both officially sanctioned by the Chinese government as well as popularly received in Hong Kong are "modern cultural symbols" which signify contemporary China's achievement in various cultural and social arenas. The best example is Yang Liwei (楊利偉), China's first astronaut, who successfully completed his mission in 2003. His officially organized visit to Hong Kong in November 2003 was enthusiastically embraced by the Hong Kong media and populace. Yet it remains doubtful whether these modern cultural symbols are numerous and powerful enough to sustain the development of Hong Kong people's national identity in a way that the Chinese government would feel comfortable with.

Research Questions

To recapitulate, in the ongoing process of identity construction and reconstruction, the challenge of reconciling Hong-Kong-ness with Chineseness is likely to become increasingly significant for Hong Kong people. Examining this process should be important for understanding political developments in Hong Kong.

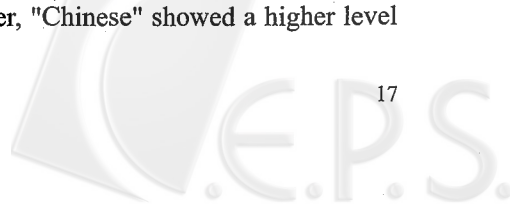
The aim of the present study, however, is more modest: to re-evaluate the relationship between cultural identities, political attitudes, and behaviors among Hong Kong people. Following the above discussions, our

³⁷See Chan, "Political Identity and Nation-Building in Hong Kong"; and Ma and Fung, "Re-Sinicization, Nationalism, and the Hong Kong Identity." For an interesting study on the tensions that can be generated by the national anthem in school settings in Hong Kong, see W. W. Law and W. C. Ho, "Values Education in Hong Kong School Music Education: A Sociological Critique," *British Journal of Education Studies* 52, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 65-82.

analysis is based on two premises that are different from the assumptions underlying previous research on the topic. First, instead of focusing mainly on the differences between "Hongkongese" and "Chinese," we are particularly interested in whether there are any specificities of people who define themselves as a mixture of "Hongkongese" and "Chinese." Because of the political situation explicated above, many believe that this group of people will increase in both number and significance in Hong Kong. Understanding these people is therefore very important in the study of Hong Kong identity. Second, "Hongkongese" and "Chinese" are not treated as a simple dichotomy or a continuum. The difference between "Hongkongese" and "Chinese in Hong Kong," for instance, is not that the former necessarily signifies a stronger identification with the local. Instead, they can simply be two different ways for citizens to consider themselves as Hong Kong people. It implies that there is not just one way to identify oneself with Hong Kong. Instead, different Hong Kong identities can be constructed by articulating Hong-Kong-ness with other elements in different ways.

Following past studies, the analysis examines the relationship between identities and political values as demonstrated in people's attitudes toward certain important political issues in Hong Kong. It also examines the relationship between identities and people's evaluations of the Hong Kong and Chinese governments. On these questions, we expect to replicate the findings of earlier studies. "Hongkongese" should be the most liberal, most supportive of democracy, and least supportive of nationalistic concerns.

We expect a different set of questions—questions on political participation—to help us illustrate the uniqueness of people who identify themselves as both Hongkongese and Chinese, and the limitation of the "Hong Kong vs. China" dichotomy. In fact, the relationship between identities and political participation among Hongkongese has seldom been studied. An exception is Lau Siu-kai's analysis of Hong Kong people's participation in the June 4 commemoration. He pointed out that "Hongkongese" participated in parades and rallies during the June 4 incident to a large extent. Since 1989, however, "Chinese" showed a higher level



of participation in June 4 commemoration.³⁸

Yet there is a third possibility: June 4 commemoration may be joined mostly by those who identify themselves as both Chinese and Hongkongese. It is not difficult to see why it is a plausible scenario. The Tiananmen massacre was widely regarded as a booster of the democracy project in Hong Kong;³⁹ hence, June 4 commemoration in Hong Kong has long been articulated with the "Hong Kong values" of freedom and democracy. At the same time, however, the Tiananmen massacre was an event in mainland China. If a person does not care about China at all, there is no particular reason why he would commemorate the event.⁴⁰ Therefore, we believe that people who identify themselves as both Chinese and Hongkongese are more likely to participate in political activities, especially those that relate Hong Kong to China.

Categorical Identities of Hong Kong Citizens

The data for the present study were gathered through a telephone survey conducted by the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in March 2004.⁴¹ It was amidst the

³⁸Lau, *Hongkongese or Chinese*, 19-20.

³⁹Alvin So, *Hong Kong's Embattled Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).

⁴⁰These arguments are supported by an onsite survey conducted during the June 4 commemoration in Hong Kong in 2004. For the findings of the survey and their implications, see Joseph Man Chan, Robert T. Y. Chung, and Francis L. F. Lee, "Series on the June 4 Commemoration Survey," *Ming Pao*, June 22-25, 2004.

⁴¹The Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing system was used with trained interviewers conducting the interviews. The target population is all Hong Kong Cantonese-speaking residents aged between 18 and 70. The sampling procedure involved randomly selecting telephone numbers from telephone directories. To include non-listed numbers, the last two digits of the selected phone numbers were removed and replaced by computer-generated random numbers. When a household was reached, the recent birthday method was used to select a particular respondent from a household. A total of 983 interviews were completed, yielding a response rate of 51.5 percent. The sample has an average age of 38.9 years old, 50.1 percent males, 21 percent holding a university degree, and 57.1 percent having a household monthly income higher than HK\$20,000. In 2001, the average age of the Hong

debate on democratic reform in Hong Kong, after the Chinese government claimed that Hong Kong should be governed by "patriots," but before the National People's Congress (NPC) ruled out the possibility of direct elections of Hong Kong's Chief Executive in 2007.

In the survey, the conventional identity item was employed so that respondents were asked to choose an identity category from four choices: Hongkongese (*Hèunggóngyahn*, 香港人), Chinese (*Jünggwokyàhn*, 中國人), Hong Kong's Chinese (*Hèunggóng dik Jünggwokyàhn*, 香港的中國人), and China's Hongkongese (*Jünggwok dik Hèunggóngyàhn*, 中國的香港人). The two latter items, directly translated into English, would be "Chinese in Hong Kong" and "Hongkongese in China" respectively. The conventional presumption is that the two items represent mixed identities with differential emphasis on Hong Kong or China.

The meanings and problems of these two categories are discussed below. Here, as far as descriptive statistics are concerned, only 3.3 percent of the respondents in the present survey failed to give a valid answer to the question. About 30 percent identified themselves as "Hongkongese," while only 13.1 percent identified themselves as "Chinese." About 22 percent chose the category "Hong Kong's Chinese," and 31.1 percent chose "China's Hongkongese." In other words, in the survey, more than half of the respondents identified themselves as a combination of Hongkongese and Chinese, though the proportion of people who identified themselves strictly as "Hongkongese" remains substantial.

The above distribution differs quite substantially from the findings of a poll conducted in June 2004 by the Public Opinion Program at the University of Hong Kong. In the latter poll, 33 percent of the respondents chose the category "Chinese," while only 21.2 percent chose "China's Hongkongese" and 14.3 percent "Hong Kong's Chinese." The remaining respondents considered themselves as "Hongkongese." We can only

Kong population over the age of 15 was about 42 years old, with 48.6 percent males. Larger discrepancies exist in education and income. Only 16.4 percent of the population has university education and 47.7 percent of households have a monthly income higher than HK\$20,000.

speculate on the factors contributing to the discrepancies. One possible factor is the more explicitly political nature of our survey, which might have heightened respondents' awareness of their distinctive "Hong Kong values" of democracy and freedom. A second possibility is the political environment in March 2004, when Hong Kong was embroiled in heated debates on patriotism and democratic reform. No matter what their real causes, however, the discrepancies show that the identity categories are not something the respondents hold onto forcefully. Their answers are dependent on various contextual factors. This is consistent with the present study's conceptualization of identity as "temporary attachments," something that cannot be fixed once and for all.

Nevertheless, the identity categories should have heuristic values. The primary interest of survey research should not be getting at the exact distribution of people having different "identities," but how people choosing one category in any particular survey, on average, differ from people choosing other categories. These overall patterns can remain relatively stable despite shifts in the distributions of answers to the categorical identity item.

Another issue in the use of the survey item is that the meanings of the categories "China's Hongkongese" and "Hong Kong's Chinese" are not immediately clear. Past studies tended to group the middle categories with the "Hongkongese" or "Chinese" category for analysis. For example, when presenting their results derived from the same item, the Public Opinion Program at the University of Hong Kong grouped "China's Hongkongese" together with "Hongkongese," and "Hong Kong's Chinese" together with "Chinese." In this way, the problem of lack of clarity of meanings of the two middle categories was avoided, not addressed. In fact, we can know whether there are meaningful differences between these two categories (and if yes, what the differences are) to Hong Kong people only by examining whether there are systematic differences between people who have chosen the two categories. The following analysis provides the results of such an examination, while the limitations of the survey item and survey research itself as a method for studying cultural identities are further discussed in the concluding section.

Table 1
Category Identities and Demographics

	Hongkongese	Hong Kong's Chinese	China's Hongkongese	Chinese	Chi-square or F-value
Identify with:					
Hong Kong	7.99 _a	8.07 _b	7.96	7.36 _{ab}	3.32*
China	6.06 _{ab}	7.70 _a	8.17 _b	8.63 _a	64.91***
Sex (% Male)	43.6%	49.5%	51.6%	59.7%	10.04*
Education:					
% Secondary	57.8%	46.4%	52.3%	50.4%	
% University	20.9%	17.7%	22.9%	22.5%	15.71*
Age	4.49 _{ab}	6.16 _a	5.32 _a	5.88 _b	20.59***
Home income	3.50	3.34	3.46	3.44	0.19

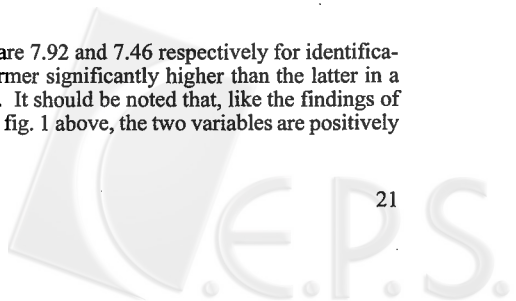
Notes:

1. Age is measured with a scale ranging from 1 for 18-19 years old, 2 for 20-24 years old, to 11 for 65-69 years old. Home income is measured with a scale with 0 for no formal income, 1 for below \$HK10,000 per month, and then each unit representing an increment of HK\$10,000 per month. Identifications with Hong Kong and China are measured with a 0-10 point scale.
2. Chi-square tests were used to examine if there is significant relationship between categorical identities and education and sex, while F-tests in one-way ANOVA were used to examine the relationship between categorical identities and age, income, and identifications with Hong Kong and China.
3. Entries in the same row sharing the same subscript differ from each other significantly.

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

As stated earlier, we expect "Hongkongese," "China's Hongkongese," and "Hong Kong's Chinese" to be three ways of identifying with Hong Kong. The survey item should not be reduced to a simple dichotomy. To provide basic support for this argument, the survey also asked respondents to evaluate their identification with Hong Kong and with China separately on a 0-10 scale.⁴² As table 1 shows, when we examine how people who

⁴²The overall mean scores of the two variables are 7.92 and 7.46 respectively for identification with Hong Kong and China, with the former significantly higher than the latter in a paired sample t-test (t-value = 5.30, p < .001). It should be noted that, like the findings of the Public Opinion Program as summarized in fig. 1 above, the two variables are positively



selected different categories in the conventional identity item scored on the two separate identification variables, we see that "Hongkongese," "Hong Kong's Chinese," and "China's Hongkongese" do not differ from each other at all in their scores on identification with Hong Kong. Only people who identified themselves as "Chinese" scored particularly low.

At the same time, table 1 also shows that the three types of "Hong Kong identities" can be distinguished in terms of the degree of identification with China involved. "Hongkongese" score particularly low (mean = 6.06) on identification with China. "Hong Kong's Chinese" score substantively higher on the variable (mean = 7.70), though it is still lower than their score on identification with Hong Kong (mean = 8.07).⁴³ For "China's Hongkongese," however, identification with China (mean = 8.17) surpasses identification with Hong Kong (mean = 7.96), though the two scores do not differ significantly in a paired sample t-test. Finally, for "Chinese," identification with China (mean = 8.63) is substantively higher than identification with Hong Kong (mean = 7.36).⁴⁴

These findings show that we should treat the four choices as four distinctive categories. The argument is further supported by the findings on the demographic characteristics of people with different categorical identities, also shown in table 1. Though there is a statistically significant relationship between categorical identities and education, age, and sex, only sex registers a linear relationship with the categorical identity item.

Identities and Political Attitudes

Our analysis then focuses on the relationship between the categorical identities and political attitudes. In the survey, we asked respondents if they supported or opposed security legislation in Hong Kong, and if they

correlated with each other (Pearson $r = .31$, $p < .001$). When asked separately, identification with Hong Kong complements rather than competes with identification with China.

⁴³For Hong Kong's Chinese, identification with Hong Kong and with China are significantly different in a paired sample t-test with $t\text{-value} = 2.48$, $p < .02$.

⁴⁴In a paired sample t-test, the two scores differ significantly at $p < .001$, with $t\text{-value} = 5.34$.

supported or opposed institutionalizing the democratic election of the Chief Executive of Hong Kong in 2007. For both questions, answers were recorded with a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly oppose" to "strongly support."

All four groups of respondents scored higher than the mid-point of the scale on the issue of direct elections in 2007, and lower than the mid-point of the scale on the issue of security legislation.⁴⁵ However, there are differences in the degree to which the four groups of respondents supported direct election and opposed security legislation. Based on findings from past studies, we could expect "Hongkongese" to be most supportive toward democracy and least concerned with security issues. This is exactly what table 2 shows.

Nevertheless, as far as security legislation is concerned, there is in fact no meaningful difference between "Hongkongese" and "Hong Kong's Chinese." There is also no meaningful difference between the two other categories. The same applies to direct election of the Chief Executive in 2007. There is no significant difference either between the first two categories or between the latter two, even though, on the surface, the four groups do seem to form a linear continuum on this issue.

In the survey, respondents were also asked to evaluate the performance of the Hong Kong government and the Chinese central government on a 0-10 scale, with higher scores representing more positive evaluations. On these two variables, "Hongkongese" seem to form a very special group. When compared with the other three groups, "Hongkongese" rate the governments significantly lower. There is again no difference between "China's Hongkongese" and "Chinese," however. Both groups tend to evaluate the Hong Kong and Chinese governments relatively positively.

To ensure that the relationships shown in table 2 are not by-products of other demographic factors, we conducted multiple regression analysis with political attitudes as the dependent variables. Four other demo-

⁴⁵All the mean scores in the first two rows of table 2, except the "Chinese" support for security legislation, are significantly different from the mid-point of the five-point scale in one-sample t-tests.

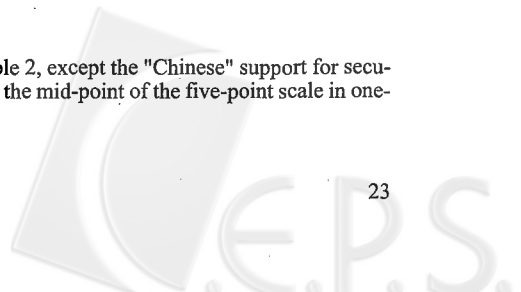


Table 2**Bivariate Relationship between Categorical Identities and Political Attitudes**

	Hongkongese	Hong Kong's Chinese	China's Hongkongese	Chinese	F-value
Support security legislation	2.42 _{ac}	2.46 _{bd}	2.73 _{ab}	2.92 _{cd}	9.46***
Support direct elections in 2007	3.83 _{ab}	3.64	3.55 _a	3.39 _b	5.57**
Rating of the Hong Kong government	3.65 _{abc}	4.16 _a	4.50 _b	4.34 _c	8.92***
Rating of the Beijing government	4.60 _{ab}	5.54 _a	6.15 _a	6.15 _b	33.09***

Notes:

1. The first two variables were measured with a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly oppose" to "strongly support." Ratings of the Beijing and Hong Kong governments range from 0 to 10.
 2. F-tests in one-way ANOVA were used to examine if there is statistically significant relationship between categorical identities and the attitudinal variables.
 3. Entries in the same row sharing the same subscript differ from each other significantly.
- *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

graphics, news media use (as surrogates for interest in politics), and internal efficacy are included as independent variables. Since the measure of categorical identities is nominal, we have to use dummy variables in the regression for categorical identities. Methodologically, one of the four categories has to be left out from the regression model to serve as a reference point against which the other three categories are tested. We left out "China's Hongkongese" from the regression model. As a type of Hong Kong identity that seems to come closest to the "Chinese" identity in terms of its political implications, using it as the reference category should give the most illuminating results.

The findings are summarized in table 3. There are some relationships between the control variables and political attitudes. Most notably, younger people with higher levels of internal efficacy are more supportive of democracy and less supportive of security legislation. However, the inclusion of these variables does not obliterate the relationship

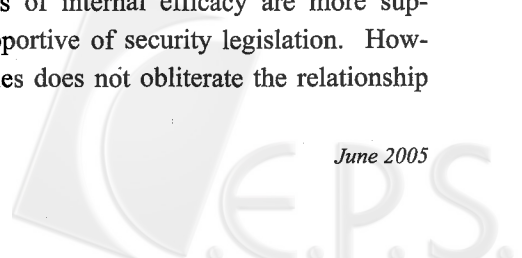


Table 3
Multiple Regression on Categorical Identities and Political Attitudes

	Security law	Direct election in 2007	Rating of the Hong Kong government	Rating of the Beijing government
Sex	-.12***	.03	.07*	-.03
Age	.18***	-.17***	.00	.11**
Education	-.01	-.15***	.04	.01
Home income	-.01	-.02	-.02	.03
Newspaper reading	-.02	.02	-.03	.07*
TV news watching	-.02	-.02	.08*	-.06
Internal efficacy	-.11**	.15***	-.11**	.01
Hongkongese	-.11**	.11**	-.18***	-.32***
Hong Kong's Chinese	-.14**	.04	-.06	-.14***
Chinese	.04	.03	-.02	-.01
Adjusted R²	7.4%***	5.3%***	4.1%***	11.2%***
N	917	913	949	908

Note: Entries are standardized regression coefficients; missing cases are excluded pair-wise, thus the numbers of cases vary in each analysis.

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

between categorical identities and political attitudes. The findings regarding categorical identities largely replicate those in table 2. There is no significant difference between Chinese and China's Hongkongese. Hong Kong's Chinese differ from China's Hongkongese only on the two variables that deal more directly with the nation—the rating of the Beijing government and support for security legislation, with Hong Kong's Chinese being less supportive of the Beijing regime and less nationalistic. Hongkongese differ significantly from China's Hongkongese in all four political attitudes.

On the whole, what the two tables show is that, despite identifying with Hong Kong to the same extent as "Hongkongese" and "Hong Kong's Chinese" do, "China's Hongkongese" have a political outlook that is basically the same as people who identify themselves as Chinese. Moreover, "Hongkongese" are distinctively more supportive of democracy and less nationalistic, while "Hong Kong's Chinese" are less nationalistic

Table 4
Categorical Identities and Political Participation

	Hongkongese	Hong Kong's Chinese	China's Hongkongese	Chinese	Chi-square
July 1 demonstration	23.7%	27.0%	21.9%	23.4%	1.79
June 4 commemoration	13.5%	19.5%	12.7%	14.7%	5.33
Joining other protests	14.5%	16.4%	17.0%	17.1%	0.82
Voting in Legco election	54.4%	64.4%	59.2%	62.3%	5.35

Note: Entries are percentages of people within each category who have participated in the specific political activity.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

but no more supportive toward democracy than "China's Hongkongese."

Identities and Political Participation

Finally, we analyze the relationship between identities and political participation. In the survey, we asked respondents whether they: (1) participated in the July 1 demonstration in 2003 (yes = 22.8%), (2) joined any June 4 commemoration rallies since 1997 (yes = 14.9%), (3) joined any protests or rallies other than the July 1 demonstration and the June 4 rallies (yes = 16.3%), and (4) voted in Legislative Council (Legco) elections in 1998 or 2000 (yes = 55.4%).

Table 4 summarizes the findings regarding the relationship between identities and political participation. As we stated earlier, despite the finding that "Hongkongese" are more supportive of democracy, they may not be the ones who are most likely to participate in political activities. Instead, as long as Hong Kong is a part of China, participation in local political activities, especially those that relate the local society to the na-

tion, may be driven by a sense of being simultaneously a Hongkongese and a Chinese.

Table 4 shows some signs that support this argument. In three out of four political activities being examined, "Hong Kong's Chinese" registered the highest levels of participation. However, the differences among the four groups are not statistically significant for any participation variable. Hence the bivariate analysis does not come up with strong evidence supporting our argument, but at least we have to recognize that the political outlook of the "Hongkongese" does not necessarily make them more active politically.

As in the analysis of political attitudes, we then conducted multivariate analysis to see if there were any relationships between identities and political participation after a number of other variables were controlled. Since the political participation variables are all dichotomous (either yes or no), logistic regression analysis was conducted. The regression model is the same as that reported in table 3. The findings are summarized in table 5.

Older people are more likely to have voted in past Legco elections, while better-educated citizens are more likely to have participated in the July 1 demonstration. Not surprisingly, internal efficacy significantly relates to participation in all kinds of activities, while watching television news is related to participation in June 4 commemoration.

Most importantly, some significant relationships between categorical identities and political participation emerge. As we expected, "Hong Kong's Chinese" are indeed particularly more likely than "China's Hongkongese" to have participated in June 4 commemoration and the July 1 demonstration.

The case of the July 1 demonstration is especially illustrative. In tables 2 and 3, we have seen that "Hongkongese" and "Hong Kong's Chinese" are equally against security legislation. At the same time, "Hongkongese" are more negative toward the Hong Kong government than "Hong Kong's Chinese" are. However, when it comes to participation in a rally that expressed disapproval toward the security legislation and the Hong Kong government in general, "Hong Kong's Chinese" are even more



Table 5
Logistic Regression on Categorical Identities and Political Participation

	July 1 demonstration	June 4 rallies	Other protests and rallies	Voting in Legco elections
Sex	-.18	-.11	-.09	-.00
Age	-.06	-.03	-.02	.19***
Education	.16**	.04	.00	-.00
Home income	.03	-.01	.02	.05
Newspaper reading	.03	.06	.08	.08
TV news watching	.04	.17*	.04	.04
Internal efficiency	.46***	.33**	.34**	.37***
Hongkongese	.20	.08	-.21	-.02
Hong Kong's Chinese	.52*	.54*	-.07	.08
Chinese	.23	.14	-.04	.06
Chi-square	69.90***	29.17**	21.05*	87.68***
-2 Log likelihood	968.14	795.22	850.53	1,143.47
N	955	978	926	913

Notes: Entries are logistic regression coefficients; dummy variables are used for categorical identities, with Hongkongese, Hong Kong's Chinese, and Chinese included in the regression model.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

likely than "Hongkongese" to have participated.⁴⁶ Here lies one unique political implication of a Hong Kong identity that recognizes Hong Kong as a part of China: it is more capable of generating the public's participation in political activities that relate the city to the country.

⁴⁶To directly test the difference between "Hongkongese" and "Hong Kong's Chinese," we conducted one more logistic regression analysis with the same model, but with "Hongkongese" as the reference point. The finding shows that the difference between "Hongkongese" and "Hong Kong's Chinese" is marginally significant ($\beta = .41$, $p < .07$). Then, we further controlled two political attitudinal variables (evaluation of the Hong Kong government and support for security legislation). The result is that a significant difference between "Hongkongese" and "Hong Kong's Chinese" emerges, with "Hong Kong's Chinese" more likely to have participated in the July 1 demonstration ($\beta = .52$, $p < .04$).



Discussion

In sum, the findings support our overall contention that a "Hong Kong vs. China" dichotomy is no longer an adequate framework for understanding the reconstruction of Hong Kong identity. There are historical reasons why Hong Kong tended to define itself in terms of its differences from China during colonial rule and the run-up to the handover. Given that Hong Kong is going to abide by the scheme of "one country, two systems," the differences between the two places will continue to be part of the identity equation. However, since Hong Kong is now part of China, constructing a "Hong Kong identity" as totally distinctive from "Chineseness" does not make much political sense. The similarities and the linkages between the two places will grow in importance in the evolution of the Hong Kong identity. Indeed, after the handover, localism for Hong Kong has become increasingly difficult to define because any adequate concept of the local would need simultaneously to take into account Hong Kong as a Chinese city and as a global city.

Another problem of the "us vs. them" dichotomy is that it tends to obliterate differences within "us" and within "them." What our findings point to is the possibility that a plurality of Hong Kong identities is constructed by differently articulating Hong Kong's relationship with China. When posited as forming a contrast with the mainland, a Hongkongese identity could indeed mean supporting democracy, freedom, and other "core values" the city inherited from its own past. However, the problem of a purely "Hongkongese" identity is shown in its failure to encourage people to become more politically active. Instead, it is a "Hong Kong's Chinese" identity that can better drive people to participation, even though such an identity does not seem to represent stronger support for democracy. Finally, a "China's Hongkongese" identity also emerges as one which posits Hongkongese as merely the same as Chinese, at least politically speaking.

Nevertheless, we do not intend to argue that there are only three possible "Hong Kong identities" for Hong Kong people. Survey research is premised on fixed categories, but identities are never completely fixed, especially in a place undergoing continual social and political changes.

The identity categories used in this study, therefore, have only heuristic values; i.e., they help us discern whether certain attitudes, values, and behaviors do seem to cluster together under different identity labels. This does not mean, however, that respondents who have chosen a label would indeed cling to the label forcefully. Indeed, the distribution of people choosing different identity categories can vary from one survey to another substantially because of contextual factors.

More importantly, it is very difficult—if not impossible—for survey research to reveal completely the richness and nuances in the meanings that people attach to different identity categories. As pointed out earlier, the meanings of the categories "China's Hongkongese" and "Hong Kong's Chinese" are not clear. Though this study has demonstrated that the two categories differ from each other systematically, and thus they are not meaningless or just the same to our respondents, there is also no particular reason to believe that the two are the most meaningful "mixed identity" labels for Hong Kong people. Furthermore, even the simple label "Chinese" can be problematic. At the very least, it has an ethnic dimension, a cultural dimension, and a political dimension. When respondents selected an identity category that involves "Chinese" in it, it is not sure to what extent and in what ways they have taken the different dimensions into account. Survey studies in the future can employ more sophisticated design and questionnaires to handle some of these complexities in meanings. Qualitative research is, however, probably needed for an adequate examination of the nuanced ways through which Hong Kong people construct Chineseness for themselves.

In addition to the issue of complexities in meanings, the findings in the present study are preliminary in two other senses. First, the attitudinal and behavioral variables used in the present study are not comprehensive. They encompass only some of the most important political attitudes that can be studied in Hong Kong, and only some of the political activities in which people participate. What this study shows is that a Hong Kong identity recognizing Hong Kong as an integral part of China is conducive to political participation in issues straddling the city and the country. More analysis would be needed to further substantiate the patterns discerned in

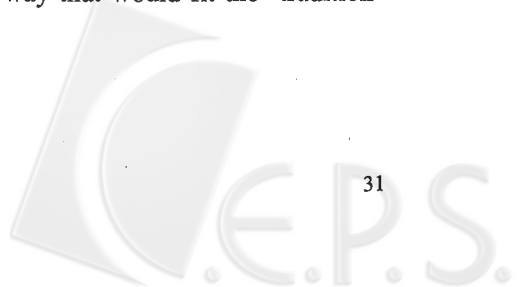
our survey.

Second, and more fundamentally, the social and political conditions in Hong Kong are still changing. The survey was conducted at a time when the Chinese government had started the debate on patriotism, but that debate has not had a definite end. Identities are "points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for [people]."⁴⁷ Yet there is no stable discursive formation in contemporary Hong Kong society. What "patriotism" means, what the "core values" of Hong Kong are, and what would constitute "tendencies of Hong Kong independence" are all subjects of further discursive struggles. Such struggles will continually define and refine the identity categories that people can attach themselves to. As the identity discourses continue to change, the patterns of connections found between identity categories and political attitudes/behaviors may also change.

Despite the qualifications, we believe our findings do reflect the emerging situation in Hong Kong. Since the debates on security legislation and the direct election of the Chief Executive, the tension within the formula of "one country, two systems" has been heightened to an unprecedented level. Hong Kong people have to face the political, rather than merely cultural, implications of their Chineseness.

When Chinese political leaders raised the curtain for the patriotism debate, democrats in Hong Kong could not simply dismiss the term. Some argued that the term is vague and hard to define; some questioned whether the term actually helps solve political questions in Hong Kong. However, no one claimed patriotism is meaningless. Instead, democrats were quick to claim that they are patriotic, too. Yet they raised questions about the proper definition of patriotism—e.g., is supporting the Communist Party necessary for a person to be regarded as patriotic? Some even attempted to articulate patriotism with democracy, arguing that it is truly patriotic to support democracy. In other words, the democrats attempted to pin down the meanings of patriotism in a way that would fit the "tradition"

⁴⁷See note 6 above.



of Hong Kong.

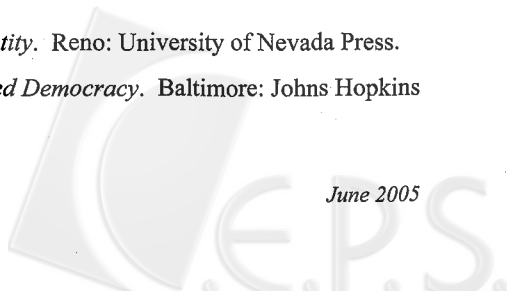
Such arguments cannot succeed easily, of course, if only because the term "patriotism" has been alien to public discourse in Hong Kong. The power imbalance between China and Hong Kong also means that Hong Kong people will have to fight a difficult discursive struggle in coming years. In any case, however, the continuing debate will be not only about "Hong-Kong-ness" but also about "Chineseness," or more precisely, about reconciling the two. Studies of Hong Kong people's identities have to take this into account.

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