

# Ethnicity and Politics in Taiwan: An Analysis of Mainlanders' Identity and Policy Preference

T. Y. WANG AND G. ANDY CHANG

*As staunch believers of the "greater Chinese nationalism," many mainlanders in Taiwan have identified themselves as "Chinese" in both an ethnic and political sense. They have also considered Taiwan to be a part of China and the island's eventual unification with the Chinese mainland as desirable. The rapid democratization of the early 1990s and the victory of the pro-independence Chen Shui-bian in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections sensitized the island residents' choice of identity as Taiwanese or Chinese and their policy preference on the issue of Taiwan independence. How have the mainlanders on the island responded to these political changes? How can these responses, if any, be explained? And, how have changes in mainlanders' identity affected their policy preferences regarding Taiwan's future relations with China? Utilizing nine sets of survey data collected through personal interviews in Taiwan, this paper shows that mainlanders have been increasingly acculturated and are shifting away*

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*from a Chinese identity to a dual Chinese-Taiwanese identity. This progressive change of identity has led many mainlanders to be more supportive of Taiwan independence or maintaining the status quo while adopting an indeterminate position on the island's future relations with China.*

**KEYWORDS:** ethnicity; mainlanders; identity politics; independence; unification; logit analysis.

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The issue of identity is considered one of the most important subjects in the modern world of politics. Along with language, religion, and culture, differences over identity have frequently contributed to instability, and sometimes even bitter conflict, among various ethnic groups. The politics of Taiwan is no exception.

Since the island became democratized in the late 1980s, the identities of Taiwan's inhabitants have undergone substantial changes and these changes have brought tense divisions in the island's society. Indeed, the issue of the Chinese vs. the Taiwanese identity is probably the most hotly debated issue in Taiwan's politics. Those who claim a Chinese identity are frequently accused of "lack of love for and loyalty toward Taiwan" and are suspected of "selling out Taiwan" due to their tendency to support the island's unification with China. Those with a Taiwanese identity are charged with "ignoring their cultural heritage" and are accused of courting disaster for Taiwan by pursuing *de jure* independence.<sup>1</sup> Within this controversy, mainlanders—a minority ethnic group in Taiwan—are caught in a difficult position as the political rhetoric of the identity debate is frequently carried out along ethnic lines.

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<sup>1</sup>A good example is the criticism provoked by Lien Chan's (連戰) recent visit to China in his capacity as the KMT chairman. President Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) criticized Lien's visit and ridiculed him as "having China and forgetting Taiwan (in his heart)." See "Bian yu Lian: Mou youle Zhongguo, meile Taiwan" (扁籲連: 莫有了中國, 沒了台灣, Bian called on Lien: Don't have China in your heart and forget Taiwan), *Ziyou shibao* (Liberty Times), April 10, 2005, <http://www.libertytimes.com.tw/>. Pro-independence supporters and media also accused Lien of "selling out Taiwan" and attacked his policies toward China. See "Don't Let the Opposition Sell Us Out," *Taipei Times*, April 24, 2005, <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/edit/archives/2005/04/24/2003251788>; and "Be Less Tolerant of Lien and Soong," *ibid.*, <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/edit/archives/2005/04/24/2003251786>.

After its defeat by the Communists in 1949, the government of the Kuomintang (KMT, 國民黨, or Nationalist Party) led by Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石) retreated to Taiwan to continue what was perceived as the sacred mission of "recovering the mainland" (光復大陸) from the Chinese Communists. Along with Chiang came two million of his followers, including military personnel, civilian bureaucrats, and their family members. During the next few decades, these so-called mainlanders—"waishengren" (外省人), or literally "people from other provinces"—were staunch supporters of Chiang's authoritarian regime and the then ruling KMT. Many followed the official line and espoused the ideology of "greater Chinese nationalism" (大中國民族主義, *da Zhongguo minzu zhuyi*). Not only did they identify themselves as "Chinese" in an ethnic and political sense, but they also considered Taiwan to be a part of China and the island's eventual unification with the Chinese mainland as a desirable goal. The rapid democratization of the early 1990s had a significant effect on the government's official position as the sole legitimate government representing a China that included both Taiwan and the Chinese mainland. The victory of the pro-independence Chen Shui-bian in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections has also sensitized Taiwan residents' choice of identity.

With these political changes in mind, this study will examine changes in mainlanders' sense of identity as Taiwanese or Chinese. Commonly conceptualized as psychological attachment to a human community, identity can be formed on a variety of bases—politics, gender, ethnicity, or class.<sup>2</sup> As will be detailed below, the Taiwanese/Chinese identity has both political and ethnic connotations. Rather than characterizing it as an identity that is solely based on politics or ethnicity, the following discussion will simply refer to it as the Taiwanese/Chinese identity in order to reflect its complexity—a practice that is used in previous studies.<sup>3</sup> Specifically, the

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<sup>2</sup>E.g., Clifford Geertz, "Primordial and Civic Ties," in *Nationalism*, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 29-34; and David Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998).

<sup>3</sup>The difficulty of properly characterizing the Taiwanese/Chinese identity is clearly reflected in the variety of names given in the literature. For this matter, see Liu I-chou and Ho

research questions to be addressed in this study are as follows. As strong believers in greater Chinese nationalism, how have the mainlanders on the island changed their identity as Taiwanese or Chinese? How can these changes, if any, be explained? And, how have mainlanders' changes in identity affected their policy preferences regarding Taiwan's future relations with China? Answers to these questions will have important implications for both the island's domestic politics and relations between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait.

Understanding the development of mainlanders' identity is no less important theoretically.<sup>4</sup> It enables us to explore the primordialist claim that blood, culture, and language are the key determinants of identity development. It can also assess the constructionist contention that identities are socially constructed and can be pragmatic choices of individuals.<sup>5</sup> In the context of Taiwan, the primordialist argument would be proven to be true if an individual's membership of a given ethnic group had a substantial effect on his/her Chinese or Taiwanese identity. If identities vary with factors other than ethnic ties, then the constructionist perspective would be vindicated.

To answer the above research questions and assess the primordialist and constructionist arguments, this study utilizes nine sets of survey data collected through personal interviews in Taiwan. In addition to basic demographic information that has been collected repeatedly, two survey questions with identical wording have been presented to respondents in all nine surveys. The first question was about whether a respondent's identity was Chinese, Taiwanese, or both, while the second asked their policy pref-

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Szu-yin, "The Taiwanese/Chinese Identity of the Taiwan People," *Issues & Studies* 35, no. 3 (May-June 1999): 1-34.

<sup>4</sup>Edward Shils, "Primordial, Personal, Sacred, and Civil Ties," *British Journal of Sociology* 8, no. 2 (1957): 130-45; Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); and Geertz, "Primordial and Civic Ties," 29-34.

<sup>5</sup>Linda Martín Alcoff, "Introduction. Identities: Modern and Postmodern," in *Identities: Race, Class, Gender, and Nationality*, ed. Linda Martín Alcoff and Eduardo Mendieta (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2003), 1-8; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991); and Laitin, *Identity in Formation*.

erences on the island's future relations with China. As Appendix 1 shows, the first survey was conducted in 1994 and the last in 2004. These data thus provide an excellent opportunity to examine the changing political identification and policy preferences of mainlanders over time.

### **The Formation of Identity: A Theoretical Framework**

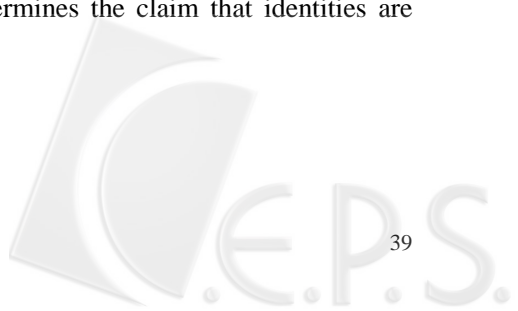
One of the major theoretical arguments for the development of identity is primordialism, which was originally developed by Edward Shils and later elaborated by Clifford Geertz.<sup>6</sup> Proponents of primordialism maintain that identities are deep-rooted in blood, culture, and language. A primordial attachment is "one that stems from the 'givens'—or, more precisely, as culture is inevitably involved in such matters, the assumed 'givens'—of social existence: immediate contiguity and kin connection mainly, but beyond them the givenness that stems from being born into a particular religious community, speaking a particular language, or even a dialect of a language, and following particular social practices." Attachments that are based on "blood, speech, [and] custom" are believed "to have an ineffable, and at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves." Although the effects of such primordial ties may vary from individual to individual, "for virtually every person, in every society, at almost all times, some attachments seem to flow more from a sense of natural—some would say spiritual—affinity than from social interaction."<sup>7</sup> As a result, psychological attachments rooted in blood, culture, and language are assumed to be given and they are not easy to change. Identity in the primordial conceptualization is thus natural, underived, and socially unconstructed.

The primordialist view has encountered serious challenges as more and more evidence shows that identities and attachments vary over time and can be constructed, which undermines the claim that identities are

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<sup>6</sup>See note 4 above.

<sup>7</sup>Geertz, "Primordial and Civic Ties," 31.



inherited and underivable.<sup>8</sup> According to the constructionist perspective, identities are more than the function of race and ethnicity. Through education and other socialization mechanisms, individuals are exposed to the cultures and norms of the society as well as the historical memories of the nation. Feelings of distinctiveness from other groups of people are thus formed and senses of belonging to certain congregations are created. Constructionists also contend that identities can be products of pragmatic choices by individuals. As Laitin pointed out, all societies have "cultural entrepreneurs" who propose new forms of identity, aspiring to become leaders of the newly formed identity groups. If individuals find these new forms of identity appealing, they may make a conscious choice of adopting the new identities that link them to certain groups.<sup>9</sup>

Meanwhile, scholarly research has demonstrated that state institutions may play a role in creating identities.<sup>10</sup> As most nations maintain an interpretative version of history which frequently emphasizes the oppression and exploitation of the people, a hostile "they-group" and unified "we-group" are formed. This collective group consciousness becomes an essential part of the public identity. In an attempt to change an existing identity or create a new identity, the state sometimes intentionally recognizes one or a few groups and ignores others. This is frequently done by subsidizing or celebrating the chosen groups' languages, cultures, or historical memories through education, propaganda, and other political means. As a result, the celebrated group identity becomes the dominant one in society and a public identity is likely to be constructed through the engineering of the state.

Indeed, individuals are constrained by the influences of their immediate families and communities. Kinship and ethnic ties may have direct

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<sup>8</sup>Jack David Eller and Reed M. Coughlan, "The Poverty of Primordialism: The Demystification of Ethnic Attachments," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 16, no. 2 (1993): 183-202; Chi Huang, "Dimensions of Taiwanese/Chinese Identity and National Identity in Taiwan: A Latent Class Analysis," in "Taiwan's National Identity and Democratization," ed. T.Y. Wang, Special Issue of the *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 40, no. 1-2 (2005): 51-70; and Laitin, *Identity in Formation*.

<sup>9</sup>Laitin, *Identity in Formation*.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

and long-lasting effects on an individual's psychological attachment. However, an individual's search for a proper identity sometimes lasts for much of their youth. They could continue to adjust their character in relation to others without settling on a permanent one. Education and other events in society may have significant effects on the subsequent development of identity. In this context, the widely used but frequently criticized assimilation theory<sup>11</sup> can be added to the theoretical underpinning of our understanding of the dynamics of identity change.

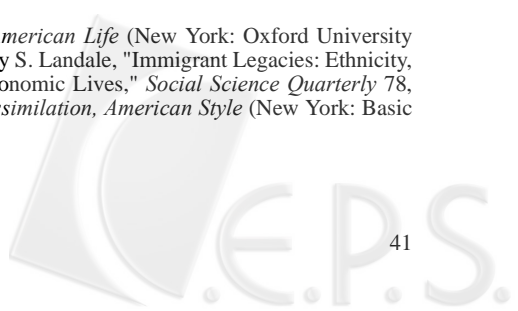
Assimilation theory has been widely used in explaining the socio-economic characteristics of immigrants and subsequent generations in American society.<sup>12</sup> In general, to assimilate means to become alike or to make alike, and assimilation implies a process of becoming similar or making similar.<sup>13</sup> While scholarly interest has focused on how the behavior of minority groups resembles that of the majority group as the former acquire human, cultural, and social capital through exposure to their adopted society, assimilation is not a one-way process. Majority and minority groups can be influenced by each other through various cultural, social, and political means and hence adopt the characteristics of other groups. In addition, assimilation theorists see intragenerational assimilation as incomplete even though it is recognized that acculturation could occur within the first generation of population. Because later generations are further removed from the experiences of earlier generations and have more contacts with the population of other groups, they are likely to be acculturated to a greater extent than their parents. The argument is that intergenerational

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<sup>11</sup>For a critique of assimilation theory, see Nathan Glazer, "Is Assimilation Dead?" *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 530 (1993): 122-36; and Rogers Brubaker, "The Return of Assimilation? Changing Perspectives on Immigration and Its Sequels in France, Germany, and the United States," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24, no. 4 (2001): 531-48.

<sup>12</sup>See, e.g., Milton Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); R. Salvador Oropesa and Nancy S. Landale, "Immigrant Legacies: Ethnicity, Generation, and Children's Familial and Economic Lives," *Social Science Quarterly* 78, no. 2 (1997): 399-416; and Peter Salings, *Assimilation, American Style* (New York: Basic Books, 1997).

<sup>13</sup>Brubaker, "The Return of Assimilation?"



effects of assimilation will be more apparent as the differences between descendants of immigrants and the local population are increasingly narrowed. The acculturation process presented by assimilation theorists thus can be used to examine the constructionist argument regarding identity formation in multiethnic societies. Because identity can be intentionally constructed or be a pragmatic choice of an individual, it is expected that individuals would adopt a certain identity if they are more acculturated in society.

### Political Changes in Taiwan

One of the major factors emphasized by the primordialists is ethnicity. Defined as "a named human population of alleged common ancestry, shared memories, and elements of common culture,"<sup>14</sup> an ethnic community is based on blood, culture, and common historical memories. Ethnicity does play an important role in Taiwanese politics.

There are three major ethnic groups in Taiwan: *benshengren* (本省人), Hakka (客家人), and *waishengren*.<sup>15</sup> *Benshengren* are those residents whose ancestors migrated to Taiwan from the Chinese mainland several hundred years ago and they constitute the largest ethnic group at 77 percent of the island's 23 million people. About 10 percent of Taiwan's total population is Hakka, descendants of immigrants who came to the island at roughly the same time as the *benshengren* from areas in central China. Both *benshengren* and Hakka are generally grouped together as "Taiwanese" even though they have different customs and habits and speak different dialects known as Minnan (閩南話) and Hakka, respectively. This is due to their ancestors' early arrival on the island and their similar political

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<sup>14</sup>Anthony Smith, "Culture, Community, and Territory: The Politics of Ethnicity and Nationalism," *International Affairs* 72, no. 3 (1996): 447.

<sup>15</sup>This study excludes aborigines from the analysis because they constitute less than two percent of the total population in Taiwan. For an analysis of Taiwan's ethnic groups, see Wang Fu-chang, "Zuqun yishi de xingcheng" (The formation of ethnic consciousness), *Lishi yuekan* (History Monthly), December 1998, 30-40.



experiences under the authoritarian rule of the KMT government. The term "*waishengren*" designates those Chinese migrants who fled to the island at the end of the Chinese civil war. With approximately 12 percent of the total population, the *waishengren* do not constitute a homogeneous ethnic group and display substantial variations of language, diet, customs, and habits due to their origins in various provinces of China.<sup>16</sup> The rocky start of mainlander-Taiwanese relations from the moment Chiang Kai-shek's forces first arrived on Taiwan in 1945 and their subsequent historical development, however, have imposed a distinct but common ethnic identity on those who are known as "mainlanders."

With Japan's unconditional surrender at the end of World War II, Taiwan was handed back to the KMT government after fifty years of Japanese colonial rule. The local residents' enthusiasm for return to the "motherland" was substantially dampened when mainland troops, who locals regarded as "beggars and thieves," were sent to take control of the island. Nationalist officials in turn viewed the islanders with suspicion, as they had been under the influence of the Japanese for half a century. By 1947, the animosity between the KMT government and local residents finally culminated in a bloody crackdown on the Taiwanese elite by Chiang's troops, a tragic event known as the February 28th Incident (二二八事件).<sup>17</sup> This outbreak of hostility solidified the local perception of the KMT government as simply a new foreign regime and occupying force. The ethnic cleavage between "mainlanders" and "Taiwanese" has since become the major division within society.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>See note 3 above; and Szu-yin Ho and I-chou Liu, "The Taiwanese/Chinese Identity of the Taiwan People in the 1990s," *The American Asian Review* 20, no. 2 (2002): 29-74.

<sup>17</sup>Tse-han Lai, Ramon H. Myers, and Wei Wou, *A Tragic Beginning: The Taiwan Uprising of February 28, 1947* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1991).

<sup>18</sup>For studies on national identity along ethnic lines in Taiwan, see, e.g., Stéphane Corcuff, "Taiwan's 'Mainlanders,' New Taiwanese?" in *Memories of the Future: National Identity Issues and the Search for a New Taiwan*, ed. Stéphane Corcuff (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2002), 163-95; and Wu Nai-teh, "Ziyou zhuyi yu zuqun yishi: souxun Taiwan minzu zhuyi de yishi xingtai jichu" (Liberalism and ethnic identity: in search of the basis of Taiwanese nationalism), *Taiwan zhengzhi xuekan* (Taiwan Political Science Review) 1 (1996): 5-40.

Ethnic division on the island was exacerbated by the KMT government's efforts to "re-Sinicize" local residents. Consistent with the constructionist perspective, the ruling elite imposed harsh authoritarian rule and used state institutions as tools to foster greater Chinese nationalism. These discriminatory measures included emphasis on a China-related curriculum in schools, prohibition of the teaching and speaking of local dialects, and restrictions on broadcasting ethnic TV and radio programs. The objective was to make local residents accept the view that Taiwan was a part of China and that China was their motherland. Activities that might encourage local identities and promote Taiwan independence were censored and suppressed. By recognizing and celebrating the greater Chinese identity, the KMT government intentionally depreciated and suppressed the Taiwanese identity. As Donald Horowitz correctly pointed out, the social recognition and political affirmation of cultures and languages of ethnic groups play important roles in understanding ethnic relations.<sup>19</sup> The discriminatory measures implemented by the KMT regime negatively affected not only local residents' prospects of getting decent careers but also their sense of personal worth in being Taiwanese. Resentment thus emerged against a government that was controlled by mainlanders, and this fed the arguments of pro-independence activists.

Meanwhile, this resentment and hostility on the part of the local population, coupled with the KMT government's official policy of "recovering the mainland," created a "guest mentality" among *waishengren*. Many mainlanders believed that their stay on the island would be temporary and they would soon return to their mainland homes. They were either unable or unwilling to learn about local culture and dialects, which prevented them from appreciating the cultural differences in a way that would have helped to narrow the ethnic gap on the island. Some mainlanders even developed a sense of cultural superiority and held local traditions and the island's Japanese cultural heritage in contempt, while the local population for

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<sup>19</sup>Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 219.

their part viewed mainlanders as uneducated and uncivilized "outsiders." Although not all mainlanders supported Chiang's authoritarian regime, many of them believed that the only way to survive in an unfriendly environment was to support the KMT government. This rational calculation and their emotional affinity to the Chinese mainland led mainlanders to espouse "greater Chinese nationalism" which considers the word "China" to represent a culture, a nation, and a state. In their minds, to be "Chinese" involved not only belonging to Chinese culture, but also political loyalty to and inclusion in a Chinese state known as *Zhongguo* (中國). Thus, mainlanders tended to view themselves as "Chinese" and considered the "Taiwanese" also to be Chinese in both the cultural and political senses of the term. For the majority of *waishengren*, the island of Taiwan was an integral part of a "greater China" and the eventual unification of Taiwan with the Chinese mainland was generally regarded as desirable.

When rapid democratization took place in the late 1980s, it brought about a sea change in Taiwan's politics, including the lifting of martial law, the legalization of political parties apart from the KMT, and the ending of restrictions on public assembly and freedom of speech. Previously banned or restricted topics in Taiwanese literature, language, and history, including the February 28th Incident, became popular and widely researched. The school curriculum deviated from the previously China-centered programs to make room for lessons on Taiwan's history and culture, a major change after decades of attempted obliteration. After Lee Teng-hui (李登輝) became the first Taiwan-born president in 1988, and later chairman of the then ruling KMT, exiled advocates of Taiwanese independence were allowed to return safely to the island and to openly espouse the independence cause. The constitutional changes that occurred during Lee's tenure as president further diluted the heritage brought by the Chiang family from the Chinese mainland and their mission to unify China. Acting like, in Laitin's words, "cultural entrepreneurs,"<sup>20</sup> some local politicians began to advocate ethnic harmony under such slogans as "collectivity of common fate" (生命

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<sup>20</sup>Laitin, *Identity in Formation*, 11.



共同體, *shengming gongtongti*), "the rising new nation" (新興民族, *xin-xing minzu*), and "the new Taiwanese" (新台灣人, *xin Taiwanren*) in an attempt to win votes and mitigate the ethnic tension between mainlanders and Taiwanese.<sup>21</sup> This gave a more all-inclusive identity to the *waishengren* group. Indeed, the eventual demise of the mainlander-supported New Party (NP, 新黨) in Taiwan after 1998 was clear testimony of this change.<sup>22</sup>

Externally, the international isolation of Taiwan imposed by Beijing prompted the Taipei government to challenge the notion of "one China" as it previously had been understood within the island as well as within the international community. In an attempt to alter the widely accepted idea that there is but one China and Taiwan is a part of China, the Lee administration pursued "pragmatic diplomacy" (務實外交, *wushi waijiao*), in a quest for a new framework in which the island would be treated as a distinct and separate state from China. When the Chinese government conducted missile tests near Taiwan in March 1996, aimed at discouraging support for Taiwan independence, its strategy of intimidation backfired and hardened the determination of Taiwan residents to resist Beijing's claim to the island. Meanwhile, Taiwan-mainland exchanges have flourished since the late 1980s despite continuing hostility between their governments and many *waishengren* have visited China. The sharp contrast between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait has led many of them to appreciate the more democratic way of life and economic prosperity they now enjoy in Taiwan and to ponder the meaning of being "Chinese."

In 2000, the pro-independence Chen Shui-bian was elected as the island country's president. The Chen administration, like the Chiang regime

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<sup>21</sup>Chang Mao-kuei, "'Xin Taiwanren' zhi fei lun" (A discussion of "the new Taiwanese"), *Guoce zhuankan* (National Policy Dynamic Analysis) 7 (January 5, 1999): 3-8.

<sup>22</sup>In 1993, dissatisfied with Lee Teng-hui's "Taiwan First" approach, a group of KMT members walked out of the party and organized the NP. Empirical analysis has shown that electoral support for the NP came primarily from voters of mainland origin. See Chen Yih-yen, *Woguo xuanmin de jiqun fenxi ji qi toupiao qingxiang de yuce: cong minguo bashiyi nian liwei xuanju tantao* (An analysis of Taiwan's electoral segments and their voting inclinations: an exploration based on the 1992 legislative election) (Taipei: Election Study Center, National Chengchi University, 1994). The authors want to thank an anonymous reviewer for bringing this point to their attention.

before it, selectively endorsed some aspects of Taiwan residents' historical memories. To encourage a sense of Taiwanese identity, special measures were adopted to honor the local population's sacrifices during the era of KMT authoritarian rule, in particular those related to the February 28th Incident. To emphasize the island's existence as a separate political entity from China, "greater China nationalism" and the related "Chinese identity" were sharply attacked during Chen's first four-year term. The Chen administration, also like the Chiang regime, used state institutions as tools to promote a public identity, which included adding the words "Issued in Taiwan" to the island's green passport cover and dropping the national emblem as the official logo of Taiwan's overseas missions.<sup>23</sup> With the revision of history textbooks, education has been used to change the collective memory of Taiwan's citizens<sup>24</sup> and Minnan began to be used in national examinations.<sup>25</sup> After Beijing passed the "Anti-secession Law" in March 2005, President Chen led a peaceful street demonstration in protest, denouncing China's threat of military force against the island.<sup>26</sup> All of these measures were aimed at de-Sinicizing the local population and promoting a Taiwanese identity and the proposition of Taiwan independence.

Aside from political interaction, social contact among various ethnic groups has also had important implications for mainlanders' identities. During the past few decades, the local population on the island has adjusted to the ideas, traditions, and dietary habits of the *waishengren*, while mainlanders have accustomed themselves to local cultures and languages. Since the early 1980s, a new generation of Taiwanese and *waishengren* has matured into adulthood and they have been relatively indifferent to the historical memories that divided them in the past. Constant contacts be-

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<sup>23</sup>New China-Taiwan Battle: 3 Words on Passports," *New York Times*, January 15, 2002, <http://www.nytimes.com>; and "Emblem Instructions Confirmed," *Taipei Times*, November 24, 2004, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2004/11/24/2003212329>.

<sup>24</sup>Jewel Huang, "Academics Quarrel over Chinese History Lessons," *Taipei Times*, September 22, 2003, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2003/09/22/2003068783>.

<sup>25</sup>Fiona Lu, "Examination Yuan Demands Politically Neutral Tests," *Taipei Times*, September 26, 2003, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2003/09/26/2003069266>.

<sup>26</sup>Keith Bradsher, "China's Hard Line Stirs Throng in Taiwan," *New York Times*, March 27, 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/27/international/asia/27taiwan.html>.

tween these ethnic groups in schools, workplaces, and other social settings have helped to narrow the differences between them. The ability to speak the official language—Mandarin—among Taiwanese and familiarity with local dialects among some *waishengren*, has also enhanced mutual understanding. Finally, interethnic marriages over the past few decades have blurred ethnic lines and produced a new generation that adapts more easily to different ideas from all ethnic groups.

Along with these political changes brought about by democratization and their increasing indigenization on the island, mainlanders, like other ethnic groups in Taiwan, have begun to reflect on the identity they held in the past and their position on the island's future relations with the Chinese mainland. Among the most important questions being raised are: Who is Chinese and who is Taiwanese? What are the differences between being Chinese and being Taiwanese? And, can one be both Chinese and Taiwanese?

### **The Identities of *Waishengren***

The traditional way of differentiating *waishengren* from other ethnic groups in Taiwan is based on administratively defined ethnicity, known as *jiguan* (籍貫) or provincial background. Under this system as implemented by the KMT government, a person was usually assigned the same provincial origin as his/her father. In doing this, the regime hoped that the tie between Taiwan and the Chinese mainland could be continued through the generations, thus keeping alive the ambitious mission to unify China. Although the *jiguan* system was based on the province of registration, a person's subjective ethnic identity was usually consistent with his/her administratively defined ethnicity. As the myth of "recovering the mainland" ebbed, the legitimacy of the *jiguan* system weakened and it was finally abolished in 1992. The abolition allowed many polling organizations in Taiwan to stop asking respondents their administratively defined ethnicity as well as their subjective ethnic identity. Instead, the ethnic designations of respondents' parents were recorded. Constrained by available data,

**Table 1**  
**Ethnicity and Identities in Taiwan, 1994-2004**

Ethnic Groups	Identities	1994	1995	1996	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
All (N = 14,084)	Taiwanese	33.0	28.9	35.7	42.8	42.9	37.7	39.9	45.3	47.0
	Dual	42.9	47.1	46.5	42.9	45.8	53.5	52.1	48.1	46.6
	Chinese	24.1	24.0	17.7	14.3	11.3	8.9	8.0	6.6	6.5
Mainlanders (N = 1,998)	Taiwanese	4.5	7.3	8.4	13.2	11.1	8.9	11.1	14.1	15.2
	Dual	38.3	35.7	48.5	48.7	59.5	60.0	67.9	68.3	68.7
	Chinese	57.1	57.0	43.1	38.2	29.4	31.1	21.0	17.6	16.1
<i>Benshengren</i> or Hakka (N = 12,086)	Taiwanese	36.9	33.8	39.7	47.2	46.9	41.5	46.9	49.7	51.6
	Dual	43.5	49.7	46.3	42.1	44.1	52.6	48.3	45.3	43.3
	Chinese	19.6	16.4	14.0	10.7	9.1	5.9	4.8	5.0	5.0

**Note:** Column percentages in cells.

this study operationally defines *waishengren* as those whose fathers are designated mainlanders, which is consistent with the traditional practice in Taiwan.

In almost identical wording, the nine surveys asked respondents the following question:

In our society, some people consider themselves as Taiwanese, and others view themselves as Chinese, while still others see themselves as both Taiwanese and Chinese. What is your view on this matter?

Table 1 presents the nine survey results from 1994 to 2004, which compare the trends of changing identities of *waishengren* with those of *benshengren* and Hakka with the latter two ethnic groups combined together.<sup>27</sup> Several important conclusions can be drawn from the data in

<sup>27</sup>Previous studies have shown that *benshengren* and Hakka share common historical experiences and thus have similar identities and policy preferences. See Wu Nai-teh, "Rentong chongtu he zhengzhi xinren: xianjieduan Taiwan zuqun zhengzhi de hexin nanti" (Identity conflict and political trust: the key dilemma of contemporary ethnic politics in Taiwan), *Taiwan shehuixue* (Taiwanese Sociology), 2002, no. 4:75-118. Although the statistical



table 1. First, treating the distribution of identities in Taiwan as a uni-dimensional spectrum, the overall ratio of Chinese identifiers dropped significantly over the past decade from 24.1 percent in 1994 to only 6.5 percent in 2004. During the same period, there was a fourteen percentage point increase in Taiwanese identifiers and a four percentage point rise in dual identifiers on the island. In 2004, almost equal numbers of islanders considered themselves as Taiwanese or had adopted a dual identity (both Chinese and Taiwanese). Second, the ratio of Chinese identifiers among *waishengren* has declined significantly from 57 percent in 1994 to just over 29 percent in 2000—the year Chen Shui-bian began his first term as president. Four years later, the percentage of Chinese identifiers among the mainlander population declined even further to only 16 percent, a drop of more than 70 percent in just ten years. As Taiwanese identifiers among *benshengren* and Hakka have increased from 37 percent to 52 percent during the past decade, Taiwanese identifiers among *waishengren* have also increased in the same period. However, instead of switching to a Taiwanese identity, the majority of mainlanders have adopted a dual identity. By 2004 about 70 percent of them had accepted that they were Taiwanese as well as Chinese, an increase of more than 75 percent since 1994. The empirical evidence indicates that, while continuing to hang on to an element of Chinese identity, more and more mainlanders on the island have come to accept a part of their identity as being Taiwanese.

These findings suggest that ethnic factors continue to exert a significant effect on the formation of identity in Taiwan, as the primordialists would argue. That mainlanders have undergone a significant adjustment in their identities seems also to vindicate the constructionist argument that identities can be constructed. It then prompts the question: Among mainlanders in Taiwan, who have been the most receptive to such changes? Based on the constructionist and the assimilationist theories, it is hypothesized that *waishengren* are more likely to adopt a partly Taiwanese identity

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results are not presented here, the analysis of the current study agrees with this assessment. To simplify the presentation, table 1 thus combines the survey responses of both ethnic groups.



if they are second-generation mainlanders, or if they have *benshengren* or Hakka mothers, or have received higher education. It can also be hypothesized that identity change among mainlanders is a response to political engineering by the Taipei leadership through its various de-Sinicization policies implemented in recent years.

To assess mainlanders' changing Chinese/Taiwanese identity in a multivariate analysis, several independent variables have been created and they are all measured dichotomously. The variable of *generation* is coded 1 for the younger generation (born after 1949) and 0 otherwise. The variable of *mother's ethnicity* is coded 1 for having a *benshengren* or Hakka mother and 0 otherwise. Respondents' education level is recoded into two dummy variables, *senior high and associate degree* and *college (and above) degree*, with respondents of junior high school education and lower as the baseline group. Constrained by available data, there are no direct measures to assess the effects of various de-Sinicization policies employed by politicians to foster the Taiwanese identity. However, if these political measures were successful, one would expect an increase in the number of Taiwanese identifiers since Chen Shui-bian was elected president. Eight yearly dummy variables, *2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999, 1996, and 1995*, are thus created with the 1994 survey as the baseline group.<sup>28</sup> Finally, respondents' *gender* is included as a control variable, with male respondents being coded as 1 and 0 otherwise.

Because the dependent variable, *Chinese/Taiwanese identity*, has three non-ordered categories, a multinomial logit model is used. Specifically, the regression model takes the form of

$$\ln\Omega_{m|b}(X) = \ln \frac{\Pr(y=m|x)}{\Pr(y=b|x)} = X\beta_{m|b}, \quad \text{for } m = 1 \text{ to } J - 1,$$

where  $b$  is the base category for comparison;  $\ln\Omega_{m|b}(X)$  is the conditional odds of having other responses relative to the base category;  $X$  is a vector

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<sup>28</sup>The authors understand that these are rather crude measurements of the effects of de-Sinicization policies. Constrained by data availability, this is the best that can be done.

**Table 2**  
**Multinomial Logit Analysis of Mainlanders' Chinese/Taiwanese Identity**

Variables & Categories	<i>n</i> = 1,934	Taiwanese Identity			Dual Identity		
		Coeff. (S.E.)	O.R.	% Change	Coeff. (S.E.)	O.R.	% Change
<b>Generation</b>							
Younger generation	1,172	.78 (.26)**	2.18	117.5	.68 (.15)**	1.97	97.1
Older generation	762	–	1.0	–	–	1.0	–
<b>Mother's Ethnicity</b>							
<i>Benshengren</i> or Hakka	810	1.47 (.22)**	4.33	333.3	.60 (.14)**	1.83	82.8
<i>Waishengren</i>	1,124	–	1.0	–	–	1.0	–
<b>Education</b>							
College & above	584	-.63 (.26)**	.53	-46.9	.48 (.17)**	1.61	61.1
Senior high/assoc.	905	-.95 (.24)**	.39	-61.5	.31 (.15)**	1.37	36.6
Junior high & below	445	–	1.0	–	–	1.0	–
<b>Gender</b>							
Male	1,120	-.15 (.18)	-.86	-14.3	-.01 (.12)	.99	-1.1
Female	814	–	1.0	–	–	1.0	–
<b>Year</b>							
2004	206	2.38 (.48)**	10.75	975.2	1.78 (.27)**	5.90	490.1
2003	193	2.11 (.49)**	8.21	721.1	1.56 (.27)**	4.75	374.9
2002	445	1.89 (.44)**	6.63	563.2	1.45 (.22)**	4.26	326.0
2001	213	1.13 (.48)**	3.11	211.1	.85 (.24)**	2.34	134.2
2000	122	1.47 (.52)**	4.34	334.4	1.0 (.28)**	2.71	171.3
1999	150	1.34 (.49)**	3.81	281.7	.57 (.26)*	1.77	77.3
1996	160	.87 (.50)	2.38	137.8	.52 (.25)*	1.68	68.4
1995	295	.53 (.47)	1.71	70.5	-.16 (.22)	.85	-15.1
1994	150	–	1.0	–	–	1.0	–

**Notes:** Coeff. = Regression coefficient; S.E. = Standard error; O.R. = Adjusted odds ratio.  
 \*Significant at 5%; \*\*Significant at 1%; Chinese Identity is the comparison group.

of independent variables,  $\beta$  is a vector of regression parameters, and  $J$  is the number of categories in the response variable.

Using the Chinese identity as the baseline for comparison, table 2 presents the regression coefficients and corresponding adjusted odds ratios (O.R.) after fitting the multinomial logit model with *Chinese/Taiwanese*

*identity* as the dependent variable.<sup>29</sup> It shows that the coefficients of *generation* variable are statistically significant for both Taiwanese/Chinese and dual/Chinese identity comparisons. Specifically, compared with the older generation, being a younger generation mainlander increases the odds of having a Taiwanese or dual identity relative to a Chinese identity by a factor of 2.18 and 1.97. Having a *benshengren* or Hakka mother will also increase a *waishengren's* odds of possessing a dual identity by 83 percent but it will substantially boost the odds of having a Taiwanese identity by a wide margin of 333 percent. Although the coefficients of the two education variables are statistically significant for both Taiwanese/Chinese and dual/Chinese identity comparisons, they bear opposite signs. Contrary to the hypothesis, more formal education on the island has in fact reduced the likelihood of mainlanders accepting a Taiwanese identity and promoted the Chinese identity among them. Previous analysis has shown that better-educated people are more capable of elaborate thinking. When confronted with a question of Chinese/Taiwanese identity, well-educated respondents are likely to base their answers on historical, cultural, and ethnic linkages between Taiwan and China.<sup>30</sup> Finally, while a respondent's gender has no effect on mainlanders' identities, the findings indicate that both Taiwanese and dual identities have grown consistently stronger over the years. The change is particularly apparent since 2002, two years after Chen's election, as the odds of having the Taiwanese identity against having a Chinese identity have increased by more than 500 percent each year since 2002 and there is a growth of more than 300 percent in dual identity during the same period. While such dramatic changes may be due to a variety of factors,

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<sup>29</sup>Because all of the independent variables included in the model are categorical, this study assesses the severity of multicollinearity by examining the standard errors in the models, the Kappa scores among independent variables, and the consistency of the regression results. Specifically, the standard errors in the model estimations are all below .53. The Kappa scores calculated among other dichotomous independent variables are all very small, except for the one between the two education variables which is -.57. Despite this slightly elevated Kappa score between the two independent variables, no inconsistent results were observed when modeling with various combinations of the independent variables. It is thus concluded that no serious multicollinearity exists in the models. See Thomas Ryan, *Modern Regression Methods* (New York: Wiley, 1997).

<sup>30</sup>See note 3 above.



**Table 3**  
**Yearly Predicted Probabilities on Identity Preferences for Younger**  
**Generation Mainlanders with Selected Characteristics**

Types of Individual	Year	Taiwanese Identity	Dual Identity	Chinese Identity
Younger generation with <i>benshengren</i> or Hakka mother  <i>waishengren</i> mother				
	1994	.09 .03	.54 .43	.36 .53
	1995	.16 .06	.47 .37	.37 .56
	1996	.15 .06	.61 .55	.24 .40
	1999	.21 .08	.57 .54	.22 .38
	2000	.18 .07	.66 .64	.16 .29
	2001	.15 .06	.66 .62	.19 .32
	2002	.19 .08	.70 .71	.11 .21
	2003	.20 .09	.70 .72	.10 .19
	2004	.22 .10	.70 .75	.08 .16
Younger generation with college or higher education junior high or lower education				
	1994	.02 .10	.62 .39	.36 .50
	1995	.03 .17	.58 .33	.39 .50
	1996	.02 .17	.73 .47	.25 .36
	1999	.04 .25	.73 .44	.24 .32
	2000	.03 .22	.80 .53	.17 .25
	2001	.03 .18	.78 .53	.19 .29
	2002	.03 .24	.85 .59	.12 .18
	2003	.04 .26	.86 .58	.10 .16
	2004	.04 .28	.87 .59	.09 .13

**Note:** Total probability may not equal one due to rounding.

they nevertheless provide indirect evidence that the various measures implemented by the Chen administration have had the effect of encouraging the Taiwanese identity and suppressing the Chinese identity.

Since a large number of older generation mainlanders are in their seventies or eighties, the younger generation will increasingly replace them and become the majority of the ethnic group. The data in table 3 show that younger generation mainlanders with a *benshengren* or Hakka

mother are more likely to develop a Taiwanese identity and less likely to have a Chinese identity than those with a *waishengren* mother. By contrast, they are less likely to have a Taiwanese identity and much more likely to develop a dual identity if they have received a high school or college education. Most importantly, the data indicate that there is an overall trend for mainlanders in Taiwan to increasingly shift away from a Chinese identity to a dual identity and, albeit less so, to a Taiwanese identity. The next question is how this trend toward Taiwanese and dual identities, along with other assimilation factors, has affected mainlanders' positions on the island's future relations with China.

### **Mainlanders' Policy Preferences**

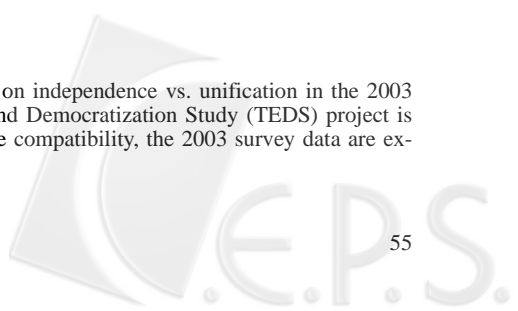
To assess the policy positions of mainlanders on Taiwan's future relations with China, this study utilizes responses to the following question:

There are different views on the future relationship between Taiwan and the mainland. Which of the following do you prefer: (1) Taiwan should pursue unification with the mainland as soon as possible; (2) Taiwan should maintain the status quo now and then pursue unification with the mainland at a later date; (3) Taiwan should maintain the status quo now and make its final decision later; (4) Taiwan should maintain the status quo indefinitely; (5) Taiwan should maintain the status quo now and then pursue *de jure* independence at a later date; and (6) Taiwan should pursue *de jure* independence as soon as possible.

By combining options 1 and 2, and options 4, 5, and 6, the variable of *policy preferences* is created with three types of responses: "prefer independence," "status quo now with future action undetermined," and "prefer unification."<sup>31</sup> Consistent with the overall trend on the island, mainlanders' backing for unification has steadily declined while their support for independence has increased. Preference for unification with China dropped

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<sup>31</sup>Unfortunately, the wording of the question on independence vs. unification in the 2003 survey collected under Taiwan's Election and Democratization Study (TEDS) project is different from the previous ones. To ensure compatibility, the 2003 survey data are excluded from the current analysis.



**Table 4**  
**Opinion Distribution of Mainlanders' Positions on the**  
**Unification/Independence Issue**

Ethnic Groups	Policy Preferences	1994	1995	1996	1999	2000	2001	2002	2004
All (N = 11,448)	Prefer independence	28.5	29.1	34.3	36.4	28.7	30.4	32.6	44.0
	Status quo now, future action undetermined	38.9	39.3	39.8	35.9	43.3	42.4	41.5	38.3
	Prefer unification	32.7	31.5	25.8	27.7	28.0	27.2	25.9	17.7
Mainlanders (N = 1,766)	Prefer independence	9.6	12.1	16.0	19.3	13.1	17.1	13.1	22.6
	Status quo now, future action undetermined	28.1	26.9	27.0	26.0	33.6	30.1	38.6	42.1
	Prefer unification	62.3	61.0	57.1	54.7	53.3	52.8	48.3	35.3
<i>Benshengren</i> or Hakka (N = 9,682)	Prefer independence	31.4	33.5	37.3	39.1	30.8	32.2	37.5	47.4
	Status quo now, future action undetermined	40.5	42.5	41.9	37.5	44.7	44.1	42.2	37.7
	Prefer unification	28.1	24.0	20.7	23.4	24.5	23.7	20.3	14.9

**Note:** Column percentages in cells.

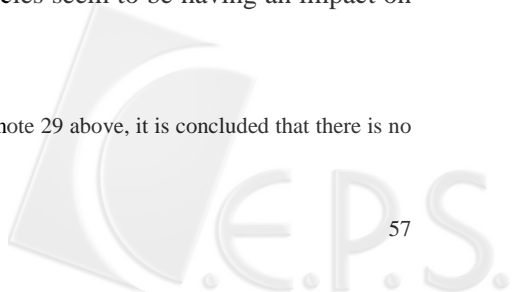
almost thirty percentage points from 62.3 percent in 1994 to just above 35 percent in 2004 while preference for Taiwan independence increased more than twofold, from 9.6 percent to 22.6 percent during the same period. Preference for maintaining the status quo without committing to Taiwan's future status has also increased, as more than 40 percent of mainlanders are now taking an overtly "wait and see" attitude. Compared with Taiwanese, *waishengren* have consistently given more support to unification than to independence by a wide margin. However, a significant proportion of *waishengren*, *benshengren*, and Hakka have adopted a "wait and see" attitude. It appears that mainlanders and other ethnic groups on the island are converging on a shared policy position regarding Taiwan's future relations with China.

To assess the effects of identity change and other assimilation factors, *policy preferences* is regressed on the aforementioned independent variables with two additional dummy variables, *Taiwanese identity* and *dual*

*identity*, in the analysis.<sup>32</sup> Because the dependent variable has three non-ordered categories, the previous multinomial logit model is used with "prefer unification" as the baseline group for comparison. The coefficients of both identity variables and the variable of *generation* are statistically significant in both panels and bear positive signs (see table 5). Specifically, the odds of supporting independence are thirteen and two times greater for respondents who possess Taiwanese and dual identities respectively, while the odds of preferring the status quo and taking an undetermined position are 435 percent and 123 percent stronger for these respondents. This means that, compared with respondents holding a Chinese identity, mainlanders with a Taiwanese or dual identity are much more likely to have a policy position leaning toward Taiwan independence or to adopt a "wait and see" attitude regarding the island's future relations with China. Younger generation mainlanders are also more likely to support Taiwan independence or to prefer maintenance of the status quo than the older generation. After adjusting for identity and other variables included in the model, the coefficients of mother's ethnicity are not statistically significant in either panel. The coefficients of both education dummy variables are statistically insignificant for the undetermined/unification comparison but are statistically significant for the independence/unification comparison and bear negative signs. Again, formal education in Taiwan has not only curbed the development of a Taiwanese identity among mainlanders, as shown in table 2, but also moderated their support for Taiwan independence. The results also show that male mainlanders are less likely to support independence or to adopt an undetermined position than female respondents, by a factor of .5 and .63 in the odds ratio. The gender difference in policy preferences is an interesting one which deserves an in-depth investigation in another study. Finally, the coefficient associated with 2004 is the only statistically significant yearly dummy variable and bears a positive sign. After four years, Chen Shui-bian's de-Sinicization policies seem to be having an impact on

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<sup>32</sup>Following the same procedure discussed in note 29 above, it is concluded that there is no severe multicollinearity in the model.



**Table 5**  
**Multinomial Logit Analysis of Mainlanders' Policy Preferences**

Variables & Categories	<i>n</i> = 1,674	Prefer Independence			Maintain Status Quo Now		
		Coeff. (S.E.)	O.R.	% Change	Coeff. (S.E.)	O.R.	% Change
<b>Identity</b>							
Taiwanese	172	2.54 (.27)**	12.61	1,161.6	1.68 (.25)**	5.34	434.5
Dual	928	.71 (.20)**	2.03	102.6	.80 (.14)**	2.23	122.6
Chinese	574	–	1.0	–	–	1.0	–
<b>Generation</b>							
Younger Generation	1,017	.46 (.23)**	1.59	58.7	.67 (.16)**	1.96	96.0
Older Generation	657	–	1.0	–	–	1.0	–
<b>Mother's Ethnicity</b>							
<i>Benshengren</i> or Hakka	695	.33 (.20)**	1.38	38.5	.17 (.14)	1.18	18.4
<i>Waishengren</i>	979	–	1.0	–	–	1.0	–
<b>Education</b>							
College & above	515	-.97 (.24)**	.38	-62.2	.24 (.20)	1.27	26.5
Senior high/assoc.	792	-.90 (.22)**	.41	-59.2	.28 (.19)	1.33	32.7
Junior high & below	367	–	1.0	–	–	1.0	–
<b>Gender</b>							
Male	983	-.68 (.16)**	.50	-49.5	-.47 (.12)**	.63	-37.4
Female	691	–	1.0	–	–	1.0	–
<b>Year</b>							
2004	205	.96 (.37)**	2.63	162.1	.65 (.27)*	1.90	91.7
2002	437	.15 (.35)	1.16	15.8	.26 (.24)	1.30	30.1
2001	202	.38 (.37)	1.45	45.2	-.00 (.27)	1.00	-.2
2000	118	.09 (.43)	1.10	9.8	.09 (.30)	1.10	9.9
1999	143	.40 (.39)	1.49	48.8	-.12 (.30)	.88	-11.6
1996	152	.39 (.39)	1.47	47.4	-.03 (.29)	.97	-3.2
1995	280	.29 (.36)	1.33	33.3	.05 (.26)	1.04	4.7
1994	137	–	1.0	–	–	1.0	–

**Notes:** Coeff. = Regression coefficient; S.E. = Standard error; O.R. = Adjusted odds ratio.

\*Significant at 5%; \*\*Significant at 1%.

mainlanders' views on the issue of independence vs. unification.

In summary, the findings appear to confirm the hypothesis that *waishengren* in Taiwan have been increasingly acculturated through generational changes, interethnic marriages, and political socialization. In



particular, while formal education in Taiwan has curbed the development of a Taiwanese identity on the island, younger generation mainlanders are increasingly shifting away from a Chinese identity to a dual Chinese-Taiwanese identity. If a respondent's mother is a local native, he/she is more likely to develop a Taiwanese identity. The drastic change in *wai-shengren's* identities over the past few years also provides indirect evidence that Taipei's de-Sinicization policies have had the effect of fostering a Taiwanese identity and suppressing Chinese identity among mainlanders. Finally, this progressive shifting away from Chinese identity has led many mainlanders to be more supportive of Taiwan independence or maintaining the status quo while adopting an undecided position on the island's future relations with China.

### ***Waishengren* or New Taiwanese?**

The above analysis suggests that during the past decade mainlanders in Taiwan have been increasingly receptive to the "Taiwan First" proposition. Instead of thinking of themselves as Chinese only, more and more mainlanders have adopted a dual identity and consider themselves to be both Chinese and Taiwanese. Some have even gone as far as to assume a Taiwanese identity. While many mainlanders continue to be staunch supporters of the island's unification with China, they have also become less determined on this issue. Such a tendency is particularly strong among younger generation mainlanders and those mainlanders who have been exposed to local culture and traditions through interethnic marriages, even though formal education has curbed the development of a Taiwanese identity among mainlanders and tempered their support for Taiwan independence. The trend toward indigenization and de-Sinicization on the mainlanders' part may suggest the emergence of a "New Taiwanese" identity on the island. Because such a tendency is particularly obvious among *wai-shengren* who are more assimilated into Taiwanese society, mainlanders are expected to switch further to dual or Taiwanese identity in the years to come as assimilation effects grow stronger through interethnic

marriages, social contacts and generational changes, and, if they continue, Taipei's de-Sinicization policies.

What are the implications of these findings for Taiwan's domestic politics and relations with mainland China? First, the trend toward indigenization among mainlanders indicates that citizens of various ethnicities have increasingly converged toward identities and policy preferences that encompass the "Taiwan First" proposition. Such a trend suggests that commonalities on these issues across different ethnic groups are greater than their differences. Indeed, the island's local population has in the past perceived *waishengren's* strong Chinese identity as an indication of their being "outsiders." Mainlanders have frequently been accused of "lack of love for and loyalty toward Taiwan" and are suspected of engaging in activities that would "betray Taiwan" and/or "sell out Taiwan." In a vicious circle, these accusations and suspicions have in turn strengthened the mainlanders' sense of crisis and exacerbated their feeling of being outsiders. Despite the fact that mainlanders have been increasingly assimilated into Taiwanese society in recent years, we continue to see many politicians on the island using the issues of identity and Taiwan's future relations with China as rallying points for electoral support. As "Loving Taiwan" (愛台灣, *ai-Taiwan*) becomes a buzz word in the island's politics, the net result is a deeply divided society with enormous ethnic tension and a country that is essentially ungovernable.<sup>33</sup> Politicians on the island will need to reconsider the harm that is inflicted by such political rhetoric and campaign tactics.

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<sup>33</sup>The political polarization on the island is demonstrated by the frequent state of political gridlock in the legislature since 2000, the mudslinging during the 2004 presidential campaign, and the ongoing disputes and confrontations between the ruling and opposition elites in the aftermath of the 2004 presidential election. See Yu-Shan Wu, "Taiwan in 2000: Managing the Aftershocks from Power Transfer," *Asian Survey* 41, no. 1 (2001): 40-48; Yu-Shan Wu, "Taiwan in 2001: Stalemated on All Fronts," *ibid.* 42, no. 1 (2002): 29-38; Shelley Rigger, "Taiwan in 2002: Another Year of Political Droughts and Typhoons," *ibid.* 43, no. 1 (2003): 41-48; Shelley Rigger, "Taiwan in 2003: Plenty of Clouds, Few Silver Linings," *ibid.* 44, no. 1 (2004): 182-87; Associated Press, "Protest Breaks Out over Election in Taiwan," *New York Times*, March 26, 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/international/AP-Taiwan-Election.html>; Keith Bradsher, "Taiwan Riot Police Battle Election Protesters," *ibid.*, April 11, 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/11/international/asia/11TAIW.html>; and "Bian yu Lian: Mou youle Zhongguo, meile Taiwan."

Second, the fact that formal education has curbed the development of a Taiwanese identity among mainlanders and weakened their support for Taiwan independence suggests that institutionalized socialization is a formidable tool in shaping the Chinese/Taiwanese identity and islanders' policy positions on Taiwan's future relations with China. This may explain why the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP, 民主進步黨) government has actively promoted changes in the school curriculum. Indeed, since the year 2000, the Chen administration has adopted a series of de-Sinicization measures and promoted the teaching of Taiwanese history, geography, and literature in an attempt to further arouse Taiwanese consciousness on the island.

The empirical findings of this study also have significant implications for Taiwan's relations with mainland China. Mainlander respondents with a Taiwanese or dual identity are more likely to support independence or to take a "wait and see" position. Although many mainlanders continue to support unification, their increasing acculturation in Taiwanese society is likely to move more and more mainlanders away from this proposition. Time thus may not be on Beijing's side if the current cross-Strait political stalemate continues. With Taiwanese and dual identity on the rise among the staunchest supporters of unification on the island, the prospects for peaceful unification will grow weaker. While Beijing's leaders have used "united front" tactics to lure opposition leaders to visit the Chinese mainland, they still adhere rigidly to their "one country, two systems" (一國兩制) unification model which, as many opinion polls have revealed, is not acceptable to Taiwan citizens.<sup>34</sup> As a new generation of leaders is taking the helm in China, some creative thinking is needed in order to resolve the cross-Strait dispute peacefully.

Finally, the empirical findings presented above suggest that both primordialism and constructionism are useful in explaining the development and formation of identity. The fact that mainlanders are more likely

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<sup>34</sup>T.Y. Wang and I-chou Liu, "Contending Identities in Taiwan: Implications for Cross-Strait Relations," *Asian Survey* 44, no. 4 (2004): 568-90.

to be Chinese identifiers than local natives and have tended to be more supportive of Taiwan's unification with China during the past decade indicates that ethnic ties and language have direct and long-lasting effects on their identities and policy preferences. However, in response to the political and social changes on the island, *waishengren* have increasingly shifted away from a Chinese identity and the unification proposition. This change also vindicates the constructionist perspective. Thus, though identities may be deep-rooted in blood, culture, and language, they may also be structurally constructed.

**Appendix 1**  
**Information on Survey Data**

Title of the Survey	Date of Implementation	Sample Size
Electoral Behavior and Political Democratization in Taiwan: A Study Based on the Magistrate Election in 1993	July 1993~June 1994	1,394
Electoral Behavior and Democratization in Taiwan: A Study Based on the Elections for Taiwan Governor, Taipei Mayor, and Kaohsiung Mayor in 1994	July 1994~June 1995	1,704
An Interdisciplinary Study of Voting Behavior in the Presidential Election	July 1995~December 1996	1,396
Constituency Environment and Electoral Behavior: An Interdisciplinary Study on the Legislative Election of 1998	July 1998~December 1999	1,207
An Interdisciplinary Study of Voting Behavior in the Presidential Election of 2000	July 1999~December 2000	1,181
Taiwan's Election and Democratization Study, 2001 (TEDS 2001)	June 2001~July 2002	2,022
Taiwan's Election and Democratization Study, 2002 (TEDS 2002): Elections of Taipei and Kaohsiung Cities	August 2002~July 2003	2,443
Taiwan's Election and Democratization Study, 2003 (TEDS 2003)	June 2003~May 2004	1,674
Taiwan's Election and Democratization Study, 2002-2004 (III): The Presidential Election, 2004 (TEDS 2004)	December 2003~May 2005	1,823

**Note:** The nine sets of survey data collected in Taiwan were based on multi-stage probability samples. Treating Taiwanese residents aged twenty and above as the population, individual respondents were identified through a three-stage sampling process with the exception of TEDS 2002 survey. Because Taipei (台北市) and Kaohsiung (高雄市) are the largest cities in Taiwan and are highly urbanized, individual respondents of TEDS 2002 survey were selected through a two-stage process. In general, the sampling procedure involves a primary stage sampling of 359 townships and cities, followed by a second stage sampling of villages and "li" (里)—a basic unit of city administration—and concluding with the random selection of ten to thirty respondents at the final stage. Note that this process skips the identification of housing units before the selection of individual respondents. This is possible because Taiwan has a system of household registration which provides a complete listing of residents of each household. Because each stage of sampling was performed with a systematic sampling procedure and with probabilities proportionate to the assigned measures of size (PPS), the final equal probability samples of individual respondents were retained. The nine sets of survey data are available for academic analysis and are accessible to the general public. Interested readers may visit the website of the Election Study Center, National Chengchi University (國立政治大學選舉研究中心), for the data release application form: <http://www2.nccu.edu.tw/~s00/eng/application/application.htm>.

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