

## Taiwanese Voters' Political Identification Profile, 2013–2014

*Becoming One China or Creating a New Country?*

### ABSTRACT

This study summarizes critical factors that influence a voter's choice between the appellations "Taiwan" and "Republic of China," a subject that has not been systematically studied so far. When the legitimacy of "Republic of China" is considered, Taiwanese voters' political identity pattern reveals itself to be more complicated than simply a choice between unification with China and independence.

**KEYWORDS:** Taiwan, identity, democracy, unification, independence

### INTRODUCTION

Taiwanese people's preferences regarding unification versus independence and their perceptions of mainland China are a complex construct. While empirical studies have attempted to identify some factors in this political preference, a systematic model that incorporates these explanatory variables is needed if we want to answer the following questions: What determines a voter's choice between the terms "Republic of China" and "Taiwan," as well as between becoming one China and creating a new country? Who are the believers in the concept of a great Chinese nation? Does identifying with Chinese culture (*Zhonghua wenhua*) and/or the Republic of China (ROC) lead a Taiwanese voter to favor unification? How sure we are when we say that Taiwanese voters employ their democracy to reject unification?

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*Asian Survey*, Vol. 56, Number 5, pp. 931–957. ISSN 0004-4687, electronic ISSN 1533-838X. © 2016 by The Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved. Please direct all requests for permission to photocopy or reproduce article content through the University of California Press's Reprints and Permissions web page, <http://www.ucpress.edu/journals.php?p=reprints>. DOI: 10.1525/AS.2016.56.5.931.

This study summarizes the effects of these critical factors that influence a voter's choice between Taiwan and the ROC, a subject that has not been systematically studied so far. I suggest that the possibility of the democratization of mainland China does not necessarily increase support for unification; that identification with the ROC does not lead to a desire for unification; and that most Taiwanese people, even if they predominantly reject unification, regard their counterparts in mainland China as "brothers" or "friends." The following section details the definition, conceptualization, and operationalization of the key variables used for the analysis: country/state identification (creating a new country for Taiwan versus rallying around the flag of the ROC), national identification and pan-national identification, cultural identification, party identification, and civil identification (Taiwan as a democratic society).

## CONCEPT, HYPOTHESIS, AND MEASUREMENT

### Country/State Identification

To study the issue of Taiwan's unification or independence, one needs clear definitions for the concepts. It is acknowledged that reviewing the distribution of voters on Taiwan's identity issue is critical to understanding Taiwan's mainland China policy.<sup>1</sup> However, it is conceptually difficult to interpret the poll results directly, because in Taiwan, (1) the term "country" has been used interchangeably with "nation"; and (2) the term "independence" is used in surveys without clarifying to respondents whether it refers to the status quo, the ownership of sovereignty and dignity, separation from the People's Republic of China (PRC), or separation from the ROC. Such vagueness in the definition used in telephone surveys can therefore lead to the selective interpretation of poll results.

From an international law perspective, Taiwan is very close to being a de facto independent state. This perspective, widely held within Taiwan and in the English-based scholarly literature, has led policymakers, journalists, and scholars to equate the Taiwanese nation (*minzu*) with a Taiwan state/country

1. A-Chin Hsiau, "Bentuhua: An Endeavor for Normalizing a Would-Be Nation-State?" in *Cultural, Ethnic, and Political Nationalism in Contemporary Taiwan: Bentuhua*, ed. John Makeham and A-Chin Hsiau, 261–276 (Gordonville, VA: Palgrave, 2005); Shelley Rigger, *Taiwan's Rising Rationalism: Generations, Politics, and "Taiwanese Nationalism"* (Washington, DC: East-West Center, 2006).

(*guo*), or to use the two terms interchangeably. One consequence of omitting the specification of the country (ROC or Taiwan) to which survey respondents are expected to anchor is the conflating of Taiwanese national/ethnic identification (*minzu rentong*) with the preference of seeking independence from China.<sup>2</sup> Christopher Hughes was one of the first scholars to clearly note this definition problem: the Chinese term *guo* “has come to be rendered into English in a variety of ways, including ‘state,’ ‘country’ and sometimes ‘nation’ . . . The idea of the *guo* has been stretched to contain a cluster of meanings, which it is difficult to catch in English translations. Perhaps the notion of a ‘post-nationalist identity in an intermediate state’ is the closest one can get to catching Taiwan’s identity and status as they have come to exist within the context of the Chinese *guo* at the end of the twentieth century.”<sup>3</sup>

Consistent with Hughes’ clarification, this study links the English word “nation” to the Chinese word *minzu* and the terms “country” and “state” to the Chinese word *guo* and considers them separate but related concepts. The former refers to people with the same sense of belonging measured by Taiwanese and Chinese identities, while the latter refers to either the ROC or (the republic of) Taiwan, the two options that are perceived as real by Taiwanese voters. Country/state identification is operationalized as identifying with the country called the ROC or the Taiwan Republic.

The term “independence” (*duli*) in this study is defined as sovereignty and/or the ability to independently make decisions.<sup>4</sup> Survey respondents in Taiwan typically do not doubt the truth of the Chinese statement *Taiwan shi yige zhuquan duli de guojia*, meaning “Taiwan is a country that has sovereignty, and it can make its own policies and decisions.” This is commonly interpreted as meaning that the majority of Taiwanese people seek independence from the PRC.<sup>5</sup> Note that separating Taiwan from the PRC and/or separating Taiwan

2. See e.g. A-Chin Hsiau, “Bentuhua”; Alan M. Wachman, *Taiwan: National Identity and Democratization* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1994); Masahiro Wakabayashi, “Taiwanese Nationalism and the ‘Unforgettable Others,’” in *China’s Rise, Taiwan’s Dilemmas and International Peace*, ed. Edward Friedman, pp. 3–21 (London: Routledge, 2006).

3. Christopher Hughes, *Taiwan and Chinese Nationalism: National Identity and Status in International Society* (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 162.

4. See also Jonathan Sullivan and Will Lowe, “Chen Shui-Bian: On Independence,” *China Quarterly* 203 (September 2010), pp. 619–638.

5. See e.g. Bruce J. Jacobs, “One China, Diplomatic Isolation and a Separate Taiwan,” in *China’s Rise*, pp. 85–109.

from the ROC have not been debated at the constitutional, elite, or mass public level. Even former President Chen Shui-bian and his Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) comrades woefully misread Taiwan's public opinion by equating a growing Taiwan identity with growing support for independence from either the ROC or the PRC.<sup>6</sup>

Therefore, "Taiwan independence" has two operational definitions: (1) transforming the ROC into Taiwan, that is, constitutionally changing the country's name and constitution from the ROC to Taiwan; and (2) creating a new country called Taiwan, that is, separating Taiwan from the ROC. Given the ROC's legacy it is expected that country/state identification with the ROC *positively* influences a Taiwanese voter's attitude toward future unification with mainland China (HI). In other words, country/state identification with (a future) Taiwan (Republic) *negatively* influences one's attitude toward unification.

### National and Pan-National Identity

National identification is a driving force of country/state identification, can be self-strengthened through selective and psychological processes, and therefore refers to one's psychological attachment to a group of people living in a political entity and one's feelings toward them.<sup>7</sup> Statements such as "I am Taiwanese" or "I am Chinese" fit this definition and should serve as the operational definition of national identification rather than of country/state identification.<sup>8</sup>

In Taiwan's case, this self-strengthened process has been underway since the 1990s: "Taiwanization" (*bentuhua*) penetrated deeply into the Taiwanese body politic in the early 2000s.<sup>9</sup> More than 40% of citizens self-identified as both Chinese and Taiwanese in 2000; many of them have since switched from "both" to self-identifying as Taiwanese but not Chinese.<sup>10</sup> While there

6. Richard C. Bush, *Untying the Knot: Making Peace in the Taiwan Strait* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press), p. 81; Rigger, *Taiwan's Rising Rationalism*; Chi Su, *Taiwan's Relations with Mainland China: A Tail Wagging Two Dogs* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

7. P. G. Klandermans, "Identity Politics and Politicized Identities: Identity Processes and the Dynamics of Protest," *Political Psychology* 35:1 (2014), pp. 1–22.

8. Yun-Han Chu, "Taiwan's National Identity Politics and the Prospect of Cross-Strait Relations," *Asian Survey* 44:4 (2004), pp. 484–512.

9. A-Chin Hsiau, "Bentuhua"; Rigger, *Taiwan's Rising Rationalism*.

10. Li-Li Huang, James H. Liu, and Maanling Chang, "The Double Identity' of Taiwanese Chinese: A Dilemma of Politics and Culture Rooted in History," *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*

exists a group of citizens identifying themselves as *both* Chinese and Taiwanese, it has been expected that Chinese national identity *positively* influences attitudes toward unification with mainland China (H2a) and that Taiwanese national identity *negatively* influences attitudes toward unification (H2b).

Compared with national identification that emphasizes “we” as a group, pan-national identification refers to the concept that emphasizes that “we” and “they” belong to the same group. Pan-Chinese nationalism, in its broadest definition but not necessarily as defined by the Chinese Communist Party, can influence Taiwanese individuals to perceive people from Hong Kong and mainland China as belonging to the same community.<sup>11</sup> It is expected that pan-national identification *positively* influences attitudes toward unification (H2c).

### Cultural Identification

Cultural identification refers to psychological attachment to a set of symbolic cultural elements of a nation. It is typically accompanied by pride in one's own culture and is used to explain the formation of national identification. Like pan-national identification, cultural identification plays a role in connecting people who do not reside in the same territory. Scholars expect that those who are mindful of Chinese culture and history will continue to identify themselves as Chinese but not Taiwanese,<sup>12</sup> and that the concept of “one China” will become meaningful to Taiwanese people only if they identify with Chinese culture.<sup>13</sup> Between 1994 and 2002, Taiwanese voters who identified themselves as Chinese shifted to the category of dual national identity.<sup>14</sup> It is expected that (Chinese) cultural identification *positively* influences one's preference regarding unification (H3a). Identification with Chinese culture is also expected to *positively* influence the adoption of dual national identity (H3b).

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7:2 (2004), pp. 149–168; see also Election Study Center, National Cheng-Chi University, “Taiwanese / Chinese Identification Trend Distribution,” <<http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=166#>>.

11. Frank Cheng-Shan Liu and Francis Li-Feng Lee, “Country, National, and Pan-National Identification in Taiwan and Hong Kong: Standing Together as Chinese?” *Asian Survey* 53:6 (2013), pp. 112–34.

12. Mei-Chih Li, “Basis of Ethnic Identification in Taiwan,” *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 6:3 (2003), pp. 229–237.

13. G. Andy Chang and Te-Yu Wang, “Taiwanese or Chinese? Independence or Unification? An Analysis of Generational Differences in Taiwan,” *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 40:1–2 (2005), pp. 29–49.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

### Party Identification

The ecology of political parties in Taiwan has been evolving since 1945 from a system dominated by the KMT (Kuomintang, Nationalist Party) to a two-political-camp system today, with the pan-green camp led by the DPP and the pan-blue camp led by the KMT. Studies of the recent history of Taiwan politics have shown that the rise of the DPP is based on opposition primarily to the KMT and secondarily to the ROC constitutional tradition; the use of Taiwanese nationalism for electoral campaigns is typically highlighted as the DPP's main strategy for winning elections.<sup>15</sup> A general expectation suggests that KMT supporters imagine a Greater China (H4a), whereas DPP supporters resist unification with mainland China (H4b).

### Civil Identification

Civil identification refers to identifying one's life in a modernized society with freedom of speech, which includes support for democratic procedures, respect for equality, and tolerance. Taiwan's democratization is neither guided by liberalism nor stimulated by anti-communist nationalism;<sup>16</sup> rather, it is a result of party competition and mobilization, social movement, and political socialization. This democratization has characterized Taiwan residents' social experiences,<sup>17</sup> and has become a collective memory that residents employ to distinguish between "we" (in Taiwan) and "they" (in mainland China).<sup>18</sup> Therefore, the focus of examining the relationship between civil identification and unification/independence preferences includes two dimensions of the concept that can lead voters to distinguish themselves from people from mainland China: belief in the superiority of Taiwan's democracy and confidence in the influence of Taiwan's democracy on mainland China. The concept "belief in the superiority of Taiwan's democracy" is operationalized by

15. Shale Horowitz and Alexander C. Tan, "Rising China versus Estranged Taiwan," in *Identity and Change in East Asian Conflicts: The Cases of China, Taiwan, and the Koreas*, ed. Shale Asher Horowitz, Uk Heo, and Alexander C. Tan, pp. 115–130 (Gordonsville, VA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Shelley Rigger, *From Opposition to Power: Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2001).

16. Chih-yu Shih, "Constituting Taiwanese Statehood: The World Timing of Un-Chinese Consciousness," *Journal of Contemporary China* 16:53 (2007), pp. 699–716.

17. Yitan Li, "Constructing Peace in the Taiwan Strait: A Constructivist Analysis of the Changing Dynamics of Identities and Nationalisms," *Journal of Contemporary China* 23:85 (2014), pp. 119–142.

18. Jacobs, "One China."

the level of agreement with the statement, “Our political system (democracy) is better than mainland China’s (non-democracy)”); and the concept “confidence in the influence of Taiwan’s democracy on mainland China” is operationalized by the level of agreement with the statement, “Our democracy and freedom can change mainland China.” Respondents who believe that Taiwan’s democratization experiences are unique, not replicable, and superior to the current political system practiced in mainland China are expected to distinguish themselves from people in mainland China (H5a). Because this belief is strongly associated with group boundaries, it is further expected that such belief in the superiority of Taiwan’s democracy would enhance one’s national identification as Taiwanese (H5b) and that confidence in the effect of democracy on mainland China could increase one’s willingness to support Taiwan’s economic negotiation with mainland China (H5c).

### Generation Politics

Generation is an important factor that has recently been found to explain the shifts in Taiwan’s identity. Previous studies have identified four generations.<sup>19</sup> The first was born in 1931 or earlier; these individuals entered their formative years before 1949 and witnessed the social conflicts between Chinese mainlanders (*waishengren*) and native Taiwanese (*benshengren*). As for either PRC or ROC, Taiwan is seen as a province (*sheng*) of China. So for decades the tension between the KMT ruling class and the anti-KMT camp was aligned with the conflict between these two ethnic groups. The second was born between 1932 and 1953; these individuals entered their formative years between 1949 and 1971 and witnessed the diplomatic difficulties such as when the United Nations General Assembly voted in 1971 to admit the PRC and expel the ROC. The third generation was born between 1954 and 1968; members of this generation entered their formative years between 1972 and 1986 and witnessed Taiwan’s economic boom. The fourth generation was born between 1969 and 1978, entering their formative years between 1986 and 1996 and witnessing the era of student social movements for congressional reform and the establishment of the DPP.

19. Chang and Wang, “Taiwanese or Chinese?”; Rigger, *Taiwan’s Rising Rationalism*.

Studies based on this generation variable have found that the second, third, and fourth generations are more likely to identify themselves as both Taiwanese and Chinese than is the first generation.<sup>20</sup> Following the logic of categorization, this study extends Shelley Rigger's generation list by adding two later generations. The fifth generation was born between 1979 and 1988; they entered their formative years between 1997 and 2006 and witnessed the transfer of power from the KMT to the DPP in 2000 and the China/Taiwan missile crisis in 2006. The sixth generation was born after 1989; these young voters entered their formative years after 2007 and witnessed the transfer of power from the DPP to the KMT in 2008 and the signing of the Cross-Straits Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement between 2010 and 2013. Empirical observations of recent Taiwan identity politics raise the expectation that elder generations are more attached to the Great China concept (H6a), and that younger generations are more alienated from it (H6b) and more likely to identify themselves as Taiwanese but not Chinese (H6c).

## METHOD AND DATA

This research employs two representative telephone survey datasets to test the above hypotheses. The first dataset, based on surveys conducted in early 2013, focuses on country, national, and pan-national identities; the second, obtained in early 2014, focuses on unification/independence preferences and the perceived relationship between mainland China and Taiwan.

The 2013 dataset ( $N = 1,078$ ) was collected from January 23 to February 4, 2013, by the telephone survey center for a research university in Taiwan. The population surveyed was eligible voters above age 20. The 2014 dataset ( $N = 1,072$ ) was collected from January 10 to 24, 2014, by the same institute. According to the American Association of Public Opinion Research response rate formula 2, the response rates of the two surveys were 21.56% and 23.9%, respectively.

Binomial logistic regression is consistently applied to a series of analyses that share the same theoretical framework. In addition to the key explanatory variables, the following control variables were included in the analysis: experience in mainland China (whether the respondent has been to mainland China within the past two years) and demographics (gender, education, and

20. Chang and Wang, "Taiwanese or Chinese?"



generation). Details regarding the question wording and frequency tables of the variables are provided in the online appendices.<sup>21</sup>

## FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### \* *What determines a voter's choice between Taiwan and ROC?*

Table 1 provides an overview of the respondents' country/state identification with a country called "Taiwan," "Republic of China," or either. The measurements of the dependent variables for the first two models are "Some people say that our country's name is 'Taiwan.' Do you agree with that?" and "Some people say that our country's name is the 'Republic of China' [*Zhonghua mingguo*]. Do you agree with that?" where 1 denotes "agree" and "strongly agree" and 0 denotes "neutral," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." In the third model, 1 denotes respondents who are coded 1 for both questions; otherwise, the value is 0.

The results suggest four points. First, nearly half the respondents (49%) have dual-country identity. Those who are proud to be citizens of the ROC and those who agree that the Taiwanese should establish their own country also approve of the alternative option. This implies that both Taiwan and ROC have multiple meanings, and are not subject to just one interpretation. Not only Taiwan name pickers will take ROC as an acceptable term; those whose country/state identification lies with the ROC see Taiwan as a non-provocative name, too.

Second, those identifying themselves as Chinese or as KMT supporters, and/or who are better educated, are *unlikely* to adopt Taiwan as the name of their country. Such objection to the use of "Taiwan," however, is not associated with favoring "ROC" over "Taiwan." This implies that "Taiwan" and "ROC" are not on the same spectrum for voters choosing their preferred name.

Third, the sixth generation is more likely than the third generation to hold dual-country identity. This finding contradicts the stereotype that profiles the youngest voters as hard-core believers in Taiwan *de jure* independence. Fourth, cultural identification is not found to positively influence dual-country identification. This suggests that (Chinese) cultural identification has minimal influence, if any, on the formation of a Taiwanese voter's country/state identification.

21. <<https://cl.ly/35130z07062s>>.

TABLE 1. Binary Logistic Regression Models of Country/State Identification (2013)

	<i>Country name Taiwan</i>		<i>Country name ROC</i>		<i>Either</i>	
	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>
Constant (intercept)	1.098	0.929	-1.319	1.207	-3.073***	0.791
<b>Country/state identification</b>						
Our country's name is Republic of China	-0.453**	0.132	-	-	-	-
Our country's name is Taiwan	-	-	-0.315*	0.133	-	-
I am proud of Republic of China	-0.006	0.128	1.182***	0.111	0.695***	0.085
Taiwanese should establish own country	0.398***	0.072	-0.178	0.138	0.269***	0.068
Hong Kong and Shanghai are foreign cities	0.273**	0.084	-0.145	0.147	0.137	0.078
<b>Pan-national and national identification</b>						
Chinese and Taiwanese belong to the same nation	-0.158	0.095	0.152	0.110	-0.097	0.077
People in mainland are our compatriots	0.134	0.091	0.027	0.121	0.081	0.077
I am a Taiwanese	0.129	0.219	-0.532	0.352	-0.125	0.198
I am a Chinese	-1.366**	0.434	-0.496	0.786	-1.329**	0.428
<b>Cultural identification</b>						
Our culture is authentic Chinese culture	0.121	0.073	-0.016	0.107	0.023	0.062
<b>Party identification</b>						
I support the pan-blue camp (KMT)	-0.697**	0.227	0.646	0.505	-0.572**	0.212
I support the pan-green camp (DPP)	0.664*	0.323	-0.179	0.311	0.118	0.232
<b>Civil identification</b>						
Our political system (democracy) is better than mainland China's	0.114	0.098	0.157	0.127	-0.018	0.085
<b>Control variables</b>						
I am more politically knowledgeable than other family and friends	-0.057	0.092	0.052	0.132	-0.011	0.080

(continued)

TABLE I. (continued)

	Country name <i>Taiwan</i>		Country name <i>ROC</i>		<i>Either</i>	
	Reg. coeff.	Std. error	Reg. coeff.	Std. error	Reg. coeff.	Std. error
I have been to mainland China within the last two years	-0.126	0.224	0.004	0.339	-0.135	0.199
Female	0.230	0.202	-0.100	0.277	0.109	0.174
Education	-0.517***	0.142	-0.090	0.186	-0.387**	0.119
<b>Generations</b> (compared to the 3rd generation, born 1954–1968)						
1st generation (born by 1931)	-1.256	1.216	12.785	570.883	-0.634	1.095
2nd generation (born 1932–1953)	-0.254	0.314	0.478	0.432	-0.213	0.262
4th generation (born 1969–1978)	0.249	0.255	0.154	0.355	0.192	0.220
5th generation (born 1979–1988)	0.234	0.295	0.142	0.384	0.343	0.254
6th generation (born 1989–1993)	0.316	0.397	1.671*	0.702	0.785*	0.362
Observations	776		776		778	
-2 log-likelihood	717.109		415.793		911.196	
AIC	761.109		459.793		953.196	

SOURCE: All tables by author

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

NOTE: The measurements of the dependent variables of the first two models are "Some people say that our country's name is Taiwan. Do you agree with that?" and "Some people say that our country's name is Republic of China [zhonghuamingguo]. Do you agree with that?"—where 1 denotes "agree" and "strongly agree"; 0 denotes "neutral," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." In the third model 1 denotes respondents who are coded 1 in both of the questions, otherwise 0.

### \* *What influences voters' preferences regarding the creation of a new country?*

"Creating a new country" is operationalized as a straightforward question: "Some people say that Taiwanese people should establish their own country. Do you agree?" A total of 37.01% strongly agreed, 30.15% agreed, 2.32% felt neutral, 15.49% disagreed, and 9% strongly disagreed. The first model of Table 2 presents three points. First, consistent with the previous section, cultural identification has no statistically significant influence on respondents' desire to create a new country. Nor does party identification have significant influence on the dependent variable. Therefore, Hypotheses 3b, 4a, and 4b are not supported.

TABLE 2. Binary Logistic Regression Models of Creating a New Country (2013)

	<i>Create new country</i>		<i>Believe in democracy</i>	
	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>
Constant (intercept)	-0.309	0.940	-3.490***	0.756
<b>Country/state identification</b>				
Our country's name is Taiwan	0.393***	0.071	0.175**	0.065
Our country's name is Republic of China	-0.124	0.123	0.105	0.086
I am proud of Republic of China	0.139	0.125	0.113	0.092
Taiwanese should establish own country	—	—	0.086	0.067
Hong Kong and Shanghai are foreign cities	0.098	0.087	0.154*	0.073
<b>Pan-national and national identification</b>				
Chinese and Taiwanese belong to the same nation	-0.050	0.100	0.134	0.072
People in mainland China are our compatriots	-0.221*	0.093	-0.097	0.073
I am a Taiwanese (neither Chinese nor both)	1.106***	0.218	-0.015	0.187
I am a Chinese (neither Taiwanese nor both)	-0.173	0.393	-0.253	0.369
<b>Culture identification</b>				
Our culture is authentic Chinese culture	-0.085	0.073	0.086	0.058
<b>Party identification</b>				
I support the pan-blue camp (KMT)	-0.402	0.227	0.350	0.208
I support the pan-green camp (DPP)	0.523	0.336	0.328	0.216
<b>Civil identification</b>				
Our political system is better than mainland China's	0.242*	0.099	—	—
<b>Control variables</b>				
I am more politically knowledgeable than others	-0.001	0.093	0.062	0.075
I have been to mainland China within the last two years	0.193	0.231	-0.029	0.188
Female	-0.253	0.207	-0.241	0.163
Education	-0.425**	0.144	0.283*	0.112
<b>Generations</b> (compared to the 3rd generation, born 1954–1968)				
1st generation (born by 1931)	0.474	1.185	1.250	1.175
2nd generation (born 1932–1953)	0.757*	0.337	0.109	0.246
4th generation (born 1969–1978)	0.286	0.249	0.073	0.207
5th generation (born 1979–1988)	0.605*	0.304	-0.162	0.238

(continued)

TABLE 2. (continued)

	Create new country		Believe in democracy	
	Reg. coeff.	Std. error	Reg. coeff.	Std. error
6th generation (born 1989–1993)	0.517	0.418	-0.795*	0.330
Observations	776		776	
-2 log-likelihood	701.281		1004.113	
AIC	745.281		1048.113	

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

NOTE: The measurements of the dependent variables are "Some people say that Taiwanese should establish own country, do you agree?" and "Some people say that our political system (democracy) is better than mainland China's, do you agree?"—where 1 denotes both "agree" and "strongly agree" and 0 denotes "neutral," "disagree," and "strongly disagree."

Second, those who prefer to create a new country are likely to be: those who acknowledge Taiwan as the country's name, those who identify as Taiwanese but not Chinese, and those who believe that Taiwan's democracy is better than the PRC's political system. Hence, Hypothesis 5a is partially supported. Two variables are found to explain the rejection of creating a new country: education and pan-national identity. Those who have completed a higher education level are likely to reject the idea that Taiwanese should establish a new country. Those who see people in mainland China as compatriots are also likely to reject the idea. Hypothesis 2c is thus supported.

Third, compared with the third generation, the second and fifth generations are more likely to support the creation of a new country. An earlier study identified this puzzle: "The younger generations in Taiwan are more likely to display characteristics of Taiwanese nationalism or a pro-Taiwan identity, but a substantial number of mainlanders, traditionally staunch supporters of greater Chinese nationalism, now also exhibit similar identities."<sup>22</sup>

The findings shown here suggest that the effect of generation on state creation preference cannot be interpreted as a linear pattern. That is, Table 2 shows no evidence that the youngest generation favors creating a new country as much as the fifth generation does. Furthermore, the "substantial

22. T. Y. Wang and I-Chou Liu, "Contending Identities in Taiwan: Implications for Cross-Strait Relations," *Asian Survey* 44:4 (August, 2004), p. 586.

number of mainlanders” does not include those of the first generation in Taiwan. The findings here reject Hypothesis 6a and partially support Hypothesis 6c.

Because belief in democracy affects one’s support for creating a new country, the second model in Table 2 further shows the profile of this group of voters. Those who believe in democracy are likely to be: those who have adopted Taiwan as the country name, those who have a clear perception of Taiwan’s territory (as not including mainland China), and those with a higher education level. These results suggest that belief in democracy is connected to one’s country/state identification with Taiwan. Interestingly, compared with the third generation, the sixth generation has a *weaker* belief that Taiwan’s democracy is better than mainland China’s political system.

**\* *What factors are associated with Chinese/Taiwanese identities?***

Table 3 presents three models that further inspect related factors: Taiwanese-only national identification, Chinese-only identification, and dual national identification. “Others” (30 individuals, 2.78% of the sample) were excluded from the analysis. As most Taiwanese voters might have been shifting from dual identification to Taiwanese-only, and because dual national identifiers are likely to be KMT supporters,<sup>23</sup> comparing the results across the three models helps clarify this picture.

The comparison yields six points. First, Taiwanese identifiers are likely to be those who take Taiwan as their country name and those who reject pan-Chinese identity. KMT supporters are unlikely to identify themselves as Taiwanese-only. KMT supporters’ national identity has become more diversified. KMT supporters are no longer (Chinese) nationalists but are likely those holding dual national identities. Second, Chinese identification is not driven by any of the variables listed in the model, except country/state identification with Taiwan: individuals in Taiwan who have a distaste for “Taiwan independence”—refusing any name change from “ROC” or refusing to acknowledge Taiwan’s de facto statehood—are likely to identify as Chinese.

Third, the following groups of people are likely to claim both Taiwanese and Chinese identification: KMT supporters, those acknowledging the

23. Frank Cheng-Shan Liu, “When Taiwan Identifiers Embrace ROC: The Complexity of State Identification in Taiwan,” *Issues & Studies* 48:6 (2012), pp. 1–34.

TABLE 3. Binary Logistic Regression Models of Taiwanese National Identification (2013)

	<i>Taiwanese</i>		<i>Chinese</i>		<i>Both</i>	
	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>
Constant (intercept)	1.021	0.865	0.102	1.763	-2.397**	0.845
<b>Country/state identification</b>						
Our country's name is Taiwan	0.176*	0.073	-0.435**	0.144	-0.042	0.070
Our country's name is ROC	-0.226*	0.105	0.076	0.267	0.212*	0.103
I am proud of ROC	-0.090	0.116	0.107	0.271	0.060	0.112
Taiwanese should establish own country	0.456***	0.076	-0.187	0.142	-0.363***	0.071
Hong Kong and Shanghai are foreign cities	0.152	0.088	-0.156	0.142	-0.078	0.082
<b>Pan-national identification</b>						
People in mainland China are our compatriots	-0.479***	0.078	0.120	0.181	0.427***	0.076
<b>Culture identification</b>						
Our culture is authentic Chinese culture	-0.006	0.070	-0.136	0.136	0.022	0.067
<b>Party identification</b>						
I support the pan-blue camp (KMT)	-0.552*	0.234	-0.278	0.419	0.531*	0.219
I support the pan-green camp (DPP)	0.493	0.271	-0.759	0.804	-0.503	0.269
<b>Civil identification</b>						
Our political system (democracy) is better than mainland China's	-0.025	0.095	-0.195	0.161	0.089	0.091
<b>Control variables</b>						
I am more politically knowledgeable than other family and friends	-0.027	0.089	0.311	0.168	-0.064	0.085
I have been to mainland within the last two years	0.059	0.220	0.108	0.415	-0.052	0.210
Female	0.051	0.189	-0.119	0.405	-0.014	0.182
Education	-0.253	0.130	-0.465	0.260	0.340**	0.126
<b>Generations (compared to the 3rd generation, born 1954–1968)</b>						
1st generation (born by 1931)	0.048	1.274	0.279	1.379	-0.619	1.104
2nd generation (born 1932–1953)	-0.135	0.310	-0.148	0.535	0.095	0.295

(continued)

TABLE 3. (continued)

	<i>Taiwanese</i>		<i>Chinese</i>		<i>Both</i>	
	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>
4th generation (born 1969–1978)	-0.141	0.240	0.053	0.458	0.153	0.230
5th generation (born 1979–1988)	-0.317	0.275	-0.838	0.806	0.394	0.265
6th generation (born 1989–1993)	0.536	0.379	-0.546	1.093	-0.446	0.374
Observations	778		778		778	
-2 log-likelihood	784.115		243.768		835.947	
AIC	824.115		283.768		875.947	

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

NOTE: The measurement of the dependent variable for the models is “Some call themselves Taiwanese, some Chinese and some both. What about you?” The three options are used to create three binary dependent variables where 1 denotes the category and 0 otherwise.

legitimacy of the ROC, those rejecting the idea of creating a new country, and/or those who view people in mainland China as compatriots. Moreover, cultural identification, civil identification, and generation are found to be statistically insignificant explanatory variables for dual national identity. But there is no evidence that Taiwanese voters who strongly identify with traditional Chinese culture are more likely to identify with Chinese nationality (*Zhongguoren*).

Fourth, the statistically insignificant coefficients of civil identification suggest that identifying with Taiwan’s democracy may not directly positively influence one’s identification with being “Taiwanese.” Therefore, Hypothesis 5b is not supported. As strong Taiwanese (national) identification positively influences one’s attitudes toward political unification (to be shown later, in Table 5), this result offers no evidence that being proud of Taiwan’s democracy is equal to being pro-independence.

Fifth, there is no evidence here that the younger (fourth, fifth, and sixth) generations are more likely than the third generation to identify themselves as Taiwanese. The insignificant regression coefficients for generations in Table 3 (as will be shown in Table 5) challenge the stereotype that younger voters in Taiwan are pro-independence and against unification. Hence, Hypothesis 6c is not supported.

Sixth, education is found to play a role in the model of dual national identification. One plausible explanation is that as Taiwan’s education system



has been reformed since 2001 and as the textbook market has become diversified in terms of ideology and politics, students have been exposed to diversified historical and political perspectives and the idea of dual-identity formation.

***\* How do Taiwanese voters analyze the relationship between Taiwan and mainland China?***

The respondents' perception of Taiwan's relationship with mainland China includes: enemies (13.71%); friends (42.35%); and family, including father-son (3.73%), brothers (25.84%), and couples (1.03%).<sup>24</sup> This distribution seems to suggest that Taiwanese voters have a mild image of mainland China, as the majority see mainland China as either a friend or a brother.

Given that all of the other important variables are controlled for, six patterns can be drawn from Table 4. The first three are associated with positively perceived images of mainland China; the rest are linked with negatively perceived images. First, as expected, respondents who hope for future unification are likely to view mainland Chinese not as enemies but rather as part of the same family. Second, compared with the third generation, the first and second generations are likely to perceive mainland China as family but not friends. Hence, this pattern indirectly supports Hypothesis 6a, that senior generations are more attached to the Greater China concept. Third, people with a higher education level are unlikely to perceive mainland China as a friend. This implies that those who are more aware of Taiwan's international situation feel less friendliness with mainland China than those who are less politically aware.

Fourth, those who prefer "Taiwan" over "ROC" in international affairs such as news media are unlikely to regard mainlanders as family. To Taiwanese voters, the family analogy for cross-Strait relations refers not only to Chinese nationality (*Zhongguoren*) but also to mutual recognition between the PRC and ROC. This result implies that those who prefer using Taiwan rather than ROC have been strongly doubtful as to whether keeping the ROC on the

24. "Family" was operationalized based on the rationale of Confucian Five Cardinal Relationships (*wu lun* 五倫): (1) between ruler and subjects, (2) between parents and offspring (father-son), (3) between husband and wife (couple), (4) among siblings (brothers), and (5) among friends. I removed the first, which might cause distaste among telephone survey respondents, and added "enemy" as a category of interest.

TABLE 4. Binary Logistic Regression Models of Relationship with Mainland China (2014)

	<i>Enemies</i>		<i>Friends</i>		<i>Family</i>		<i>Family2</i>	
	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>
Constant (intercept)	-2.356**	0.855	0.548	0.508	-1.066	0.551	-1.080	0.556
Prefer using name Taiwan	0.342	0.269	0.231	0.187	-0.586**	0.206	-0.604**	0.209
Want to change ROC to Taiwan	0.084	0.089	-0.124	0.066	0.043	0.075	0.047	0.075
I'm a Taiwanese	0.819	0.639	0.222	0.307	-0.330	0.319	-0.381	0.321
I'm both a Taiwanese and a Chinese	0.095	0.658	0.125	0.300	0.059	0.308	-0.023	0.310
I support the pan-blue camp (KMT)	-0.060	0.342	-0.245	0.206	0.402	0.216	0.432*	0.218
I support the pan-green camp (DPP)	0.371	0.234	-0.060	0.190	-0.154	0.222	-0.119	0.225
I hope Taiwan and PRC become one country	-0.408**	0.138	-0.046	0.075	0.246**	0.079	0.233**	0.079
Our democracy can change the mainland	-0.190*	0.082	0.025	0.055	0.118	0.061	0.144**	0.062
Female	0.065	0.209	0.628***	0.150	-0.894***	0.167	-0.931***	0.169
Education	0.003	0.044	-0.076*	0.031	0.029	0.034	0.030	0.035
Generations (compared to the 3rd generation, born 1954–1968)								
1st & 2nd generation (born by 1953)	0.377	0.320	-0.763**	0.221	0.556*	0.231	0.501*	0.232
4th generation (born 1969–1978)	1.079***	0.298	-0.255	0.209	-0.139	0.238	-0.257	0.243
5th generation (born 1979–1988)	0.758*	0.338	0.030	0.238	-0.277	0.276	-0.250	0.277
6th generation (born 1989–1993)	1.245**	0.363	-0.383	0.283	-0.163	0.314	-0.228	0.318

(continued)

TABLE 4. (continued)

	<i>Enemies</i>		<i>Friends</i>		<i>Family</i>		<i>Family2</i>	
	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>
Observations	800		800		800		800	
-2 log-likelihood	625.763		1055.369		896.115		881.434	
AIC	655.763		1085.369		926.115		911.434	

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

NOTE: The measurement for the dependent variables is "What does our relationship with the mainland look like, father-son, brothers, couples, friends, or enemies?" where in the first model 1 denotes enemies, and 0 denotes the rest; in the second model 1 denotes friends and 0 the rest; in the third model 1 denotes family (including father-son, brothers, and couples), and 0 the rest; in the fourth model 1 denotes family (including father-son, brothers), and 0 the rest.

international stage would uphold their need for dignity. Fifth, compared with the third generation, the younger generation (in their early forties or younger) are more likely to view mainland China as an enemy. This finding indirectly supports Hypothesis 6b. Sixth, those who are confident that Taiwan's democracy can change the political system of the mainland are unlikely to perceive mainland China as an enemy. This finding provides indirect support for Hypothesis 2b.<sup>25</sup>

Overall, the above patterns suggest that Taiwanese voters' perceptions of the relationship between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait are influenced more by their pre-existing unification/independence preferences and demographics (gender and age) than by psychological identification variables. Generations of voters differ in their perceptions of the relationship, and this implies that a China-targeted social movement or policy (such as the Sunflower Movement, which targeted mainland China as an economic threat) can stimulate diverse responses.<sup>26</sup> The findings of this section suggest

25. The measurement of "family" used in this study could have two categories: one includes the analogy of father-son, brothers, and couple, and the other does not include couple. Table 4 shows the results of both measurements, in the 3rd and 4th columns. The results are similar, except that in the narrower definition of family (1) support for the pan-blue camp and (2) believing that Taiwan's democracy can positively change mainland China influence one to perceive mainland China as family.

26. The Sunflower Movement was initiated by scholars and students who used radical means—breaking windows and "occupying the Congress"—to stop the ratification of the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement in the Legislative Yuan on March 18, 2014. This movement was a result of

that older generations who have not perceived mainland China as a real economic enemy of Taiwan may display tolerance for such a social movement, but might not necessarily support it.

**\* *Will Taiwanese voters accept unification with mainland China?***

In the 2013 dataset, answers to the question “If both China’s and Taiwan’s political systems were democratic, would you like to see the unification of Taiwan and China?” are polarized: 43.88% of the respondents said yes, and 45.29% said no. To the more sensitive question, “Some people say that the two sides of the strait will ultimately become one country. Do you agree?” 28.57% of respondents answered affirmatively, and 60.67% gave a negative answer.

Table 5 presents two models that decipher the above patterns. Who would accept unification if mainland China becomes a democracy? As shown in the first model (unification under democracy), country/state, culture, party, and civil identifications do *not* have a statistically significant influence on the preference for democratic unification. These findings provide no support for an assertion that those who insist on using Taiwan as the country name reject unification under democracy (H1) or that attitudes to unification should be attributed to Chinese cultural identification (H3a) or partisanship (H4a, b). The first model further shows that pan-national identification, but not Chinese national identification, positively influences attitudes toward democratic unification (H2c supported but H2a rejected). Taiwanese identifiers are likely to hold negative attitudes toward democratic unification (H2b), which predicts that (Taiwanese) national identity negatively influences attitudes toward unification.

Who thinks that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait will inevitably become united? The second model suggests that, first, national and pan-national

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a continuous social movement against the trade agreement, which was signed in June 2013 by two semi-governmental organizations, the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF), representing Taiwan, and the Association for Relations across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS), which represented mainland China’s interests. A rally called by the leaders of the movement attracted almost 500,000 citizens, as reported by the *Liberty Times* on March 30 (<http://news.ltn.com.tw/news/politics/breakingnews/978491>). The movement “ended” on April 6, when the leaders agreed to leave the Legislative Yuan after President Wang Jin-Pyng promised student leaders that the Legislative Yuan would give the trade agreement a transparent ratification process under the monitoring of the political parties.

TABLE 5. Binary Logistic Regression Models of Future Unification (2013)

	<i>Unification under democracy</i>		<i>Inevitable unification</i>	
	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>
Constant (intercept)	0.92	0.84	-0.75	0.91
<b>Country/state identification</b>				
Our country's name is Taiwan	-0.06	0.07	-0.06	0.07
Our country's name is Republic of China	-0.05	0.09	-0.03	0.11
I am proud of Republic of China	0.03	0.10	0.08	0.11
Taiwanese should establish own country	-0.14	0.07	-0.21***	0.07
Hong Kong and Shanghai are foreign cities	-0.19*	0.08	-0.16	0.08
<b>Pan-national and national identification</b>				
Chinese and Taiwanese belong to the same nation	0.24***	0.08	0.32***	0.10
People in mainland China are our compatriots	0.29***	0.08	0.22*	0.09
I am a Taiwanese (neither Chinese nor both)	-0.62***	0.19	-0.59***	0.21
I am a Chinese (neither Taiwanese nor both)	0.18	0.43	-0.16	0.40
<b>Culture identification</b>				
Our culture is authentic Chinese culture	-0.06	0.07	-0.09	0.07
<b>Party identification</b>				
I support the pan-blue camp (KMT)	-0.01	0.22	0.09	0.23
I support the pan-green camp (DPP)	-0.13	0.24	-0.01	0.27
<b>Civil identification</b>				
Our political system is better than mainland China's	-0.10	0.09	-0.20*	0.09
<b>Control variables</b>				
I am more politically knowledgeable than others	0.01	0.08	0.15	0.09
I have been to mainland China within the last two years	-0.11	0.21	-0.11	0.22
Female	-0.40*	0.18	-0.26	0.19
Education	0.03	0.12	0.20	0.13
<b>Generations</b> (compared to the 3rd generation, born 1954–1968)				
1st generation (born by 1931)	-0.97	1.26	-0.22	1.10
2nd generation (born 1932–1953)	-0.12	0.28	0.15	0.30
4th generation (born 1969–1978)	-0.07	0.22	-0.00	0.24
5th generation (born 1979–1988)	-0.28	0.26	-0.04	0.28

(continued)

TABLE 5. (continued)

	<i>Unification under democracy</i>		<i>Inevitable unification</i>	
	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>
6th generation (born 1989–1993)	-0.52	0.36	-0.05	0.39
Observations	744		740	
-2 log-likelihood	873.148		770.263	
AIC	919.148		816.263	

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

NOTE: The measurements of the dependent variables are “If both China’s and Taiwan’s political system were democratic, would you like to see the unification of Taiwan and China?” and “Some people say that the two sides of the Strait ultimately will become one country. Do you agree?” where 1 denotes “agree” and “strongly agree” and 0 denotes “neutral,” “disagree,” and “strongly disagree.”

identification (with the Chinese) positively influences attitudes toward ultimate unification; H2a is supported. Second, the respondents who resist this scenario are likely to be those who want to establish a new country, those who claim Taiwanese (and neither Chinese nor both) identification, and/or those who believe in Taiwan’s democracy. Hence, H2b and H5a are supported.

**\* *What determines a voter’s choice between becoming one China and creating a new country?***

The 2014 survey asked respondents two critical questions regarding unification and independence. In the first five-point-scale question, “Do you hope that Taiwan and mainland China become one country?” the proportions of answers ranging from “I do not hope for that at all” to “I hope so very much” are 18.84, 26.68, 17.44, 15.49, and 16.32%. The missing rate is 5.22%. For the second question, “Do you hope that ROC changes its name to Taiwan or the Republic of Taiwan some day?” the distribution is 44.50, 30.69, 11.47, 6.53, and 3.64%. The missing rate is 3.64%.

The results of the analysis shown in Table 6 reveal four points, of which the first three are consistent with conventional wisdom. First, there is no statistical evidence that Chinese identification influences acceptance of unification with mainland China. Hence, H2a is rejected. Second, Taiwanese identifiers and DPP supporters are less likely to accept the “ultimately

TABLE 6. Binomial Logistic Regression Models of Choosing Taiwan's Future (2014)

	<i>Become one country with mainland China</i>		<i>Prefer name change from ROC to Taiwan</i>	
	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Reg. coeff.</i>	<i>Std. error</i>
Constant (intercept)	0.948*	0.461	-2.414***	0.575
Prefer using name Taiwan	-0.180	0.182	2.068***	0.207
Willingness to change name ROC to Taiwan	-0.082	0.065	—	—
I am a Taiwanese (neither Chinese nor both)	-0.980**	0.309	0.686	0.426
I am both a Taiwanese and a Chinese	-0.185	0.312	-0.060	0.442
I support the pan-blue camp (KMT)	0.224	0.209	-0.434	0.277
I support the pan-green camp (DPP)	-0.622**	0.191	1.009***	0.205
Believe that democracy can change China	0.128*	0.056	0.008	0.066
Female	-0.145	0.150	-0.219	0.178
Education	-0.014	0.031	0.004	0.036
Generations (compared to the 3rd generation, born 1954–1968)				
1st & 2nd generations (born by 1953)	0.104	0.217	0.241	0.254
4th generation (born 1969–1978)	0.363	0.213	-0.285	0.253
5th generation (born 1979–1988)	0.199	0.240	-0.602*	0.286
6th generation (born 1989–1993)	0.291	0.278	0.508	0.320
Observations	843		862	
-2 log-likelihood	1066.057		816.579	
AIC	1094.057		842.579	

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

NOTE: The measurements for the dependent variables are “Do you hope that Taiwan and mainland China become one country?”—where 1 denotes “strongly hope so” and “hope so” and 0 denotes the rest; and “Do you hope that someday ROC changes its name to Taiwan or Republic of Taiwan?”—where 1 denotes “strongly hope so” and “hope so” and 0 denotes the rest.

becoming one China” option; H2b is supported. Third, Taiwanese identifiers seem to prefer changing the country's name from ROC to Taiwan, as found among DPP supporters.

What is unexpected here is that the fifth generation of voters is *less* likely than the third generation to support changing the country's name from ROC to Taiwan, suggesting that this generation is experiencing conflict between their national identification and their country/state identification. One explanation is that the cohort of voters who are in the early years of their career are more reluctant to undergo a fundamental political/constitutional change.

## CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study contributes to the development of the literature on political identity by examining the extent to which factors typically assumed to be important and empirical observation explain Taiwanese voters' attitudes toward the future political landscape across the Taiwan Strait, a topic that has not been systematically studied so far. The profile of Taiwanese voters presented in this study is more complex than a choice between "becoming one China" or "creating a new country," if the legitimacy of the ROC is taken into account.

Three points can be drawn from Table 7 that summarize the above findings. First, the possibility of democratization of the mainland does not necessarily increase voters' support for unification, even if they are KMT identifiers. Second, identification with the ROC does not lead to desire for unification, even if the PRC becomes democratized. This implies that the ROC as a Chinese regime is losing its original meaning as associated with "China." Third, while a substantial majority of Taiwan's population rejects unification, nearly 70% deem mainland Chinese "brothers" or "friends," not enemies. This is positive evidence that continued economic and political talks across the Strait would be welcomed by Taiwanese voters. These findings are expected to help avoid over-interpretation of the attitudes toward unification/independence inferred from opinion polls, such as that rising Taiwanese identity indicates stronger support for Taiwan independence (from either the PRC or ROC).

These findings together present a clear message that the basis of the PRC's desire for Taiwanese people's consent to further political arrangement has been eroded. However, as long as there is room for political discussion regarding the legitimacy of the ROC,<sup>27</sup> it will be critical for both Beijing and Washington to reconsider the following empirical facts. (1) The issue of "independence" in Taiwan is more about the ROC's legitimacy than the PRC's. Hence, there is no immediate threat to Beijing regarding any dramatic Taiwan action on separation, as long as the ROC is still recognized by most people in Taiwan. (2) "Unification" in any form is unlikely to become

27. Gang Lin, "Beijing's Evolving Policy and Strategic Thinking on Taiwan," in *New Dynamics in Cross-Taiwan Strait Relations: How Far Can the Rapprochement Go?* ed. Weixing Hu, pp. 64–77 (London: Routledge, 2013); Yang Zhong, "Explaining National Identity Shift in Taiwan," *Journal of Contemporary China* 25:99 (2016), pp. 336–352.



TABLE 7. Hypothesis Testing Summaries

<i>Categories</i>	<i>Hypotheses</i>	<i>Test results</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Country/state identification	<b>H1:</b> Country/state identification with (a future) Taiwan (Republic) negatively influences one's attitudes toward unification with mainland China	Not supported <i>or</i> partially supported	Table 5
National and pan-national identification	<b>H2a:</b> Chinese national identity positively influences attitudes toward unification	Not supported	Tables 5 & 6
	<b>H2b:</b> Taiwan national identity negatively influences attitudes toward unification	Supported	Tables 5 & 6
	<b>H2c:</b> Pan-national identification positively influences attitudes toward unification	Supported	Tables 2 & 5
Cultural identification	<b>H3a:</b> Culture identification positively influences one's preference about unification	Not supported	Tables 2 & 5
	<b>H3b:</b> Culture identification positively influences the adoption of dual national identity	Not supported	Table 3
Party identification	<b>H4a:</b> KMT supporters imagine a greater China	Not supported	Tables 2, 3, 5 & 6
	<b>H4b:</b> DPP supporters seek "Taiwanese independence"	Not supported Partially supported	Tables 2 & 5 Table 6
Civil identification	<b>H5a:</b> Because of belief in the superiority of democracy, the Taiwanese people see themselves as distinct from mainland China	Partially supported	Tables 2 & 5
	<b>H5b:</b> Belief in the superiority of democracy enhances one's national identification as Taiwanese	Not supported	Table 3
	<b>H5c:</b> Confidence in democracy increases one's willingness to cooperate with mainland China	Partially supported	Table 4
Generation	<b>H6a:</b> Older generations are more attached to the great China concept	Not supported Partially supported	Tables 1 & 2 Table 4
	<b>H6b:</b> Younger generations are more alienated from the great China concept	Supported Partially supported	Table 1 Table 4
	<b>H6c:</b> Younger generations are likely to be Taiwan nationalists	Partially supported Not supported	Table 2 Table 3

a favorable choice among Taiwanese people in the near future. (3) Therefore, the terms “independence” (or separation) and “unification” (or reunification) are insufficient to construct an innovative framework for deeper mutual understanding between Beijing and Taipei. A clearer perception of these facts will ease the pressure on Beijing and mitigate any urgency behind reunification. It will also soothe Taipei’s anxiety over the balance between maintaining the ROC’s legitimacy and the Taiwanese people’s impatience regarding ROC legitimacy and functionality.

Beijing’s patience is critical to the maintenance of peace across the Taiwan Strait.<sup>28</sup> The empirical findings of this article suggest that the basis of this patience—a belief that Taiwanized Chinese are still “Chinese” in terms of both national and cultural identification<sup>29</sup>—may have been undermined. Because it serves the PRC’s own need for a complete Chinese national identity, such a belief sustains Beijing’s patience.<sup>30</sup> In addition to being intolerant of the territorial definition of China *without* the inclusion of Taiwan,<sup>31</sup> Beijing’s desire to complete the “holy” task of rebuilding its broken national identity drives its restatement of the “one country, two systems” and “one China” policies for Taiwan. Even though the growing Taiwanese national identity will not necessarily lead to immediate efforts toward *de jure* independence (which has been assumed by those who interpret poll results selectively), claiming Taiwanese (national/ethnic) identity and believing that Taiwan’s democracy is superior are important factors in why Taiwanese people are rejecting Beijing’s political proposal.

It remains unclear whether Beijing’s impatience will accelerate the loss of ROC legitimacy in Taiwan. But if loss of ROC legitimacy does occur, Beijing may lose its leverage to claim *de jure* unification. Therefore, sustaining trust and peace across the Taiwan Strait requires a better mutual understanding of Beijing’s need and the Taiwanese people’s identity dynamics.

28. Richard C. Bush, *Uncharted Strait: The Future of China-Taiwan Relations* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2013); Shiping Zheng, “Ethnic Peace in the Taiwan Strait,” in *New Thinking about the Taiwan Issue*, ed. Jean-Marc F. Blanchard and Dennis V. Hickey, pp. 71–91 (Milton Park: Routledge, 2012).

29. Zheng, “Ethnic Peace.”

30. Lowell Dittmer, “Taiwan as a Factor in China’s Quest for National Identity,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 15:49 (2006), pp. 671–686.

31. Alan Wachman, *Why Taiwan? Geostategic Rationales for China’s Territorial Integrity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007).

Four constraints of this study may limit further interpretation of the findings and may present topics for future research. First, the measurements of the concepts, including country/state identification and family as well as cultural and civil identification, are in their pilot stage and need further development. For example, survey questions about ROC name recognition may not have gone beyond the dimension of national identification. Therefore, questions about ROC name recognition may not (yet) be the best measurement of country/state identification. Although the measurement of national identification adopted for this study is consistent with the measurement widely used in the scholarly literature, a refined measurement of this concept and extension beyond the simple categorization of “Taiwanese, Chinese, or both” would be welcome.

Second, the high proportion of respondents who did not reveal their party identification, including those claiming to be “independent voters” (more than 60% in the 2013 survey and more than 25% in the 2014 survey), can obscure our understanding of how partisanship influences unification/independence preferences. This study adopts a dummy-variable approach to avoid loss of data, but future studies should consider alternative approaches, such as multiple imputation or indirect attitudes, to inform the party-identification variable. Third, the perception of the role of the US has not been included in the model. Although it remains unclear how the perception of the US influences Taiwanese voter identification, future studies are encouraged to explore this influence. Last but not least, this study assumes that unification/independence is a dichotomous issue. Following this conventional assumption, future studies might clarify the relationship between rejecting unification and favoring independence, as well as investigating whether rejecting independence equals favoring unification.