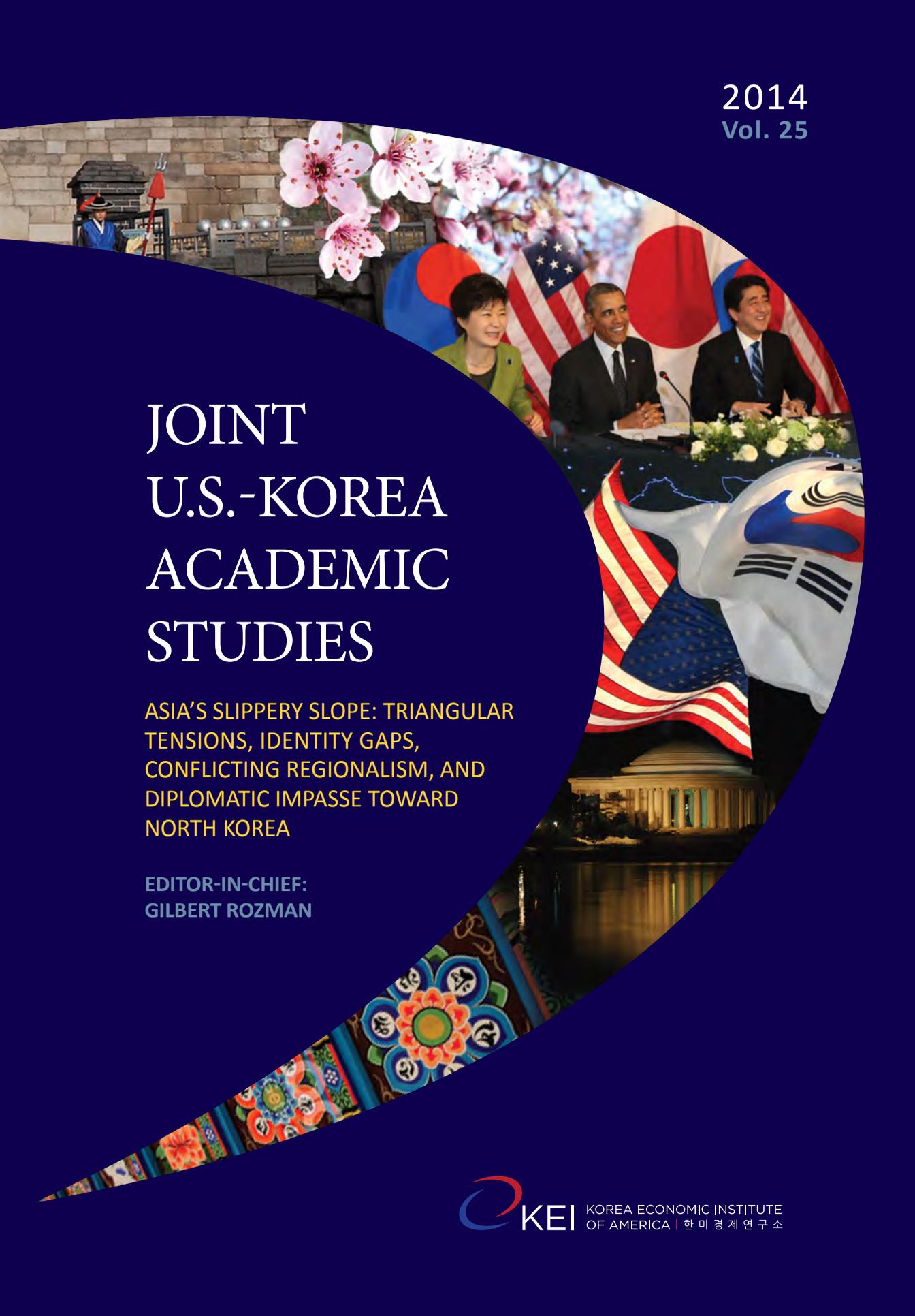


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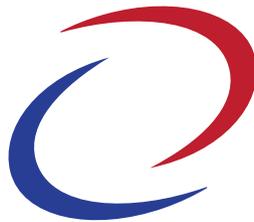
ASIA'S SLIPPERY SLOPE: TRIANGULAR
TENSIONS, IDENTITY GAPS,
CONFLICTING REGIONALISM, AND
DIPLOMATIC IMPASSE TOWARD
NORTH KOREA

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:
GILBERT ROZMAN

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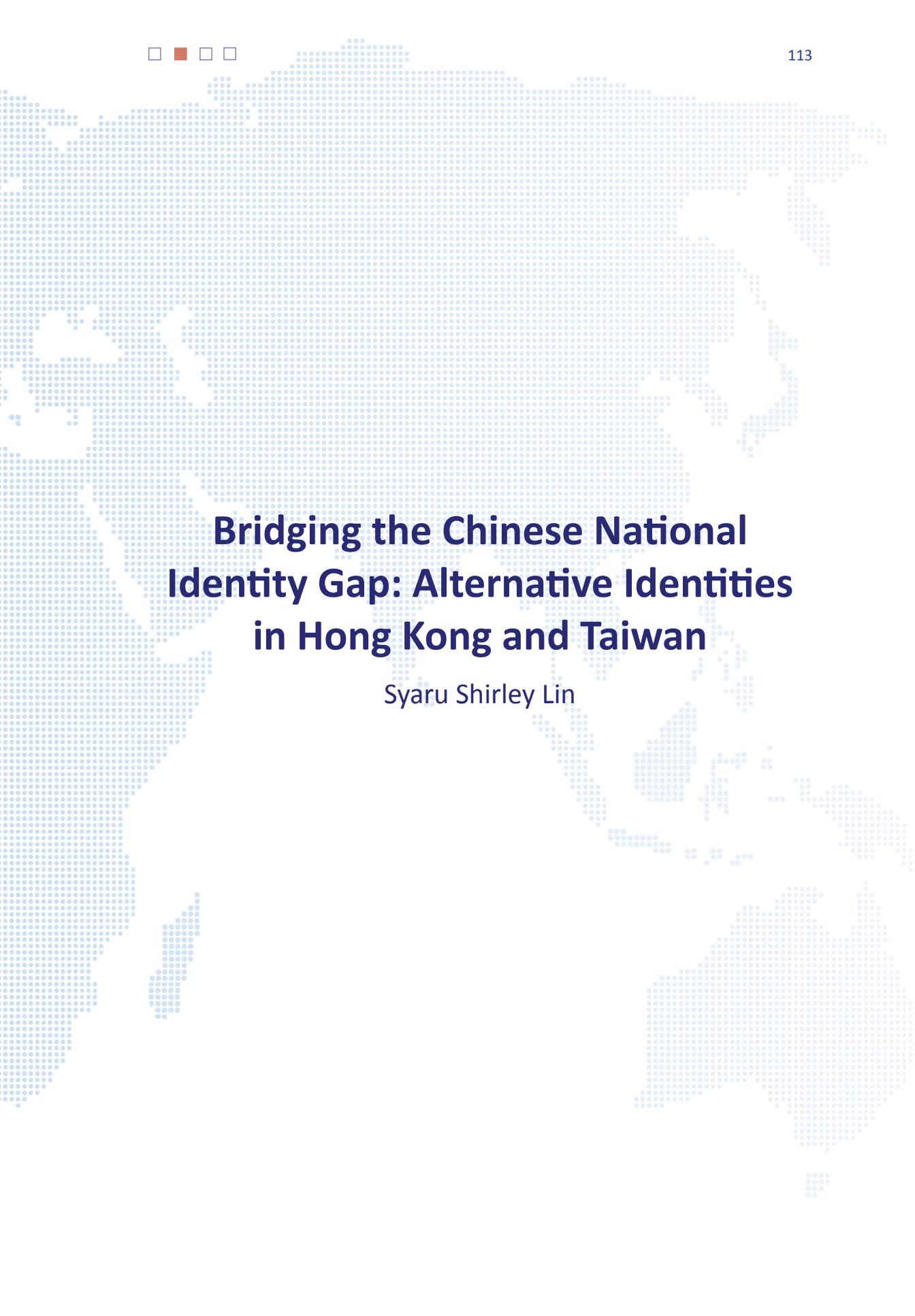
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NATIONAL IDENTITY APPROACHES
TO EAST AND SOUTH ASIA



Bridging the Chinese National Identity Gap: Alternative Identities in Hong Kong and Taiwan

Syaru Shirley Lin

After more than one hundred years of colonial rule, China regained sovereignty over Hong Kong in 1997 and is now seeking the eventual return of Taiwan, which has enjoyed de facto independence since the Kuomintang (KMT) government retreated there from the mainland in 1949. China has continued to expand its social and economic ties with Hong Kong and Taiwan. However, despite China's deepening economic integration with Hong Kong and Taiwan and the transfer of sovereignty over Hong Kong from Britain to China in 1997, surveys show that there has been no increase in Chinese identity among the people in Hong Kong or Taiwan. Instead, there is a rise in local identities. Beijing is determined to bridge the identity gap in both regions in the belief that the development of a Chinese national identity is necessary to ensure political stability and territorial integrity. Its aim is to prevent Taiwan from declaring de jure independence and to secure the eventual unification of Taiwan with the rest of China, and with regard to Hong Kong, it seeks to ensure that the continued progress toward direct elections does not produce an unacceptable legislature or chief executive. Promoting Chinese national identity in both Hong Kong and Taiwan is seen as important to achieving those goals.

China has employed both soft approaches, such as introducing national education and patriotic propaganda, and hard tactics, such as visa denials to those whom it believes are promoting a local identity. Neither strategy has been effective in bridging the identity gap. This chapter seeks to understand the widening gap between a Chinese national identity and the alternative local identities that are gaining ground in both regions, and to assess the prospect that people in either region will regain or adopt a Chinese national identity.

DEEPENING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

After China began its program of economic reform and opening in the 1980s, it did so primarily through Hong Kong and Taiwan, whose businessmen benefitted greatly from being the first investors to take advantage of cheap labor and favorable policies for "Overseas Chinese." Initially, China's goals were primarily economic, but in the last decade, China has given even greater priority to economic and social integration with Hong Kong and later, Taiwan, this time not just to promote China's own economic growth, but also in the hope such integration would enhance people's sense of Chinese national identity.

This renewed emphasis on cross-border integration began in 2003, when Hong Kong experienced an outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and a dramatic economic slowdown under an already unpopular chief executive, C.H. Tung. Beijing tried to revitalize Hong Kong's economy by the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA), which granted Hong Kong preferential access to the Chinese market. The industries receiving preferential terms under CEPA now constitute 58.5 percent of Hong Kong's GDP. To date, CEPA is the most liberalized free trade agreement (FTA) signed by Beijing. When Taiwan and China signed liberalization measures in services that went beyond what CEPA granted, CEPA was immediately amended in June 2013 to keep pace.¹ Furthermore, the Individual Visit Scheme was introduced in 2003, which greatly eased the restrictions on mainland Chinese tourists coming to Hong Kong.

As for Taiwan, Beijing introduced a series of economic measures to encourage cross-strait integration after 2008, in an attempt to strengthen the position of the pro-unification KMT, which had just returned to power after eight years of rule by the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). In June 2010, Beijing and Taipei signed the Cross-Strait Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), a preferential trade agreement (PTA) with an “early harvest” list that specified which goods and services would be liberalized first. Similar to CEPA, ECFA is a framework agreement that needs further negotiations to broaden the scope of liberalization. Beijing and Taipei also signed agreements allowing Chinese tourists to visit Taiwan, which had not been permitted. Group tours have been allowed since 2008, and a restricted number of individual travelers were also permitted starting in 2011.

Due to these liberalization measures, Hong Kong has become an even more important gateway to China. Since China’s opening in 1979, Hong Kong has become the leading source of foreign direct investment (FDI) for China. As of 2013, China is also the leading source of FDI for Hong Kong. In 2013, China is responsible for over half of Hong Kong’s re-exports and exports.² Similarly, Taiwan’s two-way trade with China has risen significantly and exceeded \$124.4 billion in 2013, accounting for 21.6 percent of Taiwan’s total foreign trade. Cumulative direct investment into China reached 62.7 percent of Taiwan’s total FDI, at \$133.7 billion as of year-end 2013, which is only a fraction of the real amount, given that most Taiwanese investments in China flow through Hong Kong and other offshore entities, making Taiwan one of China’s leading investors.³

Aside from trade and investment, Chinese tourists play an increasingly important role in the two economies, creating growth and jobs. In 2013, 40.7 million Chinese tourists visited Hong Kong, constituting 75 percent of total foreign visitors, and 2.8 million Chinese tourists visited Taiwan, constituting 36 percent of total foreign visitors.⁴ In addition, since the handover about 150 Chinese immigrants qualify to become Hong Kong residents per day, including primarily family members of Hong Kong residents and a limited number of professionals and investors. The number of new immigrants will soon reach one million, in a city of only seven million residents. Chinese immigration to Taiwan had been restricted to spousal reunions in the past, but those restrictions have since been relaxed to include professionals, with the cumulative number of immigrants now at more than 720,000, in an island of 23 million people.⁵

Beijing’s most significant economic measure integrating the three regions was to allow Hong Kong and Taiwan to become offshore renminbi (RMB) centers, since 2004 and 2013, respectively. Because of capital controls, RMB earnings from trade and investment could not be converted into home currencies. With this new status, Hong Kong and Taiwan businesses and individuals are able to convert RMB into their local currencies. Furthermore, with increased RMB liquidity in these two offshore markets, financial institutions will be able to gather deposits and offer RMB products.⁶ Some believe that the creation of these offshore RMB centers will produce a Greater China financial industry that will bind the three markets more closely together.⁷

THE GROWING IDENTITY GAP

Beijing's Definition of National Identity

Beijing has always defined its core interests as the perpetuation of CCP leadership and the socialist system, the preservation of Chinese sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the promotion of national unification.⁸ In the case of Hong Kong and Taiwan, strengthening a Chinese national identity, especially among the younger generation, is particularly important. President Xi Jinping concluded one of his first “China Dream” speeches at the 12th National People’s Congress (NPC) by calling for Hong Kong “compatriots” to prioritize the interests of the nation, and for Taiwan “compatriots” to be united in creating a new future for the Chinese nation.⁹ He appealed for “contributions from compatriots in Hong Kong and Taiwan in realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.”¹⁰ To Beijing, the political component of a Chinese national identity is acceptance of increasing Chinese influence in Hong Kong under the “One Country Two Systems” (OCTS) formula and future unification of Taiwan under the “one China” principle.

China had welcomed the resumption of sovereignty over Hong Kong, as a way not only of restoring national dignity after a “century of humiliation,” but also of showing that the successful governance of Hong Kong could be the model for governing Taiwan were unification to be achieved. Deng Xiaoping’s OCTS formula was devised specifically with Taiwan in mind, but it was also applied to Hong Kong as an interim system for fifty years following the handover. The structure of the OCTS is laid out in Hong Kong’s Basic Law, adopted by the NPC in 1984, to ensure a high degree of political, economic, and legal autonomy for what was to become a special administrative region (SAR). Although Hong Kong people seemed to accept the Basic Law and OCTS, they had had no say in the development of either, and there remained much ambiguity as to how Hong Kong would be governed over the next fifty years.¹¹

As a precondition to peace talks, Beijing has always insisted on Taipei’s acceptance of the “one China” principle, which provides that there is only one China, Taiwan is part of China, and Beijing is the only legitimate government of this China.¹² Taiwanese have voted for their legislators since 1992 and directly elected their president since 1996, and the island has its own army. An increasingly assertive and hostile China refuses to acknowledge the legitimacy of the elected Taiwanese government and has never renounced force against its Taiwanese “compatriots.” Only one of the two dominant political parties in Taiwan, the KMT, has accepted the “one China” principle, and then only partially. Under the “92 Consensus,” reached with Beijing in 1992, the KMT accepts that there is only one China of which Taiwan is a part, but has never acknowledged that Beijing is the sole government to represent this one China. The DPP continues to adhere to the principle that Taiwanese, not Beijing, must decide Taiwan’s future, and opposes establishing reunification as an a priori goal.¹³

Beijing has also emphasized that China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan are all one “nation” ethnically. Since people in Hong Kong and Taiwan are predominantly Han Chinese, they acknowledge their Chinese roots, but this does not translate easily into a common national identity.¹⁴ While Beijing stresses common ethnicity, people in Hong Kong and Taiwan place at least equal weight on strong civic values that Beijing either rejects or does not fully implement, such as freedom of speech, the rule of law and an independent judiciary, an open market economy, a clean bureaucracy, and democratic institutions. In particular, many look with great sympathy at how minorities in autonomous regions like Tibet and Xinjiang have suffered from political

repression. With over 120 cases of self-immolation of Tibetans in the last three years and arrests of Uighurs, including professionals and intellectuals who speak up for minority rights, Beijing’s record of governance of regions that were promised autonomy for people with different values has not been comforting.¹⁵

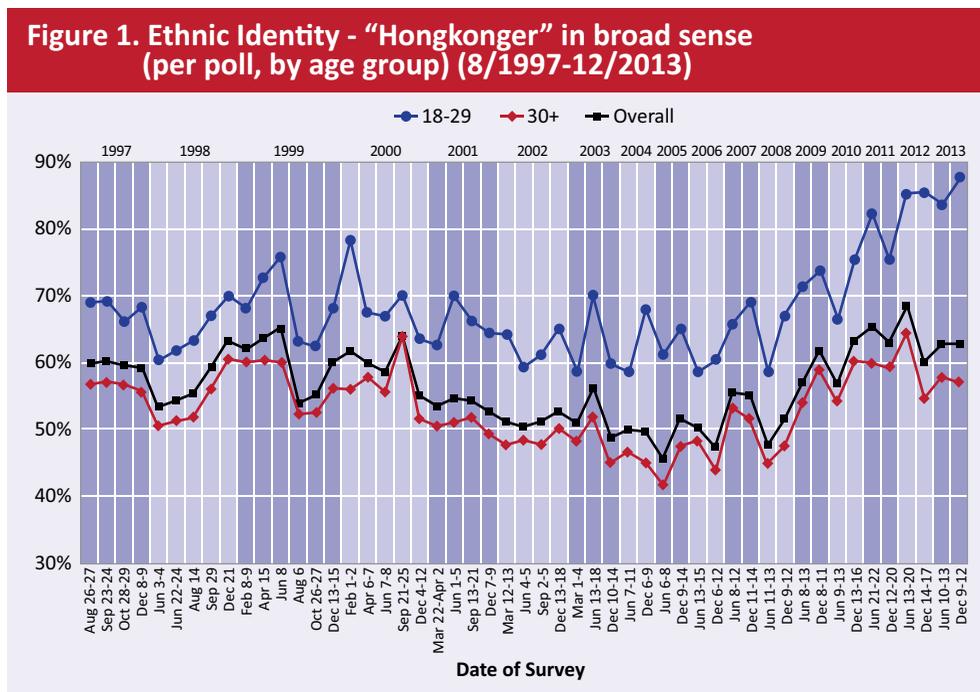
Definition and Measurement of Identity

In both regions, identity has been primarily defined in two ways. The first is self-identification: whether one chooses to identify oneself as “Chinese,” or adopt an alternative local identity. The second is preference for the region’s political structure and status, in particular, support for OCTS in Hong Kong and for unification in Taiwan. These two dimensions of identity have been measured through public opinion polls in both regions for many years.

The Identity Gap in Hong Kong

From 1846 to 1997, both the British and Chinese governments depoliticized the city and avoided mobilizing strong national sentiment in order to minimize anti-colonial sentiments. The local sense of identity that developed was rooted more in social and economic factors than in political institutions. Residents viewed Hong Kong society as much more developed and free compared to China, and took pride in speaking Cantonese, rather than Mandarin.¹⁶

In December 2013, more than sixteen years after the handover to Beijing, a survey found that 62.4 percent still saw themselves as having primarily a Hong Kong identity, either a “Hong Konger in China” for 27.6 percent or a “Hong Konger” for 34.8 percent of the respondents. This was an increase from the 56.7 percent in 1997. Only 36.5 percent called themselves a “Chinese in Hong Kong” or a “Chinese,” a decline from 38.7 percent in 1997. More alarmingly, despite years of “patriotic education,” 87.6 percent of people under 29 years old identified themselves as having primarily a Hong Kong identity. Only

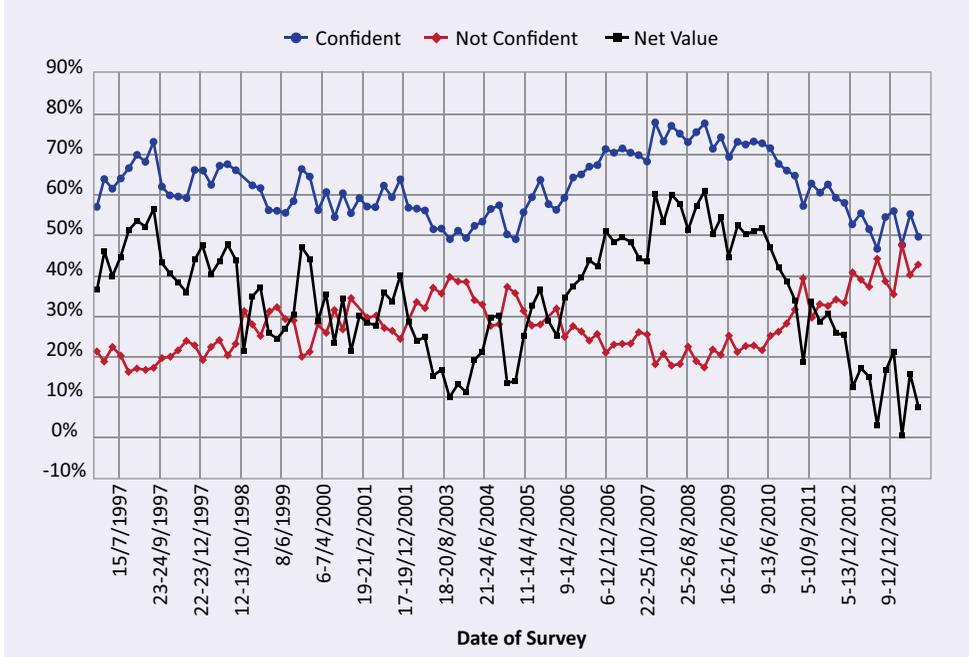


Source: HKU POP, December 2013

11.8 percent of the young people identified themselves as primarily Chinese, about one-third of the 31.6 percent recorded in 1997 (see Figure 1).¹⁷ In a separate 2013 Baptist University study, which showed the same trend but divided the respondents by profession, not one of the 93 students surveyed wanted to be known as simply “Chinese.”¹⁸

The second measure of Chinese identity used here is the degree of confidence that Hong Kong people have in OCTS. In July 1997, the percentage who felt confident about their political system exceeded 63.6 percent but has since dropped to 49.2 percent. Conversely, those who lacked confidence in the system had risen from 18.1 percent to 42.3 percent (see Figure 2).¹⁹ The degree of confidence is primarily dependent on whether people believe Hong Kong enjoys autonomy, free of Beijing’s interference and irrespective of changes in CCP leadership. This is especially tied to perceptions of whether Beijing will allow universal suffrage as provided for in Hong Kong’s Basic Law.²⁰ From 2007, the tenth anniversary of the handover, to 2013, confidence in OCTS dropped more dramatically than in previous years, declining 27 percentage points in both the POP polls and the surveys conducted by Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (HKIAPS), the two leading polling centers in Hong Kong.²¹ No matter which measure of identity is examined, whether self-identification or confidence in OCTS, the identity gap is widening, not narrowing.

Figure 2. People's Confidence in "One Country, Two Systems" (per poll) (7/1997 - 12/2013)



Source: HKU POP, December 2013

The Identity Gap in Taiwan

The gap between a Chinese identity and an alternative local identity is even more glaring. During the Cold War, after fifty years of Japanese colonial rule, the KMT attempted to impose a Chinese identity on Taiwanese in order to maintain its authoritarian rule and to maintain

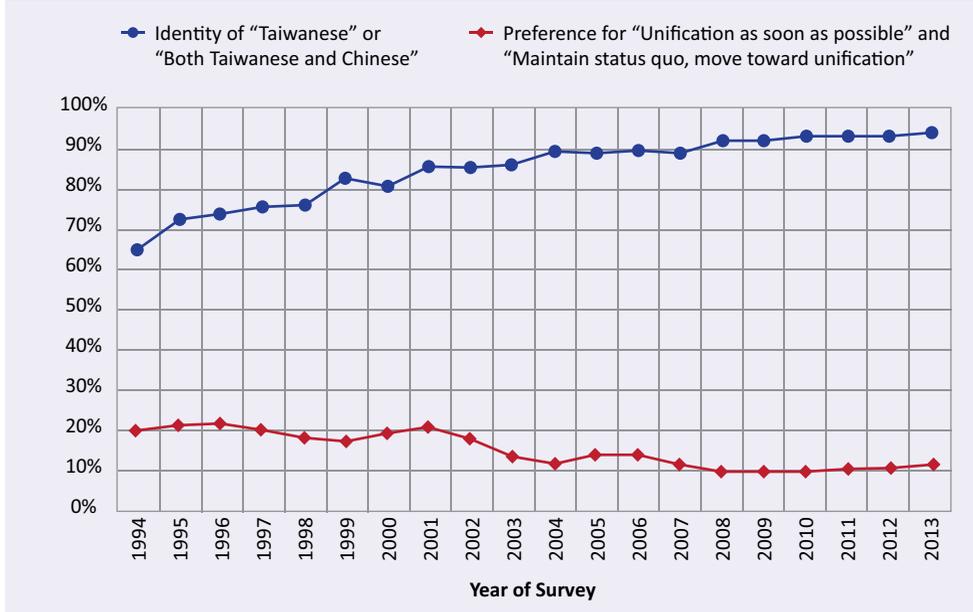
support for its ultimate goal of national unification. After the lifting of martial law in 1987, and as Beijing secured more diplomatic relations and membership in all major international institutions, Taiwanese began an open and long debate over their national identity with increasing criticism of the KMT-imposed Chinese identity and growing support for a more Taiwanese identity.²² This was reflected in the attempt by the DPP government to shift the focus of school curricula to be more Taiwan-centric. At the same time, the earlier primordial definition of that identity has given way to a “new Taiwanese” identity, defined less in terms of ethnicity and more as a commitment to the interests of the people of Taiwan and the island’s new civic values and democratic institutions.

In a June 2013 poll conducted by the Election Study Center of Taiwan’s National Chengchi University (ESC), fully 93.6 percent of Taiwanese identified themselves as “Taiwanese” or “Both Taiwanese and Chinese.” The exclusively “Taiwanese” category has increased more dramatically than the dual identity, rising from 17.6 percent in 1992 to 57.5 percent in 2013. Only 3.6 percent identified themselves as “Chinese” in 2013, a decline from 25.5 percent in 1992.²³ In two decades, a primarily Taiwanese identity has been accepted by the majority. Ironically, despite greater economic interdependence with China, the Taiwanese have continued to move away from a full or partial Chinese identity.²⁴ Although the increase in a local identity is across all age groups, the increase was higher in the younger generations, just as in Hong Kong. Young people do not think of China as an enemy and are open-minded about their relationship with China, but they have a firm sense of a local identity. Their attitude is no longer “anti-Chinese” but just “non-Chinese” and Taiwanese.²⁵

In order to analyze the similarities and differences between the two regions’ rising local identities, HKIAPS and Taiwan’s Academia Sinica conducted a joint “China Impact” study in April and May of 2013. Using a common questionnaire, the team found a high correlation between age and local identity in both regions. For Taiwanese respondents under the age of 34, nearly 90 percent identified themselves as simply, “Taiwanese,” compared to 76 percent in the other three age groups.²⁶ In terms of preference for unification or independence (known as future-national-status, or FNS), the June 2013 ESC polls showed that support for immediate unification had dwindled to only 2.1 percent. The majority preferred the status quo, 58.0 percent in 2013 vs. 12.9 percent in 1994. Support for autonomy, either the status quo or immediate or eventual independence had risen from 24.0 percent to 81.3 percent, while support for immediate or eventual unification had dropped to half of the level of two decades earlier. In terms of OCTS, the Taiwanese are equally skeptical. Polls in the last twenty years have repeatedly shown low acceptance rates of unification, the “one China” principle, or OCTS.²⁷ Most believe that any of these outcomes would only curtail Taiwan’s autonomy, especially as they watch Hong Kong’s autonomy erode. When self-identification is juxtaposed with FNS, it is clear that national identity on Taiwan is evolving rapidly in one direction—away from being “Chinese” or part of a Chinese state (see Figure 3).²⁸

This trend is clear even when respondents are permitted to express their preference under hypothesized conditions. Academia Sinica has conducted surveys every five years to show these conditional FNS preferences. The latest poll in 2010 showed the continued decline (29.6 percent vs. 54.1 percent in 1995, 48.2 percent in 2000, and 37.5 percent in 2005) in support for unification, even if China were to become democratic.²⁹

Figure 3. Taiwanese Self-identification and Preference for Future-National-Status (1994-2013)



Source: Compiled by author according to data from ESC, "Important Political Attitude Trend Distribution," June 2013.

CAUSES OF THE IDENTITY GAP

What is it about those more intense interactions that have caused identity in the two societies to pull away from China, and their attitudes to become less positive? The increased number of tourists and immigrants explains much of the growing identity gap. With only 7.2 million people living in 1,104 square km, Hong Kong will see the number of mainland Chinese tourists rise to 70 million in three years and 100 million in 2023, officials estimate.³⁰

Polls conducted on the Individual Visit Scheme have indicated the strong negative reaction most people in Hong Kong feel toward Chinese tourists, despite the benefits they bring to Hong Kong's economy.³¹ Mainland tourists overrun downtown shopping areas and attractions previously the domain of Hong Kong locals and the much smaller number of overseas tourists.³² The working class immigrants and students coming from China have put pressure on the city's limited resources, from housing and maternity wards to university placements. Repeated problems with tainted baby formula among mainland babies have led to thousands of Chinese coming to Hong Kong to buy imported baby formula and creating a shortage. A similar problem is the insufficient supply of maternity wards after mainland mothers started to flock to Hong Kong to give birth to obtain residency for their children, crowding out local mothers. New immigrants, many of whom are from low-income families, place more burdens on the city's welfare and education systems. Wealthy Chinese immigrants and visitors are resented as well, since they are believed to be bidding up real estate prices and flooding Hong Kong schools with students willing and able to pay full tuition. Once derided as "clumps of earth," given their rural backgrounds and unsophisticated ways, mainlanders

are now described as “locusts,” swarming into Hong Kong to denude the city of some of its most valuable assets. The more Hong Kong people interact with the mainland Chinese in China and in Hong Kong and become aware of the endemic problems throughout China, the more committed they are to maintain autonomy.³³

Similar problems from intense social interactions with mainland Chinese have arisen in Taiwan. Although Chinese tourists are reported to bring Taiwan an additional \$300 million of revenue per year, the impact on Taiwan’s environment and way of life are creating problems on a daily basis. From reports of visitors exhibiting uncivilized behavior to tourist groups taking up the entire daily admission quota for the National Palace Museum, the Taiwanese have been shocked and resentful.³⁴ These episodes are seen as typical, not exceptional.

Although Hong Kong and Taiwan have benefitted in terms of overall growth and employment as a result of CEPA, ECFA, and the liberalization of tourism, the gains are not perceived as being evenly distributed. After the conclusion of CEPA, inequality in Hong Kong widened dramatically, with the Gini coefficient increasing from 0.518 in 1996 to 0.537 in 2011, one of the highest in developed economies, worse than the United States and Singapore.³⁵ Many members of the middle class feel that the additional tourist revenues do not benefit them, only the business elites and real estate companies amidst skyrocketing real estate prices. Young people believe that their prospects for local jobs and college placements are being reduced by integration.³⁶ Nearly a third of the Hong Kong people feel dissatisfied with how SAR government has handled relations with the central government, up from 12.3 percent in 1997.³⁷

Similarly, instead of creating good will among a broad spectrum of Taiwanese, ECFA and its related agreements have led to intense domestic debates about the benefits and costs of becoming more integrated with the PRC.³⁸ Taiwanese analysts have concluded that high trade dependence on China has been associated with a rising poverty rate and inequality, and the working class increasingly believes they have been hurt by the implementation of ECFA.³⁹ After its signing, Taiwan became even more polarized between pro-China and anti-China groups. Nor has the increase in Taiwanese identity in terms of both self-identification and FNS preference for autonomy been reversed. The Service Trade Agreement (STA) signed in June 2013 as a supplement to ECFA opens more industries to mutual investments, but is perceived to threaten Taiwan’s economic security and job prospects. There has been widespread criticism of the STA and the pro-independence Taiwan Solidarity Union flat out opposes it.⁴⁰ The KMT government’s attempt in March 2014 to move the STA to a legislative floor vote without conducting a review of each provision has resulted in the largest student-led protest in Taiwan’s history. The students occupied the legislature for three weeks and did not end the protest until the government agreed to adopt a legislative framework to guide consideration of all future cross-Strait negotiations.

Polls have corroborated that the negative consequences of economic integration have widened the national identity gap. The Hong Kong-Taiwan “China Impact” joint project highlights how identity is closely related to perceptions of economic prospects.⁴¹ Someone who believes that economic integration will benefit his family was much more likely to identify himself as “Chinese.” Conversely, the perception that economic integration with China will hurt one’s family’s economic prospects is associated with a high degree of a local

identity.⁴² As the two societies perceive that integration with China is damaging to their economy, a distinct local identity becomes ever more consolidated.

In addition, identity appears to be correlated with class. In Hong Kong, the less educated and lower income individuals are more likely to assume a Chinese identity. Many of these are recent Chinese immigrants, who retain their original Chinese identity and depend on public welfare and social services provided by a local government linked to Beijing. In contrast, the more educated individuals are more likely to assume a local identity. These middle-class professionals are unlikely to view economic integration with China to be beneficial to their families.⁴³ In Taiwan, educational level is not highly correlated with identity, but income level is. High-income individuals, many of whom were mainland Chinese who came to Taiwan with the KMT and have benefitted from doing business in China, are more likely to assume a “Chinese” identity. The middle and lower classes in Taiwan are predominantly native Taiwanese whose ancestors immigrated to Taiwan hundreds of years ago and do not visit China frequently, if at all. For them, integration with China robs Taiwan of jobs and creates inequality. With increased interaction with mainland Chinese and visits to China, Taiwanese have found that they are not regarded as Chinese and have developed a stronger and distinct sense of separate identity. In addition, Taiwan’s rural and working classes are more supportive of democratic values, as they were the ones who had fought against the KMT for Taiwan’s democratization and, therefore, find it difficult to associate themselves with China’s non-democratic political system or accept unification under Beijing’s authoritarian rule.⁴⁴

BEIJING’S STRATEGY TO BRIDGE THE GAP

In short, social and economic integration with China has made local identities more salient in both regions. These identities are perceived to be eroding the legitimacy of Beijing’s rule over Hong Kong and reducing the support for Taiwan’s unification with China. Beijing has thus been attempting through a variety of strategies to reverse the trends toward local identities so as to instill a greater sense of Chinese identity.

One strategy is the use of economic incentives to reward supporters and penalize opponents in both regions. Beijing has offered favorable business opportunities in China to pro-Beijing individuals and their families like the first chief executive of Hong Kong C.H. Tung and the former KMT chairman Lien Chan, both of whose families have extensive businesses in China. Firms that do not toe the party line are penalized, like *Apple Daily*, the leading newspaper in Hong Kong that is highly critical of Beijing headed by the pro-democracy Jimmy Lai, or Chi Mei Corporation, the largest ABS plastics producer owned by the former DPP-supporter Wen-long Shi.

Soft Power Through Propaganda and Education

After Hong Kong was reincorporated, Beijing was very mindful to utilize softer power, hoping that this would reinforce a sense of Chinese identity in Hong Kong. For example, China supported the continued representation of Hong Kong in international organizations, and promoted the appointment of individuals from Hong Kong to leading positions in international organizations, as exemplified by Margaret Chan, the director-general of the

World Health Organization (WHO). When Beijing hosted the 2008 Olympics, it permitted Hong Kong to host the equestrian events. Beijing has also exposed Hong Kong to Chinese icons in order to foster patriotism. After successful space explorations, Chinese astronauts visited Hong Kong in October 2003 and June 2012, before visiting any other Chinese cities. China's gold medalists from the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the 2012 London Olympics also visited the city after the closing ceremonies.

To further consolidate Chinese identity among Hong Kong people, Beijing requested the inclusion of “national education,” “enhancing students’ understanding of our country and national identity” in school curricula.⁴⁵ During the first years after the handover, there was little systematic attempt to introduce national education, but in 2007, when President Hu Jintao attended the tenth anniversary handover celebration in Hong Kong, he stressed that Hong Kong should provide more national education for young people.⁴⁶ Hong Kong’s Education Bureau then proposed reforms requesting schools to strengthen national education and a special department focusing on national identity was set up in the Education Bureau. Teachers were given resources to teach students about national flag raising, the national anthem and national identity. Finally, Chief Executive Donald Tsang proposed that national education become mandatory in his 2011 policy address.⁴⁷

The proposal generated intense opposition, involving an unusual degree of collaboration among different societal groups. In response to concerns that such reforms amounted to government-sponsored brainwashing, the publicity director of Beijing’s liaison office defended the policy by saying national education in school was “necessary brainwashing” and internationally accepted practice.⁴⁸ Some schools set evaluation criteria for students that included supporting the country even if the people believe that the country has done wrong.⁴⁹ Furthermore, in multi-ethnic, multi-lingual Hong Kong, many raised doubts about the curriculum guide that also contained ethnocentric language calling for national unity based on geography, blood, and ethnic commonalities. In April 2012, the Education Bureau declared that national education must be introduced over three years for primary and secondary schools, but on July 29, more than 90,000 citizens, including educators, parents, and students, joined a successful protest to demand the order be retracted.⁵⁰

Since Beijing does not exercise sovereignty over Taiwan, it cannot try to reshape the educational system in the same way as it does in Hong Kong. Instead, it focuses on sending both positive and negative messages. One theme has been to insist on a renewed commitment to unification under the “one China” principle. Relatedly, Chinese leaders have been intent on promoting a Chinese national identity in Taiwan. In 2011 Hu Jintao asked the people on both sides of the Strait to “enhance the sense of a common national identity... [and] heal wounds of the past.”⁵¹ The Director of the Taiwan Affairs Office Wang Yi, at a cross-Strait conference in June 2012, reminded the Taiwanese audience that recent favorable policies such as allowing the import of Taiwanese rice to China depended on “people across the Strait deepening their identity as one family.”⁵²

Conversely, Beijing has sought to denigrate “local” identity as a form of false consciousness, the product of “identity politics” and foreign intervention. Beijing has criticized the DPP government for “de-Sinification” of curricula and has regularly accused pollsters in Hong Kong of working for foreigners to deny their Chinese identity.⁵³ Recent attacks on the protests

against national education and the pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong have continued this line of argument, accusing the leaders of working with foreign forces to divide the Chinese people and of employing identity politics for their own political gain.⁵⁴ Similarly, Beijing denies that a Taiwanese identity is a genuine popular sentiment that has arisen spontaneously. Instead Beijing portrays it as an outcome of political contestation, engineered by pro-independence political leaders for their own political gain, and resulting from the collusion between those leaders and foreign forces conspiring to undermine Beijing.

Hardline Strategies of Sanctions and Legislation

Beijing cannot rely solely on soft power to prevent Chinese national identity from eroding in Hong Kong and Taiwan, but has used tougher measures as well. Even before Hong Kong's handover, it refused to allow entry to Hong Kong to people who might be offensive to Beijing, including pro-democracy activists, Falun Gong members, and supporters of Tibetan independence. In some cases, Beijing detained Hong Kong residents when they crossed the border, most recently Yiu Mantin, the Hong Kong publisher of an upcoming book about Xi Jinping.⁵⁵ For Taiwanese, Beijing selectively grants visas to officials and politicians based on "good behavior" and has regularly denied visas to pro-independence activists or leaders from the DPP or other pro-independence parties. For both regions, Beijing has tried to ostracize organizations and individuals such as journalists who are considered to be undermining what Beijing regards as key aspects of national identity, denying them visas and opportunities, such as prohibiting universities and state-owned companies to work with them.

Beijing has also enacted or demanded legislation aimed at what it regards as treasonable behavior or secessionist movements. In 2003, it pressured C.H. Tung to introduce a security law, as provided in Article 23 of Hong Kong's Basic Law, which would criminalize activities that constituted sedition, secession, or subversion. When this legislation was introduced in 2002, it aroused a protest involving half a million people, the largest in Hong Kong's history since 1989. Although the legislation required by Article 23 failed to pass, Beijing has continued to press for its passage, and Hong Kong's current chief executive, C.Y. Leung, has acknowledged that the SAR government has constitutional responsibility to do so.

Whether hard or soft, Beijing's strategies to promote national identity have tended to be counterproductive. The more it threatens those who oppose Chinese policies and rewards those who support them, the more local identity appears to be strengthened. As one writer describes it, Hong Kong people have developed less of a political boundary with China since 1997, but more of a psychological boundary. They have accepted Beijing as their sovereign, but feel strongly that their freedom, rule of law, and independent judiciary separate them.⁵⁶

Given that Beijing has no ability to monitor Taiwanese internally, as it does in Hong Kong, and is intent on taking over Taiwan, its strategy toward Taiwan is even more heavy-handed than toward Hong Kong. After democratization, when Taiwan began the search for its identity and opened the debate over unification, the initial strategy was simply to influence the presidential election in order to influence Taiwanese identity, especially in terms of FNS. Beijing made direct threats to pressure the Taiwanese not to vote for pro-independence candidates by lobbing missiles in the Taiwan Strait in 1995 and 1996, which appeared to backfire.

Similar to Beijing's efforts in Hong Kong, exasperated by the re-election of DPP president Chen Shui-bian, whom it regarded as a supporter of Taiwanese identity and independence, the NPC passed an "Anti-Secession Act" in March 2005. It stipulated that should Taiwan move toward independence, Beijing would use force. The Anti-Secession Act was intended to deter any attempt to declare independence or even reduce Taiwan's commitment to eventual unification. With an increasing number of more accurate missiles deployed by China across the Taiwan Strait, this was not an empty threat. But the law's enactment fueled a massive public demonstration in Taipei, involving all the political parties, with approximately one million participants. Another strategy has been to isolate Taiwan internationally, successfully excluding it from almost all international organizations, or restricting Taipei's participation so that the invitation is subject to China's approval, including for the WHO or the International Civil Aviation Organization, and only on an ad hoc basis. By narrowing Taiwan's feasible options, Beijing hopes to reshape Taiwan's national identity.

THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF A COMMON IDENTITY

Hong Kong's 2017 Chief Executive Election

Beijing believes that a more Chinese identity is necessary to gain acceptance of Chinese restrictions on Hong Kong's political autonomy. Immediately after the resumption of sovereignty, Beijing established a liaison office in Hong Kong. Over time, Beijing has increasingly reiterated that the degree of autonomy granted by the Basic Law is limited and that in the OCTS formula, "one country" should be given priority over the "two systems." Hong Kong people have often reacted strongly when officials in the liaison office or in Beijing appeared to be intervening in local affairs.⁵⁷ In particular, Beijing would like to control the redefinition of Hong Kong's electoral systems for the 2016 Legislative Council election and the 2017 election of the chief executive, fearing that universal suffrage would encourage the development and expression of local sentiments.⁵⁸ This is despite the fact that the Standing Committee of the NPC announced in 2007 that the chief executive may be chosen by universal suffrage in 2017 and after that, it may apply to the Legislative Council.⁵⁹ The selection of successive chief executives who are regarded as puppets of Beijing has culminated in widespread calls for universal suffrage for the next chief executive in 2017, with an open nominating process, as the ultimate expression of the Hong Kong people's emerging identity. Beijing wants to ensure that no candidate for chief executive unacceptable to Beijing is nominated, let alone elected, and that pro-Beijing legislators will enjoy a majority in the legislature.

In contrast, recent polls have shown that the people of Hong Kong are not only demanding the preservation of Hong Kong's autonomy and the protection of civil rights but are also seeking the development of more democratic institutions including universal suffrage of both the Legislative Council and the Chief Executive.⁶⁰ In response, Beijing has encouraged discussions that would promote Beijing's core national interests and enhance people's Chinese identity. But there is little cohesion even among Beijing loyalists, as was shown in the election of C.Y. Leung as Hong Kong's Chief Executive in 2012, whom many business

tycoons normally favorable to Beijing still do not support. The growing dissatisfaction with the pace of democratization and Beijing's greater involvement in the city has certainly contributed to people feeling more local and less Chinese.

The five-month public consultative process on the nomination and the election process started in December 2013. Although Article 45 claims that the "ultimate aim is the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage upon nomination by a broadly representative nominating committee in accordance with democratic procedures," it is rather vague as to the timing and the details.⁶¹ The Basic Law is even more ambiguous with regard to the timing and process to implement universal suffrage for the Legislative Council, in which a system of functional constituencies leads to an overrepresentation of certain sectors. The city is polarized between pro-Beijing and pro-democracy camps hurling insults and threats at each other. With every suggestion made by pro-Beijing individuals or groups, especially regarding the chief executive nomination procedures, there appears to be more support for protests. With widespread support by students, two professors and a Baptist minister are organizing "Occupy Central," a large-scale sit-in scheduled for July 2014 if there is no acceptable plan for the 2017 chief executive election. Beijing has denounced the leaders of the sit-in as "enemies of the state," and warned against foreign interference.⁶² It has also incensed the public by announcing that only candidates who "love the country and love Hong Kong" can run for chief executive, and not those "who confront the central government."⁶³

Studies have shown that before the handover and as recently as 2007, Hong Kong people did not fully embrace the liberal values underlying a democratic system. Instead, they seemed content with a relatively undemocratic governance structure as long as rule of law and a market economy remained the foundation.⁶⁴ However, as identity has evolved, so have values and views on democracy. In December 2013, polls found that over half the people were dissatisfied with the pace of development of democracy in Hong Kong.⁶⁵ This increasing impatience with the pace and extent of democratic reform suggests that Hong Kong people are more committed to democratic values, further separating them from their mainland Chinese compatriots, and strengthening the development of a separate Hong Kong identity.

Taiwan's 2016 Presidential Election

In late 2013, the pan-democrats in Hong Kong paid a visit to the DPP in Taiwan to exchange views on democracy and advocate universal suffrage. Beijing was quite alarmed and pro-Beijing media have described this as the collusion of secessionists.⁶⁶ While Hong Kong simply demanded universal suffrage under the framework established by the Basic Law, Taiwan is a fully functioning democracy with its own government and military. Further along than the development of a Hong Kong identity, Taiwanese have adopted a primarily local identity that has little in common with the national identity that Beijing wants, embracing civic nationalism in the sense of cherishing democracy, rule of law, and freedom of speech.⁶⁷

At the 18th Party Congress, the CCP leadership emphasized consolidating political, economic, cultural, and social foundations in order to create more favorable conditions for peaceful reunification. In October 2013, at the APEC summit, Xi Jinping said to the Taiwan representative, Vincent Siew, the Taiwan problem should not be handed down to future generations, the first time Chinese leaders have signaled their impatience with the lack of

progress toward unification. While President Ma has focused intensely on warming relations with China during his first term, he has repeatedly emphasized that the Taiwanese sense of national identity is growing and that he could negotiate with China only if there is consensus among the Taiwanese to do so. His 2011 suggestion of discussions of a peace agreement drew heavy public criticism, which led him to be more cautious in his second term.

Beijing's efforts to apply soft and hard strategies have not increased the prevalence of a Chinese identity on Taiwan nor elevated the popularity of the KMT, the party more associated with a Chinese identity. With the consolidation of a Taiwanese identity, both the KMT and the DPP have moved toward the center on cross-Straits policy. To Beijing, a pro-Beijing president could be extremely important in closing the identity gap, both broadly and in terms of support for unification. Under Taiwan's semi-presidential system, the president wields unusual power over cross-Straits relations, and the next presidential election will be in January 2016. While the DPP may have lost the 2012 presidential election because of the lack of a clear China policy, Taiwanese do not seem pleased with Ma's pro-China attitude, which fails to reflect the growing Taiwanese national identity on the island. Since Ma assumed the presidency in 2008 and initiated liberalization measures with the Chinese economy, Ma has seen only a drastic decline in his popularity in his second term, hitting a record low 9 percent.⁶⁸ Beijing is very concerned about the outcome of the presidential election in 2016, fearing that the consolidation of a Taiwanese national identity will lead to the return of the DPP.

ASSESSMENT AND PROSPECTS

None of Beijing's present strategies is reversing the trend toward local identity in either Hong Kong or Taiwan. Rewarding businesses, individual leaders, or political parties who appear sympathetic to Beijing, in the hope that they will thereby adopt a Chinese identity, seems only to polarize both societies without narrowing the identity gap. At the same time, mainland tourists pouring into both Hong Kong and Taiwan have created a host of social problems. The daily problems created by tourists, students, and new immigrants in both places and the experience Hong Kong and Taiwanese people have when they go to China have actually intensified the trends toward separate local identities.

Despite the recent consolidation of a Taiwanese national identity, there remains the risk that national identity in Taiwan may become polarized once again if those who benefit economically become more "Chinese" than those who feel left out, while those who are disadvantaged by integration become more exclusively "Taiwanese." The same dynamic might be seen in Hong Kong. As the identity gap widens, Chinese leaders are becoming increasingly frustrated that the economic benefits provided to Taiwanese have not produced a greater sense of Chinese national identity or made them more committed to unification, and have begun to suggest that their patience is limited. Some Taiwanese, on the other hand, see ECFA and financial liberalization as a self-interested tactic that China is using to promote unification, and fear that China might revoke that policy unless Taiwan adopts a more accommodative position. This mutual mistrust creates the risk of growing polarization within both Hong Kong and Taiwan, as well as polarization between each of them and China.

Sanctions and legislation may deter pro-independence movements on Taiwan, but they are not preventing protests in Hong Kong or promoting a Chinese identity in either region. Propaganda promoting national identity and denigrating local identities as a form of false consciousness is equally ineffective. Deeper social and economic integration is underscoring differences rather than producing a common identity.

Given these trends, is a common Chinese identity conceivable any longer? An identity of the sort Beijing prefers seems highly unlikely, given the consolidation of local identities in both Hong Kong and Taiwan. A more plausible outcome would be the emergence of mixed identities, wherein residents increasingly see themselves as both Hong Kongers and Chinese or both Taiwanese and Chinese. Such mixed identities might emerge if the three governments adopt measures that ensure that economic integration provides more equitable benefits for all the residents of both regions, and if they seek policy solutions for the social and economic woes resulting from the deepening integration of Hong Kong and Taiwan with mainland China. Beijing could help the SAR government to control immigration and tourism, and alleviate the shortage of affordable housing and reduce the level of income inequality. In both regions, Beijing could consult with a wider range of social and political groups, not just the business sector and sympathetic political leaders.

Even if these developments occur, China may find it impossible to reduce the level of local identity among Hong Kong and Taiwanese people because neither incentives nor coercion are sufficient. This echoes the conclusion Deepa Ollapally reached in her chapter about India that identity matters, above and beyond material interests. In order to bridge the gap, China may have to propose a new identity based on common civic value rather than ethnicity, and develop a formula for governance that guarantees even greater autonomy to Hong Kong and Taiwan. Similar to Jiyeon Kim's findings about Korean national identity, this study highlights how civic values are more important than ethnicity in creating a common Chinese identity, especially among the younger generations. Unless China embraces the values that people in Hong Kong and Taiwan hold dear, or at least respects them, neither Taiwanese nor the people of Hong Kong are likely to become more "Chinese." Conversely, by incorporating the civic values that Hong Kong and Taiwanese people cherish, Beijing might be able to create a new and more inclusive Chinese national identity.

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