The Politics of National Identity Since 1945

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Taiwan presents one of the most fascinating and challenging cases for the study of identity in the social sciences. Politically, this is because it has the qualities of a sovereign state but its government works within the framework of a constitution that is supposed to cover the whole of China (Hughes 2000: 63-5). Culturally it arises from a tenuous historical relationship not only with China but also with Japan that makes it, above all, a "frontier" society (Harrison 2006: 2). Economically it is shaped by the island's integration into both global trade and production networks and the growing Chinese economy. In the field of international relations it is determined by island's pivotal geostrategic location and the tension between Chinese claims to sovereignty and US commitmenbts to the island's security. This chapter will explain how this situation has arisen and the dynamics of identity politics that it has created from the end of World War Two to the present day.

The China Myth

In 1945, Taiwan had been a colony of Japan for 50 years, having been ceded by the Qing dynasty at the end of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5. During World War Two the Allies agreed to return the island to the Republic of China (ROC), allowing its armed forces to take its surrender from Japan on behalf of the Allies. Deeming the population unready for democracy, the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) effectively continued the system of colonial rule used by the Japanese, presided over by a military governor.

The pre-1945 population was only tenuously linked with China. The island had been made a prefecture of the Qing Empire in 1683 and only gained the status of a province in 1885 but administration never extended to the whole territory. Its elite even tried to avoid cession to Japan in 1895 by proclaiming a Taiwan Republic. Economically, the island developed an export-oriented economy in the nineteenth century, especially after it opened two Treaty Ports in 1860. Ethnically, aside from a small number of aboriginal peoples from the Pacific, the islanders were descendants of migrants from the Chinese mainland. However, those migrants had left when the idea of a Chinese nation-state had not yet supplanted the universalist ideology of the Qing Empire. Identification with China was thus conceived largely in terms of provincial and sub-provincial origins. The majority originated from the province of Fujian, opposite Taiwan, and spoke varieties of Hokkien. Yet they coexisted with a sizeable minority of trans-provincial Hakka, in a

relationship that was fraught with suspicion and animosity due to struggles over land (Lamley 1981). The Hakka and "aboriginal" communities have tended to remain suspicious of the Hokkien speaking majority down to the present day.

Although this fragmentation makes it problematic to talk about a homogeneous "Taiwanese" identity, the pre-1945 population shared the experience of 50 years of Japanese colonial rule. Government was harsh, but law and order was enforced and the island's economic and social infrastructure had been developed. Many members of the business community had even spent the war years in China, supplying the Japanese occupation forces. Over 200,000 Taiwanese had been conscripted into the Japanese armed forces and the best Taiwanese students had studied at Japanese universities. Despite these achievements, however, many among the population had a common feeling of being second class citizens. Community leaders had already begun to politicize Taiwanese identity, lobbying for a Taiwan Assembly and a presence in the Tokyo Diet.

The new arrivals from the Chinese mainland after 1945, however, had been shaped by KMT nation-building and the war against Japan. A cleavage of identity between these post-1945 "Mainlanders" and pre-1945 "Taiwanese" quickly developed and was deepened when the new arrivals treated the native population more like traitors than compatriots. Government corruption and maladministration and the spectacle of disorderly armed forces made for a stark contrast with the Japanese period. On 28 February 1947 the population finally rose up in defiance, only to be crushed by military reinforcements from the mainland. Known as the "228 Incident", this was followed by a purge of the Taiwanese and the stifling of all dissent under what came to be known as the "White Terror". This episode quickly became embedded in what was to become a new narrative of Taiwanese identity as the product of 400 years of a tragic history at the hands of foreign invaders that would become part of the challenge to the KMT's narrative of Chinese nationalism over the years to come (Su 1980 [1962]).

The cleavage between pre-1945 "native Taiwanese" (*bensheng ren*) and post-1945 "Mainlanders" (*waisheng ren*) was further deepened with the new influx of immigrants from the Chinese mainland when the KMT retreated from the Chinese mainland to Taiwan in 1949. Ye the state orthodoxy of Chinese nationalism was also strengthened, as Taipei became the new capital of the ROC. The Legislative Yuan (parliament) and National Assembly (upper house) were populated by representatives who could not be replaced until new elections could be held in their Chinese constituencies, now under

the control of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The democratic provisions of the ROC Constitution were postponed and the KMT governed under martial law.

Contesting the Chinese nation in Taiwan

The legitimacy of the KMT dictatorship thus depended on propagating the myth that Taiwan was part of a divided China. Chinese identity was imposed through cultural measures such as the sinicization of time and space, with the calendar starting from 1912, the year of the establishment of the ROC and maps showing the national territory as the whole of the Chinese mainland. Streets and institutions were renamed after mainland locations, institutions and historical figures. Mandarin was made the "National Language", with Japanese forbidden and dialects such as Hokkien and Hakka confined to private life. Schoolchildren were indoctrinated with the thought of the National Father and KMT founder, Sun Yatsen. The study of history and geography focused on China, with little taught about Taiwan itself. The young were socialised through membership of a Chinese Youth Anti-Communist League and military conscription and the armed forces were used to police dissent on campus.

Measures were also taken to co-opt the rising Taiwanese elite into the political system. Because Taiwan was held to be a province of the ROC, a pseudo-democratic form of politics was introduced at the level of local government, while the members elected to central government chambers in the Chinese mainland were frozen in their seats until new elections could be held after national unification. The myth that Taiwan was the home of the legitimate government of China was given extra credibility by United States (US) recognition, a commitment that was consolidated after the island became a link in the containment of communism with the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. The government in Taipei was thus able to occupy the China seat at the UN until 1971 and was recognised as the legitimate government of "Free China" by the US until 1979 (Hughes 1997: 21-45).

Although the KMT's policies were designed to suppress the cleavage of identity that had opened up during the first years of KMT rule in Taiwan, they proved to be counter-productive in the long term. In the first place this was because Taiwanese felt that they had been relegated to second-class citizens again. Moreover, gradual political reforms brought on as the ageing political elite from the Chinese mainland had to be replaced gave native individuals the space in which to develop political careers and become a political force in their own right. The most spectacular and politically significant illustration of this is the career of the Taiwan-born and Japan-educated Lee Teng-hui,

who rose steadily through the ranks of government and party from a position as agronomist in the US—ROC Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction in 1957 until he finally became the President of the ROC in 1988.

This process of nativisation was equally important for providing space in which politicians could create a "Dangwai" ("Outside the Party") (movement. The Chungli Incident of November 1977 is seen by many as the first open challenge to the KMT's monopoly on power, when the *Dangwai* politician, Hsu Hsin-liang, won an election for the position of Taoyuan County Magistrate. It was only after rioting broke out that the government was forced to recognise the result.

Comment [g1]: You may either use "Dangwai" or "Tangwai" to be consistent with Pinying or Wade-Giles transcription. In the English-language literature, "Tangwai" has become an established term as well.

The *Dangwai* movement became increasingly important for the formation of identity politics when Washington switched diplomatic recognition from the ROC to the PRC on 1 January 1979, dealing a lethal blow to the KMT's China myth and causing it to postpone all elections. The consequent linkage of domestic political change with identity politics was further strengthened when the authorities used force to prevent a demonstration organised by the *Dangwai* on Human Rights Day on 10 December, 1979, at the southern city of Kaohsiung. The trial and imprisonment of the activists involved in this "Kaohsiung Incident" (also known as the "Formosa Incident", merely kept the *Dangwai* activists in the public spotlight, encouraging them to finally defy the law and establish the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) on 28 September, 1986.

When martial law was lifted the following year, identity politics was destined to be a major issue in the development of multi-party, electoral politics. The DPP entered this new era armed with a substantial critique of the KMT thanks to the efforts of artists, writers and political dissidents over the preceding decades. As far back as the 1950s, writers had begun to revive interest in a social realist genre of "native literature" (*xiang tu wenxue*) from the 1930s. Although this was largely aimed at resisting cultural fashions from the West, it also fed into a broader awareness of the value of writing about Taiwan itself (Hsiau 2000: 79-116).

During the 1960s a more direct critique of the identity politics underpinning KMT rule had also begun to be articulated by a small group of academics. Most articulate was National Taiwan University Professor of Law, Peng Ming-min, who argued that the principle of defining nationality according to Chinese ethnicity should be replaced by the idea of citizenship based on subjective loyalty to Taiwan. He called this a "community of shared destiny" (*mingyun gongtong ti*), explicitly drawing on the work of the nineteenth century French political philosopher, Ernst Renan. Such an argument

also required a deconstruction of the KMT's historical orthodoxy, by pointing out that the early settlers had come to Taiwan to escape from the despotic regime of the Qing Empire and that the island had only been ruled by a state that simultaneously exercised sovereignty over the Chinese mainland for the four years of 1945-49.[1] There was thus no more reason for the residents of Taiwan to live in one Chinese state than there was for Americans, Australians, British and New Zealanders to live in one Anglo-Saxon state (Peng 1972).

Often operating in exile, such activists influenced a growing population of overseas students. The absurdity of the ROC's claim to represent the whole of China became painfully apparent for this audience after US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, visited Beijing in 1971, heralding PRC-US rapprochement and forcing the withdrawal of the ROC from the UN. Inside Taiwan, the fragility of the KMT's nationalism was also revealed when the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, claimed by the KMT to be ROC territory under the name "Diaoyutai", were transferred from US administration to Japan.

In the wake of the Kaohsiung Incident, more embryonic civil society groups began to join the criticism of the KMT, with student groups objecting to issues such as the presence of the military on campus and teachers demanding the promotion of a greater sense of Taiwanese history and culture in the classroom. When the DPP began to win control of local governments in the late 1980s, it could begin to address these issues. Ilan County started in September 1989 by ceasing the practice of schools holding daily flag-raising ceremonies and scrapping the rule that only portraits of Sun Yatsen could be hung in classrooms. Other DPP-controlled local authorities soon followed with measures such as supplementing the teaching of Mandarin with instruction in local dialects.

At the same time, national identity was explored in popular culture. A particularly significant breakthrough was the 1989 film *City of Sadness* (*Beiqing chengshi*), directed by rising star Hou Hsiao-hsien, already known for bringing the *xiang tu* genre to cinema. For the first time audiences could view a story in which the main protagonists, a Taiwanese family, experienced the corruption and violence of the early years of KMT rule. Hou brilliantly emphasised the complexity of identity politics at the time by rendering the dialogue in not just Mandarin, but also Shanghainese, Hokkien, Hakka

[1] Peng claimed that the Qing only exercised a very tenuous kind of sovereignty over Taiwan by pointing out that migrants had gone there to escape the regime, that it had been the haunt of pirates and opium fiends who the Qing had been glad to be rid of, that it had allowed the heads of aboriginal tribes to sign a treaty with the United States in 1869 and that it had willingly ceded the island to Japan (Peng 1972: 239).

and even Japanese. Over the decades that followed, Taiwan's film directors would pioneer the exploration of the island's complex layers of identities for the domestic audience, winning prizes and applause from around the world.

The nativization of the KMT

The emergence of an inclusive and pluralistic conception of national identity was only partly due to the formulation of a kind of civic nationalism by intellectuals like Peng Ming-min and activists like the *Dangwai*. Equally important was the nativisation of the KMT itself, accelerated by Chiang Ching-kuo when he assumed leadership of the KMT and the presidency of the ROC in 1978, there years after the death of his father, Chiang Kai-shek. On his own death in January 1988, the process of nativisation culminated with the nomination of the Taiwan-born and Japan-educated Lee Teng-hui as his successor.

With a Taiwanese leader presiding over a booming economy, the KMT was in a strong position to continue the reformulation of identity politics as it faced the prospect of fighting the first multi-party elections for national representative chambers in the early 1990s. Although this meant that it would no longer depend on the constitutional claim to be the government of the whole of China for its legitimacy to rule, however, Lee Teng-hui could not move too far away from the China myth for two reasons: the continuing domination of the highest ranks of the KMT and the armed forces by Mainlanders loyal to the Chinese nationalist mission; and, increasingly, the need to develop a stable relationship with a PRC that was growing in strategic and economic importance for both Taiwan and its security guarantor, the US.

An ingenious way through this identity politics was found by manipulating the Constitution through a number of "Additional Articles", promulgated between May 1991 and May 1992. These allowed elections to be held for the Legislative Yuan, National Assembly and President, while leaving the main body of the Constitution (still for the whole of China) untouched. By stipulating that these were only temporary measures pending unification, the myth that Taiwan was part of China could be preserved while democratization proceded apace. At the same time, a workable relationship with the PRC was developed by passing the *Guidelines on National Unification*, in March 1991, which maintained that the long-term goal was still unification but that this would have to be postponed until the CCP had introduced freedom of speech, democracy and the rule of law in the mainland. A new institution,

the National Unification Council, was created to monitor the process.

Procedures and institutions were also established to reassure PRC leaders that progress towards unification was possible and to present a responsible stance towards Washington. Negotiations thus began with the PRC that were held to be "unofficial", conducted by personnel with no formal political status. In 1991, two "non-official" organisations, the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) and the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS) were commissioned by the ROC and the PRC to respectively, to take these negotiations forward. Meeting in Hong Kong in 1992, the representatives were able to agree on practical arrangements to manage the increasing volume of cross-Strait transactions while putting aside any discussion of the question of Taiwan's status and the meaning of "One China". At the time, this was seen as a useful fudge that prevented disagreements over Taiwan's status blocking attempts to find practical solutions. Several years later it was elevated to a high symbolic rhetoric by members of the KMT who christened it the "92 Consensus" and saw it as the key for maintaining a stable relationship with the PRC.

Finally, Lee began to more actively promote Taiwan's foreign relations without challenging the one-China principle under the rubric of "pragmatic diplomacy", which did not require formal diplomatic recognition by third-party states. Some commentators claim that this goes back to when Chiang Ching-kuo was Premier in 1973 and outlined a strategy of "total diplomacy" (Fu 1992: 79). In the 1980s the pressure grew to find ways around the self-defeating principle of requiring other states to accept the ROC as sole legitimate government of China by allowing the island to take part in events such as the Olympic games under the name "Chinese Taipei" alongside teams from China and to join organizations such as the Asian Development Bank under the name "Taipei, China". As an increasing number of states switched recognition from the ROC to the PRC, Taiwan's remarkable economic development gave Lee the means to develop this strategy in ways that could maintain substantial ties short of diplomatic recognition.

National Identity in Electoral Politics

The efficacy of Lee Teng-hui's strategy was proven with a landslide victory in the 1991 National Assembly election, the first contest for a national representative chamber to be held in Taiwan. Defeat for the DPP also forced the opposition to tone down its emphasis on Taiwanese independence in future elections. It performed significantly better when elctions were held for Legislative Yuan in 1992, by focusing on issues of corruption, social welfare and the environment.

Democratisation thus shaped the broad contours of a pragmatic "status quo" that circumvented the minefield of identity politics in the early 1990s. It proved increasingly difficult to uphold this status quo, however. Disputes over identity politics inside the KMT had to be accommodated under growingdomestic pressures generated by the social change that accompanied democratisation. Such dynamics also had to be managed in the context of growing pressure from an increasingly uneasy and more powerful PRC.

This pincer movement had already become clear when the first presidential election was held in March 1996. It was impossible to ignore the growing demands of pressure groups that linked broader issues of human rights and social welfare to identity politics, many of which found support inside the nativised elements of the KMT. This was magnified by the increasing freedom of expression and diversity of media ownership, along with the ability to stage public demonstrations. A well-travelled population was also deeply frustrated at being treated as stateless persons when they went abroad.

At the same time, any positive perceptions of the PRC that had arisen from the liberalisation of cross-Strait relations had been dented by the spectacle of the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre. They were more severely damaged when news broke of the kidnap and slaughter of a group of 24 Taiwanese tourists at the Qiandao Lake beauty spot in the PRC's Zhejiang Province in March 1994, which Taiwan's National Security Agency blamed on renegade members of the PLA. It is at this point that the opinion polls began to show a decline in the number of people identifying themselves as "Chinese" and wanting unification. There was a corresponding rise in the numbers of those identifying themselves as "both Chinese and Taiwanese" or just "Taiwanese" and wanting to maintain the status quo indefinitely, or move towards *de jure* independence.

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It is in this context that a wave of protests broke out, including a movement for and education system that would reflect the pluralism of society, allow more teaching about Taiwan itself and instil a sense of Taiwanese consciousness in the young (Bi 1996: 268-9). Calls to balance advances in cross-Strait relations by strengthening the loyalty of the population to Taiwan even began to receive parliamentary support from elements of the KMT. In 1993 Lee had begun to respond to such pressures, throwing his support behind a campaign for UN membership. He also more openly emphasised the fact that Taiwan had been ruled separately from China since 1949.

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With his position in the KMT not secure enough to move too far away from the

orthodoxies of Chinese nationalism, however, Lee resorted to promoting an identity for Taiwan that could still be presented as ethnically but not politically "Chinese", by deconstructing the idea of China itself,. His government thus began to describe "China" as an entity with multifaceted geographical, political, historical, and cultural meanings (MAC 1993: 4). He also deployed the post-Cold War discourse on globalization, presenting Taiwan as a member of a "global village" established on respect for democracy and human rights, replacing the use of military force with negotiation, promoting a mixed market economy and strengthening collective security. Taiwan thus became an island striving to raise its international status by joining international economic organisations, becoming a hub for air transportation and establishing itself as a major Asian financial centre.

Lee's master stroke was to effectively appropriate the civic conception of national identity that was central to DPP thinking. He thus began to describe Taiwan as a "*Gemeinschhaft*" (*shengming gongtong ti*), which in Chinese is very close to the terminology of the "community of shared destiny" (*mingyun gongtong ti*) coined by Peng Ming-min and used by the *Dangwai* and DPP. The concept of Taiwan as a "political entity" (*zhengzhi shiti*), could also be used as an alternative to "state" or "government", allowing sufficient creative ambiguity for all sides to live with (*ROC Yearbook 1994*: 147). He even went so far as to advocate a new sino-centrism with Taiwan as the focus when he coined the slogan "manage great Taiwan, establish a new Central Plains" (*jingying da Taiwan, jianli xin zhongyuan*) in a speech delivered in January 1995, alluding to the mythology that Chinese culture emerged from central China several millennia in the past.[2]

Despite these attempts to find flexibility in the concepts of nation and state and to articulate a civic, inclusive conception of national identity, however, pressure for a more assertive foreign policy in the run-up to the presidential election finally resulted in Lee taking a steps that were deemed unacceptable by the PRC. This began in June 1994, when Lee gave in interview to the Japanese writer of historical novels, Ryotaro Shiba, in which he described the KMT as a "foreign regime" (*wai lai zhengquan*), causing PRC commentators to accuse him of lacking the "sentiments of a Chinese person". The tension escalated to a much higher level in June 1995, when Taiwanese diplomats were successful in winning overwhelming support in the US Congress for granting Lee a visa to visit his alma mater, Cornell University. When the PRC responded with a propaganda barrage against Lee, it only opened up divisions inside Taiwan, leading rival demonstrators to proclaim "I am Chinese" and "I am Taiwanese. The mobilisation of

[2] United Daily News (*Lianhe Bao*), 15 January 1995.

the PRC military in the run-up to the presidential election, including a series of missile tests off the coast of Taiwan, only encouraged more defiance. On polling day, voters swung behind a leader whose roots were in Taiwan, who recognised that "sovereignty is in the people" and who was prepared to push for raising the island's international profile. Lee won a landslide victory with 54 percent of the vote.

Nativization or de-sinicisation?

After the presidential election, the KMT and the DPP both needed to recalibrate their atttitudes towards maintaining the status quo on national identity. For Lee Teng-hui it was important to reassure the US that Taiwan would not drag the US into a war with China. This meant restarting the unofficial negotiations with the PRC. That this could be leading Taiwan into a tight corner, however, became evident when President Clinton made a breakthrough visit to the PRC and announced for the first time that the US was opposed to independence for Taiwan and even to its membership of international organisations requiring statehood.

As expectations grew for Taiwan to begin discussion of political issues with the PRC, Lee responded by giving an interview to the German radio station, *Deutsche Welle*, on 9 July, 1999. He explained that the constitutional amendments of the early 1990s had designated cross-Strait relations as a "state-to-state relationship" or at least as a "special state-to-state relationship", rather than an internal relationship between a legitimate government and a renegade group, or between a central government and a local government. Lee's critics in Taiwan and the PRC pounced on what they demonised as his "Two States Theory" (*liang guo lun*).

Another issue of growing concern for Chinese nationalistswas Lee's initiative to start changing the school curriculum and teaching materials to include more learning about Taiwan. This actually adopted the pragmatic method of teaching that identity consists of concentric layers, moving out from the local community of Taiwan, through the national community (*guojia*) of China and into the pluralistic "world village" (Ministry of Education 1993: 159). This downgrading of the status of China in the new curriculum enraged a group of historians inside Taiwan, who condemned the reforms as a campaign of "de-sinicisation". This accusation was quickly echoed in the PRC (Hughes and Stone 1999; Corcuffe 2005).

Such complaints gained a certain amount of traction when "de-sinicisation" was said to be part of a policy to privilege the position of a new, Taiwanese political elite and legitimise the concentration of power in the hands of Lee Teng-hui. Evidence for this

was found in the way that the historical narrative of democratisation culminated with the popular election of Lee as President. The accusation appeared to be borne out by practice when a third round of *ad hoc* additions to the Constitution to move towards a presidential system. This was particularly sensitive because senior Mainland figures in the KMT had been squeezed out of high office since the departure of the former general, Hau Pei-tsun, from the premiership in 1993. The overall effect of these measures was to create a number of very high profile political losers who happened to be Mainlanders.

A significant body of senior members of the KMT thus split away to form the New Party, combining a platform of clean politics with opposition to what they saw as the drift towards Taiwanese independence. The abolition of the Taiwan Provincial Assembly in 1997 had a particularly decisive impact on the fortunes of the KMT because its head, James Soong, decided to run for the presidency in the 2000 election against Lee Teng-hui's preferred candidate, the unpopular Lien Chan. Even though Soong was a Mainlander and Lien was seen as Taiwanese,[3] he had cultivated considerable grass-roots support. The KMT vote was thus split and the former mayor of Taipei, the Taiwan-born Chen Shui-bian, won the highest office for the DPP with just 39 percent of the vote.

Identity politics under the DPP presidency

Given the split in the KMT, it is hard to argue that the DPP victory in 2000 was due to a radical shift in identity politics. The DPP had in fact begun a process of accommodating the status quo following its defeat in the 1996 presidential election. At a major conference on China policy, the radical and pragmatic factions of the party came to agree on a compromise strategy summed up by the slogan "strong base, westward advance" (*qiang ben xi jin).* This meant that opening up cross-Strait economic transactions could be accepted so long as Taiwan's democratic institutions and identity were strengthened in ways that could mitigate risks to national security. This position was further developed in May 1999, when the party passed a "Resolution on Taiwan's Future" that neutralized the commitment to independence in the DPP Charter by accepting that there was no need to change the official name of the island to "Taiwan" or declare independence because it was already an independent state under the name of the ROC.

Chen Shui-bian used this moderate approach to present himself as a Nixon-like figure,

[3] Lien Chan was actually born of Taiwanese parents in the Chinese mainland in 1936.

able to break new ground in cross-Strait relations because he would not sell out the island. This stance made it possible for influential figures who were frustrated by the decline of good governance, to throw their support behind him. The impression created by the DPP campaign was of a youthful and vibrant party with its roots in Taiwan's modern history and a genuine commitment to the future of the island. Chen's speech at the pre-election night rally was carefully calibrated not to alienate non-Hokkien speakers, though, stressing that he would be a president of all the people who would work for stability in relations with the PRC. This moderate tone was maintained in his inaugural speech, when he committed himself to a policy of what became known as the "Four Nos and the One Have Not", meaning no change of the national name, no change of the ROC constitution that would include Lee Teng-hui's "state-to-state theory", no referendum on independence, no declaration of and no intention to abolish the Guidelines for National Unification and the National Unification Council.

Chen's views on national identity were also in tune with the civic conception that had become central to the status quo. Accepting that the people on the two sides of the Strait share the same ancestral, cultural, and historical background, he hoped that this would enable their leaders to possess enough wisdom and creativity to jointly deal with the question of a future "one China", according to the principles of democracy and parity. When he spoke about connecting with the cultures of Chinese-speaking communities, though, it was to be on a par with other world cultures to create "a cultural Taiwan in a modern century"'.

Multi-party politics and the radicalization of identity

Maintaining this version of the status quo proved even more difficult for Chen Shui-bian than it had been for Lee Teng-hui, and for similar reasons. High among these was pressure from within his own party, as radical pro-independence activists who had left to campaign against the party's moderate line on independence during the election returned to the fold. Moreover, although moderation had helped the DPP to gain 10 percent over its usual vote, a danger arose with the establishment of a new party, the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU), that threatened to chip away at the DPP's core supporters by taking on the mission of scrutinising whether the DPP was maintaining the path of true nativisation. When the TSU won 13 seats in the 2001 Legislative Yuan election, it was clear that Chen had to depend on its support to pass legislation.

At first, the TSU was also careful to define its platform on identity in inclusive terms, recognizing that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait share the same language and culture. Yet as the party became more ambitious, it began to commit symbolic acts that upset

Chinese sentiments and appealed to a certain anti-Chinese chauvinism. Most notorious was its chairman's visit to Tokyo's controversial Yasukuni Shrine on 5 April 2005, where Taiwanese veterans are interred along with Japanese soldiers from World War Two, including a number of Class A war criminals. Even more anger was triggered in the PRC and among many Mainlanders in Taiwan when this act was replicated on 7 June 2007 by LeeTeng-hui, claimed by the TSU as their spiritual leader.

As with Lee's interview with Ryotaro Shiba, the significance of any such positive associations with Japan has highly complex ramifications for identity politics is highly complex. While Japan is reviled by Chinese nationalists for its invasion of China, Anne Heylen points out, that makes good sense for Taiwanese to pay respects to the island's war dead, even if they did die serving the Empire of Japan. This would be especially meaningful for Lee Teng-hui, who last saw his own brother on his way to the Philippines theatre. Yet, in the international context, the visit of a former ROC president to the shrine was seen as "tantamount to siding with the Japanese and acting in a non-Chinese way" (Heylen 2010: 27-8).

The radicalisation of identity politics was also enhanced when James Soong established the People's First Party (PFP), combining the call for clean politics with opposition to Taiwanese independence. This could appeal to the old guard of the KMT and the remnants of the New Party as well as ethnic groups such as the Hakka and aboriginal constitiuencies who remained suspicious of the intentions of Hokkien-speaking majority.

The appearance of these new parties meant that the leaders of the big parties had to navigate identity politics in the context of increasingly complex coalition politics, divided into what came to be know as the "pan-Blue" and "pan-Green" camps, aligned with the KMT and DPP respectively. Both of the main parties could be pulled away from the centre ground and to the extremes of Taiwanese and Chinese nationalism in this situation, as they had to work to keep support drifting away to other parties in their respective camps.

This growing complexity also opened up new oppportunities for the CCP to manipulate Taiwan's politics. Under the threat of economic sanctions from Beijing, Chen Shui-bian's supporters from the business and academic community soon began to defect to the pan-Blue camp. Even more of a challenge for the DPP was a growing alignment between the pan-Blues and the CCP. This started to become visible when the two parties launched similar propaganda campaigns during the presidential election, warning that a vote for Chen would be tantamount to a vote for war.

The pressure on Chen grew to a head when he decided to take on the role of Chair of the DPP in 2002. The PRC responded by persuading Nauru to break diplomatic relations with Taipei. Under pressure from elements inside his own party for a defiant response, Chen delivered a speech proclaiming that the relationship between the two sides was that of "one country on each side of the Taiwan Strait" (*yi bian yi guo*) and declared a plan to introduce legislation to enable the holding of referendums.

Chen was given the opportunity to take this radical stance on identity politics a step further when the lethal Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic broke out in the PRC in 2003, creating hysteria as it spread to Taiwan, where it was seen as a Chinese plague. The mismanagement of the crisis by the PRC authorities and their failure to allow the UN agencies to directly assist Taiwan provoked more anger, providing the momentum for Chen to sponsor a campaign for Taiwan to join the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Chen capitalized on the surge of anti-Chinese feeling by turning the referendum into a vote on membership of the UN under the name "Taiwan". The climax of this radicalisation of identity politics came on the anniversary of the 228 Incident, just before the 2004 presidential election, when a human chain was formed along the length of the island by an estimated 1.9-2.3 million people. Inspired by a similar demonstration in the Baltic states in 1989, the anti-Chinese sentiment of the event was made clear when the participants "turned away" from China.

This put the pan-Blue presidential candidates, Lien Chan and James Soong, on the defensive, forcing them to pass a law allowing the holding of referenda. Although many observers claim that Chen was only able to secure a razor thin victory due to an assassination attempt the day before the election, this alone cannot explain how he was able to rebound from a low starting point in the opinion polls to secure his second term. Identity politics had played an important part.

As well as the referendum, the Chen administration had continued to implement the measures to strengthen Taiwanese identity that began in the last years of the Lee Teng-hui presidency. Particularly controversial for Chinese nationalists were steps such as the removal of the name "China" from buildings and institutions of national significance and the adding of "Taiwan" to official documents, including the ROC passport. Placards calling for the unification of China under Sun Yatsen's Three Principles of the People were removed from outside the presidential palace, and slogans urging a renaissance of

Chinese culture and opposition to Taiwanese independence were taken out of military bases. Chinese nationalist indoctrination was also removed from military training and civil service examinations. Key cultural institutions, such as the National Palace Museum and the National History Institute were also put under the leadership of academics who were sympathetic to promoting Taiwan's own culture and history.

That Chen's 2004 inauguration speech called for a degree of "candid self-reflection" on issues of identity and ethnicity shows he was aware that he had taken politics in a dangerously divisive direction. Yet he continued to resort to identity issues in his second term, as the pressure from the pan-Blues and the PRC grew stronger, even portraying the December 2006 election for the mayor of Kaohsiung as a struggle between Taiwan and China. His suspension of the operations of the National Unification Council on 27 February 2006 stimulated particularly strong reactions. Although this was presented as a response to the build up of PLA missile batteries opposite Taiwan, the announcement was made on the day before the anniversary of the 228 Incident. In an emotional address to a memorial ceremony the next day, Chen asked in Mandarin, "Is A-bian wrong? Is A-bian wrong by returning the right of choosing their future to the 23 million people of Taiwan?" The rest of his speech was in the Hokkien dialect.

The KMT-CCP united front on identity

Appealing to Taiwanese identity in this way might have helped Chen Shui-bian win the support of some elements of the population. Yet it also strengthened the anti-DPP alignment between the pan-Blues and the CCP. This was formally cemented when Lien Chan and James Soong travelled separately to the PRC in the spring of 2005. In a meeting with Hu Jintao, in his capacity as CCP General Secretary, Lien shelved the differences between the two parties by claiming that the 1992 "unofficial" negotiations in Hong Kong had put in place a "92 Consensus" under which the two sides agreed to put aside their differences on the meaning of "one China". This opened the way for them to work together to oppose the common threat of "Taiwanese independence" and to jointly develop Chinese culture (*zhonghua wenhua*). In a speech at Peking University, Lien was greeted with rapturous applause when he proclaimed that this new KMT-CCP cooperation would win universal praise for the Chinese race, and would be an issue of "shared glory of the descendants of the Yellow Emperor for generations to come" (Lien 2005: 191).

Accusations that this alignment with the CCP amounted to selling out Taiwan could be countered by promises that Taiwan would gain substantial economic benefits from a

deepening of the liberalisation cross-Strait transactions. The PRC lent credibility to this message by providing concessions for agricultural exports to the mainland, targeting the DPP's core support in southern Taiwan. As the population perceived the economy to be flagging, this linkage of bread and butter issues with a positive attitude towards China provided the core theme for the platform of the Hong Kong-born Ma Ying-jeou to campaign for the KMT in the 2008 presidential election and to win comfortably.

Identity politics under the Ma administration

As with the 2000 election, caution is advised when trying to understand the role of identity politics in Ma's victory. This is because a serious decline in the quality of governance was again highest in voters' minds. Ma also had to be careful not to lay himself open to the kind of accusations of disloyalty to Taiwan that had handicapped the pan-Blues in the 2004 election. The DPP capitalized on this by portraying Ma as a Trojan Horse ("Ma" means "horse") that would allow an invasion of undesirable people and products under a policy of what they dubbed a "one-China common market". This referred to the vision of a "Greater Chinese Market" articulated by Ma's vice presidential running mate, Vincent Siew, which was supposed to develop into something akin to the European Union or the federal system of the US.

In order to defend accusations of selling-out to the PRC, Ma tried to appropriate the discourse on nativisation by emphasising the Chinese contribution to Taiwan's development. Stressing that the population was composed of waves of immigrants and was being shaped by the forces of globalization, Ma could point out that the only people entitled to call themselves "native'" were the tiny number of aboriginal peoples. Presenting the KMT as the inclusive party in this way allowed Ma to portray the DPP as advocates of a chauvinistic form of ethnic Taiwanese nationalism that would divide society and risk conflict with the PRC.

There are reasons to think that Ma's stance on identity was more than just a short-term strategy to win votes, though. He was already fairly safe to win the election in 2008 due to the discrediting of the DPP by corruption surrounding Chen Shui-bian. Promises that economic growth would come from further liberalising cross-Strait relations mean that he did not need to deploy identity discourse in order to justify pragmatic initiatives, such as accepting the "92 Consensus". Neither did he have to worry about PRC aggression after his victory, given that the priority of the CCP's leaders was to ensure he would win a second term.

Despite the safety of his positiong, though, Ma started to quickly engage in what Stephane Corcuff calls a policy of "de-Taiwanisation" (Corcuffe 2011: 21). This began when his inaugural address referred to people on both sides of the Strait as the *Zhonghua minzu*, a term that implies Chineseness defined by racial and cultural unity. Embassies and overseas representative offices were then ordered to stop describing foreigners coming to the island as "Coming to Taiwan" (*fang tai*), and to use the term "Coming to China" (*fang hua*). The opposite side of the Strait was to be called "the Mainland", "Mainland China", or "the Mainland area", rather than "China". The postal service had its name changed back from "Taiwan Post" to "China Post". The Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall also reverted to its original name, after having been rechristened the National Taiwan Democracy Memorial Hall under the Chen administration. Ma also appealed to Confucian values, making Classical Chinese and the Confucian cannon required material for school courses again.

One explanation for this strategy is that it reflected Ma's personal commitment to the version of Chinese nationalism with which he had been brought up, both in family life and in the KMT. Throughout his political career he had been known for his commitment to the political transformation of the Chinese mainland. On his re-election he continued to emphasise that Taiwan's democratization would spread to mainland China. Whereas Lee Teng-hui used the same claim to postpone the prospect of unification, Ma appeared to genuinely believe that Taiwan was a beacon for political change in the tradition of the modernizing spirit of the May 4 Movement that began in the mainland in China in 1919 and the democracy movement that was crushed in 1989.

An attachment to Chinese identity was also evident in Ma's foreign policy, especially as tensions began to escalate over maritime territorial disputes in the region. The collision of a Taiwanese trawler and Japanese coastguard vessel near the contested Senkaky Islands, just as Ma came into office in 2008 was particularly significant for a president whose Harvard PhD thesis had attempted to prove the legal case that the islands are Chinese territory. As a student, he had also been involved in the Chinese patriotic movement to "Defend the Diaoyutai (Senkaku)" when they were transferred to Japan in 1971. As Taiwan-based activists ferried journalists to the islands to express Chinese "sovereignty", the new administration followed by sending a group of legislators to the on its largest and most powerful ship.

A similar test for Ma's stance on the territorial disputes also arose in the South China Sea where the ROC's claim to around 3.3 million square kilometres of maritime territory is contested by several Southeast Asian states. The dilemma is further

complicated when the PRC calls on Taiwan to work together to protect Chinese territory. This creates a situation that serves little purpose for Taiwan and alienates and annoys the very governments that it needs for regional support.

When these territorial claims pulled Taiwan closer to conflict with some of its neighbours, however, Ma could show a degree of pragmatism. This was most evident when the dispute over the Senkaku Islands deteriorated following the decision of the Japanese government to purchase three of them from their private Japanese owners in late 2012. Using his legal training, Ma was able to use the dispute to raise his international prestige by proposing an "East China Sea Peace Initiative" that reaffirmed the ROC claim of sovereignty on the one hand, but also called for the dispute over sovereignty to be shelved so that the disputed parties could come to arrangements to allow all sides to enjoy the fruits of joint exploration and development.

Identity politics and economic security

Rather than adopt this pragmatic approach in the domestic arena, however, Ma continued to emphasise the propagation of traditional Chinese culture and Confucianism when he was re-elected in 2012. This even involved the performance of symbolic acts that identified him very strongly with Chinese cultural tradition, such as leading the memorial ceremony for the Yellow Emperor, the mythical founder of the Chinese nation. More institutions were also given back the names that associated them with China, which had been changed during the Chen administration. Such measures were given new momentum by the establishment of Taiwan's first Ministry of Culture, under the leadership of Mme Lung Ying-tai, the daughter of a veteran of the ROC army and an outspoken critic of "nativisation" who is well known for her interest in the democratization of the PRC.

That the orientation of such figures towards national identity was out of touch with public opinion is supported by opinion polls. Before Ma became president in 2008, the majority of the population were willing to accept a status quo according to which they saw themselves as "both Taiwanese and Chinese". Shortly after he assumed power, the majority began to identify themselves as "Taiwanese only" for the first time. By the time he ran for re-election in March 2012, this figure had reached a new high of 54 percent, while those identifying themselves as "both Taiwanese and Chinese" had dropped to 40 percent. Those identifying as just "Chinese" made up a mere 3 per cent.[4]

[4] TVBS, 'Xie Changting fang daluyu tong-du, guozu rentong min diao' (Public Opinion Poll on Hsieh Chang-ting's Visit to the Mainland and unification/indepdence, national identity') (16-17 October 2012). Online: http://www1.tvbs.com.tw/FILE_DB/PCH/201210/0p4v11j38l.pdf

This growing dislocation of government policy and public opinion began to be reflected in the growth of angry public demonstrations, beginning in November 2008 with a large protest against the visit of the chairman of the PRC's ARATS, Chen Yunlin. When the police prevented the display of the ROC flag and the playing of Taiwanese songs, around 400 students started an occupy movement in front of the Executive Yuan, calling themselves the "Wild Strawberries". This name was chosen because it had been common in Taiwan to refer to the young generation as "strawberries" on the grounds that they were weak of character and lacked conviction. It thus heralded the appearance of a radicalized new generation, who were to lead a growing number of demonstrations and sit-ins throughout the Ma presidency, focused on a variety of issues but bound together by a common rejection of the idea that Taiwan is a part of China.

Such concerns might have remained the preserve of the intellectual and political elite, if they had not been accompanied by ambitious political and economic overtures from the government and the KMT towards Beijing. Particularly controversial was the attempt to start building the promised Greater Chinese Market through the signing of a cross-Strait Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA). In itself, this liberalization of cross-Strait economic relations was not a radical departure from the policy of the previous two presidents. However, unlike them, Ma showed no signs of balancing growing dependence on the PRC with the building of Taiwanese consciousness and democratic institutions.

Instead, he dispatched honorary KMT chairman, Wu Poh-hsiung, to meet Hu Jintao on the eve of the 2012 election and propose a formula for describing the relationship between the two sides of the Strait as "one country, two areas" (*yi guo liang chu*). Opinion polls showed only 33 per cent in favour, while 55 per cent were opposed. Only 20 per cent expressed some degree of satisfaction with the government's handling of cross-Strait relations, while 55 per cent expressed dissatisfaction.[5]

This became even more controversial when suspicions arose over the links between the KMT, the PRC and business magnates with large interests in Taiwan. The immediate catalyst was an attempt by the owner of the *China Times* to acquire ownership of a number of cable television stations in 2008. The individual in question was food products magnate, Tsai Eng-meng, known for his positive views of the PRC political

[5] I have drawn on a set of polls taken on 26 March by the Hong Kong-owned satellite television station, TVBS (Television Broadcasts Satellite), based on a survey of 1093 respondents with a 3 per cent margin of error. Online: http://www1.tvbs.com.tw/FILE_DB/PCH/201203/0fwcy3m9v1.pdf

system.[6] If his bid had succeeded, Tsai's *Want Want* media group would have gained control of 10 major cable service providers and a 23.1 percent share of cable TV subscribers. In the spring of 2012 a coalition of journalists, students and labour organizations led the opposition to this prospect by organizing a boycott, which gained the support of prominent public intellectuals. Most notable was Professor Yu Ying-shi, a world-leading expert on Chinese history and a member of Academic Sinica, who called for the protection Taiwan's values of freedom and democracy from a group of wealthy and powerful politicians and business people who had decided to infiltrate Taiwan at the behest of the CCP (Taipei Times 2012: 3).

The catalyst that finally brought all the forces concerned about the direction of cross-Strait policy onto the streets in huge numbers was Ma's attempt to sign a Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement with the PRC, without due parliamentary scrutiny. Known as the "Sunflower Movement", with many of its leaders having learned their organization skills as Wild Strawberries, the demonstrators managed to occupy the Legislative Yuan and the Executive Yuan, receiving the support of a massive demonstration in the surrounding area.[7] Although the most prominent leaders of this movement were young, it brought together large sections of Taiwan's economy and society who felt threatened by growing dependence on China.

Their fears were driven by a combination of identity politics and wariness about the impact of PRC influence over the media. This combined with as concerns over job security and the survival of small and medium-sized enterprises under cross-Strait economic liberalization to create a new kind of radicalization of identity. After the movement disbanded, the momentum was taken up by a growing coalition of activists concerned with issues ranging from land rights, food safety, LGBT rights through to media control and constitutional reform. They then began to establish new political parties, forming a "Third Force" with the potential to radicalize identity politics once again by establishing running candidates in elections on a platform of "normalizing Taiwan's status as a nation".[8]

Disillusionment with the established parties has thus led to a combination of identity politics more immediate political concerns that is more complex than the old binary

[6] On Tsai's views of the PRC see Hsu (2014) pp. 142-46.
[7] The movement took on this name after a florist donated a large number of sunflowers to the protestors, who then carried them as a symbol of hope. Naming the movement after a flower also has resonances with the "Wild Lily Movement", which occupied the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Plaze in central Taipei in 1990 to call for elections for the National Assembly.
[8] See "The New Party's Platform", *Thinking Taiwan*. Online: http://thinking-taiwan.com/the-new-power-partys-platform/ (consulted 8 July 2015).

division between independence and unification. In fact, large-scale demonstrations against the corruption of the political establishment began under the second Chen Shui-bian administration and were partially hijacked by the pan-Blues in the bid to oust the DPP from the presidency. Moreover, concerns over the possible imposition of a hegemonic version of "Taiwanese" identity continue to exist not only amongst members of the population who arrived in Taiwan after 1945 and their descendants, but also among the aboriginal peoples, the Hakka community and in new social groups such as the wives of ROC citizens from the PRC (Winnie King 2007; 2010).

This growing complexity of identity politics is symptomatic of a generation that has come to maturity in a democratic society is used to practicing through the ballot box. No matter how such individuals might identify themselves in terms of political, ethnic or gender orientation, no less than 83 per cent of those in the 20-29 and 30-39 years of age groups now identify themselves as "Taiwanese"; a proportion that falls to 65 per cent in those aged 65 and above.[9]

Conclusion

The long trajectory of identity politics in Taiwan since 1945 has moved through three broad phases. The first, starting in 1945, involved nation-building under an authoritarian political system in which the ruling KMT defined national identity according to Chinese ethnicity. The establishment of multi-party politics in 1986 heralded a new period in which the two main political parties strived to articulate a more inclusive vision of national identity based on citizenship and loyalty to Taiwan. Since 2008, a combination of growing economic dependence on the PRC and a return of the KMT to the presidency has heralded a new phase, in which identity politics is largely shaped by a tension between a state-led attempt to present Taiwan once again as part of the Chinese nation on the one hand and a defence of the civic vision by civil society groups on the other.

Over the long term, democratization has thus allowed the steady growth of a pluralistic, civic sense of Taiwanese identity. The flourishing of civil society movements and the impact of generation change makes this likely to continue into the future. With the KMT under the leadership of Ma Ying-jeou, cooperating increasingly closely with the CCP to keep the DPP out of power, the possibilities for the division of politics along ethnic lines have not disappeared altogether. Lee and Williams go so far as to describe

[9] TVBS, 'Xie Changting fang daluyu tong-du, guozu rentong min diao' (Public Opinion Poll on Hsieh Chang-ting's Visit to the Mainland and unification/indepdence, national identity') (16-17 October 2012). Online: http://www1.tvbs.com.tw/FILE_DB/PCH/201210/0p4v11j38l.pdf

this as a situation in which Mainlanders who have come to identify themselves as Taiwanese are resorting to a new kind of ethnic oppression to maintain their rule in Taiwan (Lee and Williams 2014b: 5). Given that the KMT still gains substantial support from Taiwanese voters and that many of the individuals who reap economic benefits from the liberalization of cross-Strait relations cannot be categorized as "Mainlanders", this may be stretching the point too far. However, it is safe to say that the Ma presidency has lost public support by focusing on elite politics and top-down attempts at nation-building, at the expense of engaging with the way in which identity politics has evolved within the broader processes of social change.

Yet is also true to say that both pan-Blue and pan-Green elites were taken by surprise at the upsurge of grass roots movements after 2008. As in other parts of the world that have experienced the birth of new social movements, globalization and generation change have to be parts of any explanation for this new radicalisation. Shelving issues of national identity and international status for the sake of managing transactions across the Taiwan Strait may have made good sense immediately after the Cold War, but formulas such as the "92 Consensus" make little sense to a generation that has grown to maturity under democracy and is increasingly anxious about the political implications of growing economic dependence on the PRC.

Much like the civil society movements that have shaped identity politics in Taiwan since the 1970s, today's activists continue to seek solutions to the unresolved tension between Taiwan's distinct identity and its relationship with China. As with their peers in other parts of the world, who occupy public places in the search for security and political reform, they now resort to new social media and other innovative modes of dissent. What gives Taiwan's civil society movements their special quality, however, is the way in which growing dependence on the PRC impregnates new concerns about economic security and public welfare with long-standing questions of cultural identity and political values. The tension between social change and the political boundaries imposed by the transfer of Taiwan to China in 1945 to require imaginative thinking about the very foundations of the concepts of statehood and national identity in Taiwan

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