CHAPTER 6

Theory and the Politics of Reunification

Understanding Past Choices and Future Options

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The "Taiwan problem"—the question of whether Taiwan should be a part of the Chinese nation or its own independent nation—is a political issue. Moreover, it is fundamentally an issue of identity. These statements are not contradictory, for, as we have seen, identity is political. A specific identity is formed by individuals who share common social experiences because they are classified as members of a single group. Social experience includes political and economic experience. That is, people's social experience derives from their position with regard to political and economic power. Social experience is also influenced by demographic conditions such as migration. However, because identity is ideologically constructed—by political leaders and governments—in terms of culture and/or ancestry, the "Taiwan problem" has unfortunately been debated primarily in these terms, rather than in terms of the sociopolitical basis of actual identities. To understand identity in Taiwan and China, we must analyze the ideological terms of debate as well as actual experiences, for both influence the choices and actions of people and governments. This concluding chapter first examines these influences at a theoretical level and then uses theory to discuss the real-world political implications of the new Taiwanese identity for Taiwan's future relations with the PRC.

Culture, social power, and demographic conditions like migration impact changing identities differently. We must turn to theory to understand why they do so. Theory provides a paradigm for understanding phenomena in the world—a framework guiding what questions we ask and

how we seek answers; it explains why and how those answers fit together. My theoretical framework considers culture, social power, and demographic conditions to each constitute a distinct system with its own dynamic for perpetuation and change—that is, for reproducing the system. Human cognition mediates each system and influences the choices of individuals; varying interactions and degrees of influence are possible. As we have seen, political interventions, a form of social power; migration, a demographic condition; and intermarriage, which I suggest is an interaction of social power and culture, have been the primary forces influencing identity changes. In these cases, social power in particular, but also demographic conditions, appears to have greater degrees of influence than culture, which operates primarily in interaction with social power. Debate over such interactions and degrees of influence are at the center of the highly polemical debate between science and postmodernism. To truly understand identity—both as claimed and as actually constructed—we need to examine these influences and interactions. That examination will take us through the fray of current intellectual debate.

Theoretical insights can guide us through "real-world" identity politics. They lead us to distinguish the implications of ideological claims from the implications of people's actual identities, because both actual identities and ideological claims influence the actions of people in Taiwan and China, but in different ways. Theoretical insights suggest that the closer ideologies are to actual identities, the more effective they are in motivating people. Failure to understand this contrast—that is, failure to understand in theoretical terms the actual basis of identity formation as opposed to ideological rhetoric about identity formation—has brought us to the point where the issue of Taiwan's political future impinges on world peace. Such failure has exacerbated identity-based political conflict there—and elsewhere in the world as well—in large part due to unrealistic predictions and policies that fuel tensions rather than damping them.

THEORETICAL BASIS FOR ANALYSIS

When an established theory cannot answer questions raised or when it can no longer explain why particular answers obtain, then researchers—working between empirical cases and theoretical proposals—must develop a new theory, in a process Thomas Kuhn (1962) called a paradigm shift. My theoretical approach synthesizes several perspectives, whose proponents are increasingly antagonistic (e.g., Nader 1988; Shore 1988; Borofsky 1994a, 1997a, 1997b; Brown 1995, 1997, n.d.). Because no one of these theoretical perspectives suffices to explain the cases of identity change discussed in this book, I propose a new synthesis that distinguishes analytically between the influences of cultural meaning, social power, demographic conditions, and human cognitive structures upon human choices. Of course these influences interact—in narratives of unfolding, intermarriage, and migration—but each of these influences operates by a self-directed process—a process that follows its own dynamic and that can, under certain circumstances, initiate change.

In this chapter, I explain this approach and provide examples from the case studies in earlier chapters which illustrate its explanatory power. I begin with culture, since the ideology of identity uses culture to justify its political claims. After formulating a concept of culture synthesized from several anthropological perspectives, I distinguish culture from social power and discuss their differing but interacting impacts on human beings. Demographic conditions, which I take up next, ultimately involve issues of mortality and fertility, or survival and descent, that impact all living creatures. Yet, finally, humans are distinguished from other living creatures by the cognitive structure of our brain. That cognitive structure mediates the influences and interactions of culture, social power, and demographic conditions through the (not necessarily rational) choices people make and act on. After analytically distinguishing each of these influences, I discuss why this theoretical approach yields a powerful understanding of identity formation, identity changes, cultural change, and ideological rhetoric.

What Is Culture?

A recent exchange in the journal *Modern China* highlights both current interest in and misunderstandings of culture. Historian Philip C. Huang (2000:28) argues that people who are members of both Western and Chinese culture—"biculturals"—have introduced Western practices and ideas into China without "aggression or domination and victimization or subjugation." (In many ways, Huang's biculturals are like the "mixed" peoples I have discussed.) Huang essentially views culture as the lived experiences of people—"the ideas, customs, skills, arts and so on of a given people at a given time" (Huang 2000:4). Historian Prasenjit Duara (2000) disagrees with Huang. He views culture as *interpretations* of lived experience, interpretations strongly influenced by nationalistic ideology. Neither of these positions captures a full anthropological understanding

of culture. Instead, E. B. Tylor's seminal 1871 definition of culture underlies their understanding of culture, as it does the view of many scholars outside of anthropology:

> Culture . . . is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. (Tylor 1871:1)

This definition is behaviorally based. That is, in addition to beliefs, Tylor viewed the behaviors—such as the practice of customs and institutions—as culture. This definition underlies what is commonly meant by "a culture." In other words, when people refer to Chinese culture they generally mean the collection of beliefs, customary practices and social institutions of Chinese people. This definition also underlies both Huang's and Duara's views of culture, for all of these—beliefs, customs, and institutions—are part of people's lived experience.

Contemporary anthropologists, however, define culture as ideational (cf. Durham 1991:3–8).[1] That is, anthropologists understand culture not as the customs of a group but as the shared ideas which motivate those customs. Because they motivate actions, cultural ideas are meaningful. Throughout most of the late twentieth century, there was widespread agreement among sociocultural anthropologists that culture was ideational and meaning-laden. In the 1990s, however, there were challenges to this consensus.

According to Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner (1994:3),

> The notion of culture has recently been undergoing some of the most radical rethinking since the early 1960s. Within anthropology, where culture was in effect the key symbol of the field, the concept has come under challenge precisely because of new understandings regarding power and history. . . . [O]ne of the core dimensions of the concept of culture [that Dirks, Eley, and Ortner argue is being revised] has been the notion that culture is "shared" by *all* members of a given society. (Emphasis added)

Although radical reconsiderations of culture have been promoted from several perspectives—not simply that of Dirks, Eley, and Ortner, which focuses on social power—they have not taken over the discipline. Moreover, this portrayal of the older anthropological consensus on culture is a caricature, a straw man more easily attacked than the actual concept of culture which still has widespread acceptance. The anthropological consensus does not claim that any specific cultural idea is shared by every single member of a society. One of the most basic, though largely unstated, things that anthropologists learn from the "worm's eye view" that is fieldwork (to use Stevan Harrell's phrase) is the rich variation that exists in cultural meanings and practices. An idea must be widely shared across a society in order to be considered cultural, but it does not have to be shared by 100 percent of the population.

Analyses of public symbols and meanings that dominate anthropological journals today show that many anthropologists still accept the position most famously articulated by Clifford Geertz (1973) that culture is shared, abstract, meaning-laden, and public. The primary criticism which Dirks, Eley, and Ortner have of Geertz—that "he never confronted the issue of power" (1994:22)—is valid if our goal is to understand human actions and social change, and thus it is important to my theoretical synthesis, but it is not particularly helpful to an understanding of culture because they, like Duara, conflate ideology and culture. Their suggestion that "cultural (read racial, gender, ethnic, religious) categories provide both a source of oppression and a means for empowering groups and communities to contest that oppression" (Dirks, Eley, and Ortner 1994:24) is an excellent description of ideologies. Narratives of unfolding, for example, constitute such ideologies in that they are consciously falsified stories of the past for present political purposes (Harrell 1996b:5n). However, Dirks, Eley, and Ortner (1994:25) go much further to say, "all culture is political." Ideologies are part of culture, but there is more to an anthropological concept of culture as shared, meaningful ideas than ideology.

Consideration of the implications of another aspect of the anthropological concept of culture—that culture is public (external to individuals) because meaning is public (Geertz 1973:12)—is much more useful in refining our understanding of culture. For example, semioticians (e.g., Daniel 1984) demonstrate that the public character of culture leads to an implication of its autonomy or self-directed dynamic. That is, there are ways in which cultural signs and symbols are independent of the people who communicate them. Cognitive anthropologists (e.g., Strauss 1992a, Sperber 1996) also accept culture as public, because it is shared, but they argue, in opposition to Geertz and others, that the implication of this public character of culture is that meaning is mental—internal to individuals and thus subjective (or private). For them, culture is both public and mental. While these perspectives may seem to diverge, I draw on the work of philosopher Karl Popper (1982) to synthesize the older Geertzian consensus on culture with semiotic and cognitive insights.

I argue that there are two different types of cultural meaning: first,

logical or semiotic meaning, which is abstract, public, and autonomous; and second, subjective or emotional meaning, which is mental. For example, patrilineal inheritance has both logical and subjective meanings. The semiotic meaning of this concept—that heritable things are transmitted strictly patrilineally—extends from property to surnames to ethnic identity without any conscious intervention necessary. People who hold this idea readily extend it from one heritable thing to another (cf. Strauss and Quinn 1994:291). Thus, the application of the concept of patrilineal inheritance to a relatively recent concept like ethnic identity is "discovered" after the fact rather than deliberately engineered. By contrast, the subjective meaning of the concept—that patrilineal inheritance is a moral good—is both conscious and dependent on experience. Many people in societies which practice patrilineal inheritance do not believe it is moral or good. Thus, feminist social criticism, for example, is possible. Because subjective meaning is idiosyncratically based on personal experience, similar versions of a subjective meaning must be shared for that meaning to be considered cultural (cf. Sperber 1996:82, D'Andrade 1992b:230).

Culture, then, is made up of shared, meaning-laden ideas, some of which are semiotic and some of which are subjective. What percentage of a population must share an idea in order for members of that population and outsiders to consider them part of "the culture" of that population is still not understood (cf. Strauss 1992a, Strauss and Quinn 1994, Sperber 1996, Brown 1997, n.d.).[2] I suggest there is a human cognitive threshold such that, once an idea achieves some critical-mass distribution, people perceive it as part of their "culture." One example of such a threshold, mentioned in chapter 1, pertains to identity. There was a turning point when villages in southwestern Taiwan were no longer perceived as Aborigine villages with Han men living in them and instead became seen as Han villages. At that point, people perceived Han identity as belonging to the majority of the group of villagers and thus as representative of the group or village as a whole. Because the term "a culture" colloquially refers to so many different things—a specific society, customs, beliefs, a disenfranchised minority group within a society—I prefer the term "cultural model" to refer to all the ideas distributed widely enough in a specific population to cross this threshold. (Thus, a cultural model does not include all the ideas extant in a population.)

The ideas in a cultural model interact with each other and also change over time. Recall the example of a uxorilocal minor marriage from Toushe (in chapter 3). There are several reasons to believe that uxorilocal

marriages (marriages with postmarital residence at the wife's family's home) were culturally approved—for example, their practice among Taiwan plains Aborigines for at least two centuries and their high frequency in Toushe before 1930. Although minor marriage (in which a girl was adopted and raised to become the wife of one of the adopting family's sons) was culturally approved among Hoklo in northern Taiwan (e.g., Wolf 1995), its rare frequency in Toushe, and indeed in southern Taiwan generally, suggests it was either relatively new or not well accepted or both. The reported acceptance and encouragement of a uxorilocal version of minor marriage in Toushe—where a boy was adopted and raised to marry one of the adoptive family's daughters—shows that these ideas could interact in complex ways. Here, the concept of uxorilocal marriage took precedence over and thereby significantly revised the concept of minor marriage as it was introduced.

Cultural models shape people's worldviews. Meaning-laden ideas affect the perception and understanding, or interpretation, that individuals and groups have of the world around them. The meaning-laden ideas already in people's minds affect the meanings ascribed to subsequent events they experience and ideas they encounter. For example, we saw in chapter 5 that people in Hubei who thought of themselves as Han but sought official ethnic minority status as Tujia on the basis of a maternal relative viewed themselves as "really" Han. In this case, the matrilateral claim to official Tujia identity was subordinated to the idea that kinship and ethnic identity are "really" passed patrilineally.

Additionally, the existing cultural model impacts which new ideas or practices individuals consider acceptable and pass on to others (cf. Brown 1995:28, 35–36). For example, contrast the location of grave sites in Taiwan and Enshi. In Taiwan, where many people believe a spirit of the deceased resides at the grave and can potentially harm the living, graves are well outside of the villages, either in a communal graveyard or outlying agricultural lands. In Enshi, however, where they are not considered dangerous, graves are conveniently accessible to the deceased's home in nearby agricultural land, sometimes even adjacent to the deceased's or a neighbor's house. Consider someone challenging the established custom. In Enshi, it is merely convenient to tend a grave near one's home; there is nothing wrong with placing a grave elsewhere. Such a modification of the local cultural model would be acceptable. In Taiwan, however, placing a grave near houses would be viewed as dangerous and would likely provoke strong objections from neighbors. In this case, the introduction of a new idea to place graves more conveniently within the

village would not be accepted, and would probably be actively suppressed, because it contradicts the already existing cultural model.

This anthropological concept of culture explains how shared meaning-laden ideas interact and shape people's worldviews. To understand how some cultural ideas become ideologies, we must first distinguish between culture and social power.

Social Power

What is the difference between society and culture? Huang's (2000:4) definition of culture, like Tylor's (1871), does little to differentiate between culture and society. Some anthropologists suggest there is no difference (e.g., Sperber 1996:9), and yet most anthropologists readily distinguish between British social anthropologists studying social institutions and American cultural anthropologists studying symbols and meanings (cf. Kuper 1999). Some cultural anthropologists have argued, largely based on the work of Michel Foucault, that anthropology must examine "power" (e.g., Dirks, Eley, and Ortner 1994). Duara's (2000) emphasis on ideology and nationalism similarly raises the issue of power.

What is power? And how is it related to society?

> Power in the substantive sense, *"le" pouvoir,* doesn't exist. . . . In reality power means relations, a more-or-less organised, hierarchical, co-ordinated cluster of relations. (Foucault 1980:198, cf. 1980:187–88)
>
> There is no Power, but power relationships which are being born incessantly, as both effect and condition of other processes. (Foucault 1989:187)

In other words, "power" refers to hierarchical social relations. Moreover, no human society is without hierarchical organization—even supposedly egalitarian hunter-gatherer societies have hierarchies based on age and gender. Thus, "power" and "society" refer to the same thing—hierarchically organized relations between individuals and groups. Since people often think of "social" as simply referring to relationships and "power" as referring to hierarchy, I prefer to combine these terms as "social power" to emphasize that hierarchy is played out socially. Society, or social power, defined as hierarchically organized relations, is different than culture, defined as shared meaning-laden ideas.

I argue (Brown 1995, n.d.) that this difference is important because the dynamics of social power hierarchies are different than the dynamics of cultural models. Social dynamics constitute how an individual person moves about in a specific social system or hierarchy as well as how that system changes. Cultural dynamics, on the other hand, constitute how an idea comes to be widely enough shared to become part of the local cultural model as well as how the introduction of a new idea into the model affects other ideas already present in that model. Part of the reason there is such disagreement over the differences between social and cultural systems is that they interact in myriad ways, both with each other and with cognition.

This interaction, and its importance, is demonstrated by a different sense in which the term "power" is also used—to refer to an ability to direct or manipulate the actions of people. Anthropologists disagree over whether to "locate" power in this sense in individuals or collectivities—that is, whether it is individuals or some collective entity that manipulates people's actions. This disagreement is essentially a debate over agency—the ability to choose and to act—and whether it functions at a collective or individual level. On one side of the disagreement is methodological individualism, which views power as located in individuals and aggregates the actions of individual members of a group to describe collective action (e.g., Elster 1983, Perry 1980, Smith and Winterhalder 1992, Little 1989:245–48). Pitted against this view is collectivism, which views power as located in collective entities—social groups or institutions or semiotic cultural meanings—and describes collective action as beyond the control or the aggregated contributions of individuals (e.g., Comaroff 1985:53; Sahlins 1976a:206, Naquin 1976, 1981, 1985).[3]

Foucault's work, regarded as seminal on the topic of power, does not resolve whether power as an ability to direct actions is derived from the aggregated relations of many individuals or from synergistic relations among collective entities. According to Flynn (1994:34–35), Foucault insists that "'power' does not exist . . . only individual relations of domination and control." Nevertheless, Foucault does not grant agency to individuals in much of his writing—even though he sees individuals as integral to structures, mechanisms, and applications of power (cf. Habermas 1987:274–75; Sangren 1995:9–10, 15–18). Foucault himself (1983: 217) explicitly denied such criticism: "For let us not deceive ourselves; if we speak of the structures or the mechanisms of power, it is only insofar as we suppose that certain persons exercise power over others." However, his published work is replete with individuals without agency and with power operating through collectivities. For example:

> The individual, that is, is not the *vis-à-vis* of power; it is, I believe, one of its prime effects. The individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, or precisely to the extent to which it is that effect, it is the element of its

articulation. The individual which power has constituted is at the same time its vehicle. (Foucault 1980:98, see also 1980:55, 98, 156)

These power/knowledge relations are to be analyzed, therefore, not on the basis of a subject of knowledge who is or is not free in relation to the power system, but on the contrary, the subject who knows, the objects to be known and the modalities of knowledge must be regarded as so many *effects* of these fundamental implications of power/knowledge and their historical transformations. (Foucault 1979:27, emphasis added)

In other words, power—which is linked to the control of knowledge—is an agent that produces individuals as conscious subjects who "know" only what they are taught. This view does not seem to leave much room for interaction between individual subjects and "power/knowledge." Instead, individuals are acted upon. Nor does it resolve questions about the links between the agency of power, collective entities, and the actions of individuals. Other analyses of power, notably Bourdieu's (e.g., 1977:89, 120; 1990:102), similarly portray humans as automatons; they describe power as acting upon humans—through the ways in which the existing social institutions structure human bodily movements, actions, and thoughts—largely without seeing humans as acting upon those powerful institutions (e.g., Comaroff 1985:5, Strauss 1992a:9, Scheper-Hughes 1994:232).[4]

I resolve these apparently contradictory views of power by synthesizing them with structuralist and cognitive insights (discussed further below), and I suggest that power is located in both individuals *and* collective entities. In this view, collective social action can be described as the aggregate of individual actions. The actions of individuals are affected by social structure, because the actual hierarchical structure of social power relations affects individuals' abilities to act and to move within the system (Brown 1995:31–35, 87; n.d.).[5] Individuals' actions are also affected by their conscious and unconscious choices, and such choices are themselves affected by individuals' *perceptions* about power and social relations. Perceptions—based on idiosyncratic interpretations of the social power hierarchy, personal experiences, and cultural meanings, both semiotic and subjective—may or may not accurately reflect actual social power relations.

Cognitive perception introduces the collective aspect of power through *cultural meanings of social power relations* that guide and constrain individuals' interpretations of actual events and possible future actions (cf. Brown 1995:86–88, n.d.). This is hegemonic ideology at work. Ideologies are constructed by people in power—sometimes by a few individuals, sometimes by a group—to emphasize cultural meanings that support the existing social power hierarchy. For example, narratives of unfolding attempt to make specific cultural ideas selected by people in positions of power especially meaningful to their constituency. If such ideas are already widely shared by this constituency, people more readily embrace these ideological narratives. To the extent that these ideologies become accepted by a populace, the cultural meanings that they tout constitute manipulation of that populace by those in power. However, people may resist ideology where it contradicts their already accepted ideas—unless it offers them a possibility for maneuvering their way up the social power hierarchy.

Narratives of unfolding—especially those for an ethnic group seeking enfranchisement or for an incipient nation-state seeking independence—do offer ways of improving their constituents' standing in the local social power hierarchy. Taiwan's new narratives of unfolding offer the possibility of a Republic of Taiwan. China's narrative of unfolding reinforces already held ideas about foreign imperialism and offers the possibility of acquiring the rich capitalist enclave of Taiwan to add to those of Hong Kong and Macao, which it has already acquired. A populace may have cause to embrace such narrative ideologies even if they are a leap from their previously held ideas. To continue the example of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao, China agreed to a referendum in Hong Kong and Macao to determine whether they would return to the Chinese nation. People in Hong Kong and Macao took such a leap in voting to rejoin China, apparently welcoming the opportunity to be citizens rather than colonial subjects—at least before the massacre at Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989.

Various kinds of structuralism—including Marxism and Bourdieu's practice theory—posit the existence of an objective, "true" set of social power relations, which are often unconscious to individuals caught in these relations and which can be discovered. This premise is the crux of Foucault's criticism of Marxism (e.g., 1980:84–85) and of Michel de Certeau's (1988 [1984]:59) criticism of Bourdieu. Foucault and de Certeau want to go beyond a structuralist analysis of power—that is, beyond an analysis of power relations in terms of the structure of social hierarchies—to consider how people's subjective experience of these power relations affects their worldviews. Both of these analytic perspectives are important.

The cultural meanings of social power relations do affect people's choices and actions, but so does the actual structure of social power re-

lations, regardless of whether people accurately or consciously understand these relations. Where individuals are located in the existing social power hierarchy—for example, their class or relation to the mode of production—affects which actions they can carry out and the consequences of those actions. Consequences are influenced, at least in part, because people perceive the same actions differently depending on who performs them. Thus, individuals do have agency—we can choose and we can act. However, that agency—which options we have to choose from and whether we can successfully carry out a particular action—is constrained by the actual social power hierarchy in which we live.

For example, consider the village monopoly system instituted by the Dutch and Aborigine-Han relations, discussed in chapters 2 and 4. A Han middleman paid a fee for exclusive rights to trade and collect taxes in a particular village. When this institution began, many Aborigine villages had extensive and close ties with Dutch missionaries, who could be petitioned to mitigate the more extreme aspects of leaseholders' exploitation, because missionaries frequently disagreed with VOC governing policies and greatly distrusted Han. The monopoly system continued under Zheng and then Qing rule of Taiwan, but under these regimes there was no mediating group like the missionaries whom Aborigines could use to reduce exploitation. By the early eighteenth century, abuses of the monopoly system were both rampant and extreme. Some Aborigine villages sought to reduce the extortion of middlemen by nominating their own people for the position, but nominations had to be confirmed by Qing officials. Most Qing officials viewed Aborigines as barbarians but saw identity as patrilineally inherited, so Aborigine villages were more successful in getting the son of a Han father and Aborigine mother—often the daughter of the Aborigine leader—into the role of middleman.

This example illustrates two important points. First, social power dynamics are historically contingent. In other words, what happens at one point in time affects the range of possibilities available at another point in time. The Zheng and Qing regimes continued the monopoly system set up by the Dutch, albeit with some modification; they did not institute totally new systems of taxation. Second, social power dynamics are also culturally contingent. In other words, there is some overlap between the influences of social and cultural systems. The patriarchal values of those with social power—the Qing officials—constrained the range of maneuvers Aborigines could make to manipulate the social organization in their favor. At the same time, intermarriage between Han men and

Aborigine women expanded the range of possible maneuvers by allowing Aborigines to identify their nominees as Han according to the cultural beliefs of the Qing officials themselves.

Even aspiration to specific powerful social roles may depend on cultural beliefs—widely shared public representations—about which categories of people should hold particular roles. The strength of the subjective meaning of this belief to different individuals—is it a historical accident, an honored tradition, a moral law?—affects their aspirations, choices, and actions (cf. Strauss 1992b). Moreover, the holder of an influential role may change the rules about who can hold such roles, thereby changing the dynamics of the local social power hierarchy. A good example is Taiwan's late president, Chiang Ching-kuo. He inherited his position from his father but, before his death in 1988, he instituted reforms leading to democratic elections of officeholders from mayors to the president. He changed the rules about how one achieved office and, thereby, people's expectations about who was likely to hold office and their aspirations to hold office. Chen Shui-bian, elected president in 2000, could not have realistically aspired to that office before the reforms because of his status as a Taiwanese lawyer who defended dissidents.

We can see, then, not only that cultural ideas and social power influence human choices and actions but also that their dynamics often interact. Their interaction, however, plays out in the context of larger demographic conditions which can, under certain circumstances, have a strong influence.

Demographic Conditions

Demographic conditions impact human choice and actions because they are fundamentally matters of survival and descent. For example, migration affects the fertility and mortality of the migrants themselves and also the fertility and mortality of both the population from which the migrants leave and the population(s) with which the migrants interact in their journey and settlement. Certainly the impetus to migrate and the consequences of migration are more complex than just these demographic effects, but the demographic effects should not be discounted. Consider the impact of the influx of some 30,000 mostly male Han immigrants in the course of five years to a population of some 25,000 Han and roughly 60,000 Aborigines, as occurred in mid-seventeenth-century Taiwan (see chapter 4). Even ignoring the concurrent political changes that occurred, we can easily see that the arrival of so many men without wives would

affect how marriages were arranged. Moreover, given the sex-ratio imbalance, the fertility rate of the new combined population had to be lower than the fertility rate for the southwestern Taiwan population prior to the influx.

Because fertility and mortality rates are directly linked to natural selection and to concepts of evolutionary viability (the probability of survival), analysis of the influences of demographic conditions takes us into the heart of the polarized debate between science and postmodernism. This major intellectual fissure affects most if not all disciplines in the university today. (See Huang [2000:27] for a discussion of how this debate has affected China Studies.) In anthropology, it has fueled a split over the relevance of natural selection to the actions and cultures of anatomically modern humans.[6] The split has been caricatured by the extreme positions of biological determinism and complete cultural transcendence.[7] However, there is middle ground which recognizes biological influences without yielding to determinism and which recognizes the potential for cultural transcendence without assuming that it always occurs (e.g., Wolf 1995, Brown n.d.). This middle ground is necessarily occupied when the influences of demographic conditions such as migration are considered.

In order to understand the link between fertility and mortality, and thus demographic conditions, on the one hand, and natural selection, on the other, some discussion of the latter is warranted. Natural selection is the environmental culling process that leads to the differential reproduction of individuals with specific genotypes. ("Genotype" refers to the genetic make-up of an individual. Individuals of different phenotypes—external appearances—can have the same genotype, and individuals with the same genotype can have different phenotypes, depending on environmental influences. "Differential reproduction" refers to a combination of fertility and mortality: individuals have different numbers of offspring who themselves survive to have offspring.) For each individual, a child represents a potential genetic descent line, which is at least partially realized when the birth of a grandchild continues the descent line one generation further. In a culling process, a population changes its membership over time through the elimination of some descent lines.[8] In a given generation, natural selection culls out some phenotypes, at the same time allowing a range of varieties to persist. It is better described as the "extinction of the unfit," which leaves behind many variants that merely get by, rather than the "survival of the fittest," an unfortunate phrase, which implies a notion of absolute progress not part of the neo-Darwinian synthesis used by contemporary evolutionary biologists and geneticists.[9]

Geneticists use technical concepts of "fitness" and "inclusive fitness" to analyze the effects of natural selection on the behavior of populations.* In populations where behavioral variants are influenced by an individual's genotype, at least in part, behaviors that have positive inclusive fitness consequences—that increase inclusive fitness—are expected to spread over time. In other words, an evolutionary perspective predicts that in populations, such as social insects, where behavior is at least partially dependent on individual genetic make-up, behaviors that increase inclusive fitness—possibly through increasing fertility or increasing viability—will be practiced by more and more of the population with each passing generation because of natural selection. These predictions work very well when analyzing nonhumans, even nonhuman primates with very complex social power hierarchies.

Consideration of human fertility and mortality in relation to natural selection is much more complicated and controversial. While the science-postmodernism divide indicates disagreement over *whether* human fertility and mortality are related to natural selection, scholars on the science side themselves disagree about *how* human fertility and mortality are related to natural selection. The ultimate cause of this disagreement is that, in human populations, variation in behavior is not linked to individual genotypes, even though it may be linked to the human genome (a genetic pattern shared by all humans). For example, while the human capacity for language is genetically based, which specific language an individual speaks—the behavioral variant—is unrelated to genotype.

Because human behavior is not dependent on individual genotype, even those who take the position that natural selection influences human behavior must see it as operating on human populations within constraints. The first important factor which limits natural selection's direct influence on humans relates to which behavioral practices may be affected by it. Nat-

*The absolute fitness of a particular genotype, A, is the expected number of offspring contributed by A individuals to the next generation. Typically, however, population geneticists use relative fitness, reducing the fitness of one type in the population to 1 and scaling the others to the same factor (e.g., Maynard Smith 1989:38). Inclusive fitness measures the relative fitness of an individual not merely from his or her own offspring but by a weighted aggregation of the fitness of one's surviving genetic relatives, weighted by their degree of relatedness (Maynard Smith 1989:175–76). Children and full siblings, who share 0.5 of one's genes on average, are the greatest contributors to one's fitness, followed by half siblings (who share 0.25) and first cousins (who share 0.125).

ural selection works through genetic reproduction, but ideas are not transmitted genetically. Natural selection can only *directly* affect ideas and nongenetically based behaviors that are transmitted vertically from parent to child—that is, following the path of genetic transmission (e.g., Cavalli-Sforza and Feldman 1981:101, 121, 365; Boyd and Richerson 1985:11, 180–81; Richerson and Boyd 1992:78–79; Durham 1991:286, 430–31, 463n). In other words, natural selection can directly influence the perpetuation of ideas and practices that are passed from parents to children. This influence occurs by the fertility and mortality of individuals who practice that behavior or hold those ideas. As we shall see, the form of parentally arranged marriages is a good example of such vertical transmission because parents actually select the marriage form practiced by their children.

The second factor which limits natural selection's effects on humans is the relative influences of culture and social relations, on the one hand, and natural selection, on the other. Anthropologist Marshall Sahlins (e.g., 1976a:57, 102, 208–209; see also 1976b) strongly criticized overemphasis of natural selection's influence (see also Ehrlich and Feldman 2003).[10] In doing so, Sahlins made the crucial point that, because the specific cultural logic of a given society drives social and cultural change, inclusive fitness consequences are relevant to cultural practices only in those rare cases where viability (probability of survival) is at stake.

In order to synthesize Sahlins's interpretive criticism with an evolutionary perspective, I define a concept called the "descent viability threshold" which measures the probability of survival of a descent line. I suggest that, beyond this threshold, inclusive fitness drops off so dramatically that individuals perpetuating a particular behavior are likely to have no surviving genetic descendants in the course of a few generations (cf. Durham 1991:85, figure 2.2.; Brown n.d., 1995:80–81). This concept is useful for an analysis of human populations because it distinguishes the relative strength of direct natural selection. In other words, a particular cultural practice or idea is only likely to be strongly influenced by natural selection—via fertility and mortality—if continuation of a descent line is at stake. Above a descent viability threshold, natural selection will strongly influence the perpetuation of vertically transmitted ideas and practices (Durham 1991:368, 450, 451–54). Below this threshold, natural selection still operates, but it is weak with respect to social and cultural processes. In other words, the relative strengths of the other processes mean that the relative persistence and/or spread of the various practices are more strongly influenced by social, cultural, and/or cognitive dynamics than by inclusive fitness consequences.

For example, consider Arthur P. Wolf's work on the Westermarck hypothesis that early childhood association leads to sexual indifference or aversion later in life. At the turn of the twentieth century, Hoklo women in minor marriages in northern Taiwanese families had about 25-percent lower fertility than Hoklo women in major or uxorilocal marriages (that is, who did not come into contact with their husbands until they were adults) (Wolf 1995:120–121). (Through the early twentieth century in Taiwan, brides and grooms were not allowed any voice in the decision of their marriage, thus meeting the criterion of vertical transmission.) Nevertheless, minor marriages constituted 20 to 47 percent of all marriages in one area of northern Taiwan between 1850 and 1920 (Wolf 1995: 42, 51), ending as a common practice only when social changes led to children having more control over whom they married, or more accurately, whom they would not marry (Wolf 1995:47, 222–223). I suggest that the persistence of minor marriages was more strongly influenced by social and cultural processes than natural selection because families whose children had minor marriages did *not* cross a descent viability threshold: Hoklo women in minor marriages still had an average total marital fertility of 5 to 6 children (Wolf 1995:120, 146, 203–205).[11] Wolf's study provides an excellent example of how the human genome can influence human behavior—in terms of reducing fertility and increasing adultery and divorce—but, at the same time, it shows that cultural and social influences can override natural selection effects to maintain a practice that does not cross the descent viability threshold.

I take a middle-ground position that, through demographic conditions, natural selection may influence cultural practices that are passed from parent to child. In order to decide whether natural selection has a strong influence on a particular practice, we must examine the degree to which that practice affects descent viability—the probability of survival of a descent line. In seventeenth-century Taiwan, where Han immigrant men overwhelmingly outnumbered Han women, the choice to avoid intermarriage must have been strongly influenced by natural selection because this choice would have strongly influenced fertility and continuation of a Han man's descent line. This perspective predicts high rates of intermarriage in that circumstance, as we found in chapter 4. This perspective also places humans in the continuum of all living creatures by accepting that we too are subject to natural selection. However, it takes into account the fact that culture mediates the effects of natural selection. I turn next to the mechanism by which culture has this mediating effect—human cognition.

Human Cognition and "Rational" Choices

Anthropologists who advocate the importance of choice (e.g., Boyd and Richerson 1985, Cosmides et al. 1992, Durham 1991, Smith and Winterhalder 1992, Tooby and Cosmides 1992) assume that choices follow principles of rational decision making and individual self-interest, often defined in evolutionary terms, economic terms, or both (as in game theory). This rationalist position is not a new one in the social sciences; it has been known at least since Weber's (1978[1922]) *Economy and Society.* Nevertheless, Huang (2000:25) apparently views the enormous influence acquired by rational-choice theory as a recent attempt to imitate the physical sciences. He (2000:26) suggests, "postmodernist 'cultural studies' . . . [is a potentially] useful corrective to such scientistic tendencies." Huang's position reflects the broader science-postmodernism split in the social sciences over the relevance of human choices in understanding human actions (cf. Elster 1983, Little 1989, Brown 1995:19–23).

Anthropologists who advocate the irrelevancy of choice, however, include both postmodernists (e.g., Bourdieu 1977) and evolutionists (e.g., Dunnell 1992:85). They emphasize the unconscious basis and unintended consequences of many, if not most, human actions. This position is actually the more recent one. It criticizes rational-choice approaches for assuming a rational subject with total understanding of and control over the consequences of his or her actions. Such assumptions are definitely unwarranted. However, the validity of this criticism does not mean that the choices of individuals may not be "rational" in some sense, at some level, nor does it mean that choices are irrelevant.

I combine cognitive, evolutionary, interpretive, and postmodern insights to suggest that choices—conscious or unconscious—are influenced differentially by cultural meaning, social power, the cognitive structure and operation of the brain, and demographic trends (Brown 1995:86–88, n.d.). Actions based on these choices may have intended or unintended consequences, but all choices, actions, and their consequences are constrained by historical contingencies in the specific culture, society, and environment in which the individual decision makers live. In other words, while individuals "choose" their actions, the alternatives available to them are shaped and constrained by the existing cultural meanings, social power relations, and demographic conditions in which they live.

A cognitive anthropological perspective emphasizes the imperfect, variable understanding of the actual social order and the strength of cultural meanings in influencing choices, without throwing out choice and decision making as irrelevant (cf. Strauss 1992a:13, 1992b:217; Sperber 1996:78–79, 135). People understand the social order and how its power relations operate in variable ways because such understanding is *not* straightforwardly transmitted by observation or symbolic communication.[12] An important characteristic of learning, often taken for granted, is that broadcasting of information and internalization of information are separate processes (Brown 1995:36–37, 502–509, figures 9.1, 9.2, 9.3; n.d.). Claudia Strauss (1992a:9–16) makes three points in this regard. First, social information may change, be inconsistent, or be hard to read. Second, the form of information—whether learned as an explicitly stated rule or learned implicitly in practice—and the order of learning affect internalization and subsequent ideas (cf. Strauss and Quinn 1994:286–91). What people learn as children, for example, often carries greater weight than what they learn later in life. Third, acquisition of social information does not automatically affect motivation (cf. Strauss 1992b). In other words, knowing a rule does not necessarily mean that one follows the rule. This variable character of social information influences people's subjective perception, so too do collective cultural meanings. Thus, pre-existing cultural ideas as well as idiosyncratic and/or imperfect understanding of the existing social order may affect a broadcast message, modifying it—in its content or importance—upon reception or even rejecting it completely (Brown 1995:35–36, n.d.).

I add to this cognitive perspective an evolutionary one. Evolutionists (e.g., Boyd and Richerson 1985, Durham 1991, Tooby and Cosmides 1992, Dennett 1995) argue that evolution has shaped the human mind by building into the structure of the human brain various cognitive mechanisms. I suggest that human minds operate as though they have an unconscious goal of fitness enhancement—a sort of "adaptive rationality"—and a derivative goal to manipulate rank and alliances in complex social relations so as to increase one's rank (Brown 1995:67–89, n.d.). Although this position may seem to be an extreme rationalist one, it is not. Drawing on Strauss' points above, I emphasize that *having such goals is not the same thing as achieving them.* The discrepancy between the unconscious goal of an individual's choices and actions, on the one hand, and the actual outcomes of conscious choices, deliberate actions, and unconscious habitual actions, on the other hand, lies in other influences beyond the control of individuals—the influences of cultural meaning, the actual social order, and the environment.

Here the addition of interpretive and postmodern perspectives is cru-

cial. The influence of collective cultural meanings on individual choices and actions (an interpretive point) has already been discussed: such meanings operate through the subjective meanings and perceptions of individuals, coloring their interpretations of the world around them. The influence of the actual social order can be understood by considering that the process determining who within a population actually attains particular powerful roles is not a cognitive process. The cognitive ability to perceive what actions are required to achieve a particular role is not the same thing as the ability to socially carry out those actions successfully. As a postmodern perspective on power reminds us, the latter ability depends upon the social roles themselves—which roles exist and what their relative degree of influence is; upon relative social power, including the position within the existing social organization from which the individual in question begins his or her actions; and additionally, upon the meanings attached to those roles.

How is such a synthesizing perspective applied? Consider the Han Chinese practice of footbinding. For a girl, the risk of death from complications in the binding process (e.g., gangrene) would be a strong factor against a potential decision to bind her own feet, if the decision was hers. However, the decision to bind or not was made by a girl's parents when she was too young to have much influence (e.g., Levy 1967:244–45, Blake 1994:678–79). For parents, the potential juvenile death of a daughter would not necessarily affect their decision to bind that daughter's feet, because it would not necessarily jeopardize their fitness if they had other children, particularly sons whose mortality would not be affected by footbinding. (It would certainly reduce their fitness, but it would not take it below a descent viability threshold.) Empirical evidence suggests that social factors, like whether light labor (e.g., weaving) was lucrative for a daughter, most strongly influenced parents' decision to bind daughters' feet (Gates 1996b, 2001).

Adaptive rationality does not operate independently of the social power hierarchy and cultural meanings. Examination of the existing social order indicates whose decision making plays a role—in the case of Han footbinding, it was parents' decision making that counted. Examination of culture indicates two kinds of meanings related to footbinding (cf. Gates 1989; 1996a: chapter 7; 1996b; 2001). First, women were considered the commodities of their kin, so it was taken for granted that their labor for the family unit and exit from it were manipulated to family's best social advantage, including whether they left as small-footed brides or as natural-footed bond-servants or prostitutes. Second, women believed that binding their feet guaranteed them the better social position of a bride.

As another example, consider migration. There were a variety of factors prompting Han men in Fujian Province to choose to migrate to Taiwan, discussed in chapter 4. In the mid-seventeenth century, war and famine in Fujian may indeed have affected descent viability for poor men. At the very least, given the distribution of Taiwan rice as famine relief in Fujian, it probably appeared to Han men in Fujian that they would fare better in Taiwan. Added to these demographic and cognitive influences was the potential for moving up the social power hierarchy that the higher wages and less rigid frontier society of Taiwan potentially offered. Moreover, Fujian had a long cultural tradition of sojourning and/or migrating overseas. This example shows that the different influences discussed here do not always compete. They can also combine to reinforce practices like migration.

The theoretical synthesis outlined here is an empirically grounded proposal. It provides the framework for my analysis of identity changes throughout this book. This empirical grounding both informed the formulation of the synthesis and allows us to evaluate the extent to which it improves our understanding of identity—how identity is actually formed, how the concept of identity has been used ideologically, and the real-world political implications of the contrast between the two.

FROM THEORY TO POLITICS

Theory can help us better understand what people have done—both as individuals and in collective entities such as societies—and what people may do in the future. In order to understand future actions, we must apply theory to our analysis of the past and arrive at conclusions stated in generalized terms that may be applied to present and future concerns. In chapters 3 through 5, I drew conclusions in terms of the specific case of identity change being discussed—long-route Han, short-route Han, and Enshi locals and Tujia, respectively. For all the cases discussed, however, the combined and sometimes competing influences of cultural meaning, social power, and demographic conditions operated through a human cognitive structure that privileged ideas in the pre-existing cultural model, shaped people's perception of the existing social system and environment, and preferred "adaptively rational" choices insofar as they were perceived at all and perceived as feasible. In this section, I put the conclusions drawn from the case studies in more general, theoretical terms

for two purposes: first, to show that this theoretical synthesis *is* the analytical framework of the book, and second, to facilitate analysis of political implications below.

Crossing the Border to Han

In the case of the long route to Han, some plains Aborigines in the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries periodically chose to migrate away from villages on the southwestern plains of Taiwan where Han colonists were so plentiful (chapter 3). The choice to migrate—perhaps influenced by an older plains Aborigine cultural preference to migrate in the face of threat—did not remove the possibility of intermarriage. A significant minority of people in Toushe, Jibeishua, and Longtian continued to choose intermarriage with poor Han men. Intermarriage put these Han men in the important social role of a parent, and they taught their children ideas from the local Hoklo cultural model, a model favored by people higher in the social power hierarchy than the people of Toushe, Jibeishua, and Longtian. However, these cultural ideas were still subject to interpretation in terms of ideas maintained from Aborigine cultural models, thus creating occasional syncretic practices such as uxorilocal minor marriage and ritual consumption of raw pigs' intestines and blood. Moreover, these Han cultural ideas were also subject to the social constraints of poverty. Carved gravestones, for example, were very expensive. In short, migration and intermarriage laid the framework for identity change in Toushe, Jibeishua, and Longtian.

Nevertheless, identity change did not occur without a change in the political regime. In banning footbinding, the Japanese colonial government was operating on a cultural model which condemned footbinding as barbaric—a cultural model very different from the Hoklo one. The Japanese cultural model allowed the colonial government to see footbinding primarily as an impediment to increased agricultural production in Taiwan, rather than as an honored tradition. Economic expedience dictated that they ban the practice, and they did, encouraging women to work in the rice fields. Without this change imposed from a new political regime, the villages of Toushe, Jibeishua, and Longtian did not and could not successfully negotiate a Han identity.

We see similar processes operating in the short route to Han. Han men, primarily from Fujian on China's southeastern coast, found it expedient to migrate in the mid-seventeenth century (chapter 4). Demographic pressures in China—including famines and war—combined with a regional cultural model of sojourning outside China, the relative proximity of Taiwan compared to other locales in southeast Asia, and the fabled rich potential of the Taiwan frontier, all encouraged large numbers of migrants to Taiwan. Continuation of the patrilineal descent line was a strong Han cultural imperative, in addition to being adaptively rational. Because the vast majority of immigrants were men, Han who wanted to marry were primarily forced to seek local wives—either Aborigine women or women of mixed Han-Aborigine ancestry. Aborigine women and parents of daughters may have had self-interested reasons for agreeing to or encouraging intermarriage, and young Aborigine men may not have had the authority in Aborigine social power hierarchies or cultural models to prevent such marriages. Historical records suggest that the rate of intermarriage may have been high enough that close to half the population at the end of the Dutch period (1650) was "mixed."

Nevertheless, we do not see evidence of this mixed population claiming Han identity until after a change in political regimes—from Dutch to Zheng rule, and possibly from Zheng to Qing rule as well—when people could claim that the previous regime had it wrong, they "really" were Han, based on patrilineal ancestry. "Mixed" people knew to claim Han identity on the basis of patrilineal ancestry because their Han fathers or grandfathers would undoubtedly have taught them this primary Han cultural idea. Moreover, officials of the Zheng and Qing regimes—themselves part of a bureaucratic system based on neo-Confucian principles that revered the patrilineal family—would undoubtedly have accepted such claims.

Interestingly, because Han identities were successfully negotiated before much cultural change occurred toward the pre-existing Han cultural model brought from Fujian, it appears that the local Han cultural model in southern Taiwan was modified. After all, Han culture is the culture of those who are Han, so if the local people accepted as Han do not practice minor marriage or even footbinding, who has the authority to say that these practices are necessary parts of Han culture? In southwestern Taiwan, during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, many of those who might have had the authority to say so—Han immigrants from Fujian—had an obvious self-interested reason not to say so: their own families did not practice these customs.

In Enshi, we see a similar process up through 1949. Migrations led to successive waves of immigrants being classified as "locals" by the subsequent migrants. These migrants intermarried with locals, and over time, the local Han cultural model became different from Han cultural mod-

els elsewhere—graves are placed near the living and patrilineal inheritance is not shared equally among brothers. Two major regime changes in the area—the establishment of Qing bureaucratic administration and the set-up of the Nationalist provisional provincial government—appear to have solidified consideration of "locals" as Han, in spite of cultural differences.

However, the last major regime change experienced in Enshi—the establishment of Communist rule—impacted identity dramatically. Bureaucrats empowered to classify the local population into ethnic groups *did* have the authority to say that the local practices departed from necessary Han cultural practices. With social authority vested by the PRC government, officials overruled locals' perception of themselves and revoked their identity as local Han. Although locals succeeded in protesting their portrayal as Miao, an ethnic group that was despised as too far from Han, they had to settle for a new official designation as a sinicized ethnic minority, Tujia. This imposed change in identity label by the new regime combined with the subsequent experiences of the Cultural Revolution which eradiated many aspects of local practices—thus changing the local cultural model as it was known to young people because people were so busy simply trying to survive—brought Enshi to the 1980s in a unique position to reinvent locals as an ethnic minority. Those who appear to be making the most of this opportunity are those who stand to gain economically from it—the local government, which receives additional funding because it is a minority prefecture, and businesses involved in ethnic tourism. Ordinary people, however—including many young people—still perceive themselves as "really" Han, whatever their official designation may be. Thus, some ideas in the pre-1949 "local" cultural model appear to have persisted through 1996, in spite of the loss of, or drastic changes in, many cultural practices. With the state shaping people's future social experience as Tujia, however, Tujia consciousness (Tujia ethnicity, a sense of oneself as Tujia) will surely develop for many people.

Understanding Changes

Throughout this book, we have seen that migration and intermarriage combined with changes in political regimes allowed individuals in Taiwan and Enshi to change their identity labels to Han and sometimes led to subsequent changes in the local Han cultural models. The proposed theoretical synthesis allows us to understand why migration and intermarriage are such powerful forces for change. Each of these processes combines different systemic influences in ways that constrain the choices of individuals and affect their aggregate outcomes. Migration brings together the influences of social power and evolutionary viability—social power relations and threatened viability often drive migration from one population, and migration can affect the social power relations and can threaten the viability for groups in the population(s) which migrants enter. Intermarriage between members of different ethnic groups brings together the influences of social power and cultural meaning. It affects the cultural meanings held by parents (an important social role) and thereby serves as an important mechanism of cultural change. At the same time, in the context of sociopolitical changes concurrent with mass migration, intermarriage can be used to change identities.

Narratives of unfolding also combine cultural meanings and social power relations, but in a different way. Here, people in positions of social power deliberately attempt to further a political agenda that maintains or advances their own position by manipulating the cultural meanings of past and present social and political events and cultural ideas. Where narratives of unfolding are largely in agreement with people's actual social and political experience and their existing cultural model, they are readily accepted and easily motivate choices and actions within their framework. Where the cultural meanings advanced by narratives of unfolding do not correspond to existing cultural models and actual social experiences, the reaction to them is much more complex and potentially resistant. Migration and intermarriage are some of these actual social and political experiences, as are the policy enactments of new and continuing regimes. These experiences and people's perceptions of them motivate choices and actions and drive broader social and cultural changes.

POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS: IS REUNIFICATION POSSIBLE?

How can the theoretical perspective outlined above guide us through current political tensions? Identity has been the call to warfare at the end of the twentieth century—in the Balkans, Rwanda, and Kashmir, to name just a few places—and China threatens to make it the call to warfare in the twenty-first century as well. Thus, the need to understand what people and governments may do and why is particularly acute. Theoretical understanding of the contrast between the actual basis of identities and ideological claims about those identities can inform an analysis of the political implications of identities and identity rhetoric

for China and Taiwan. As we shall see, the crucial first step is to realize that there is a difference between the actual basis of identities and the ideologically claimed basis of identities—that is, to realize that social experience and cultural ideas have different dynamics.

The Actual Basis of Identities in Taiwan and Enshi

Identity formation is based on social experiences, which are more than the lived experience of individuals. The formation of a group identity requires that members of the group share similar experiences. These experiences do not have to be lived experience, remade anew with each generation. Social experiences—broadly construed to include political experiences—are passed down from one generation to the next as oral history, with events that have been especially important or galvanizing handed down in more detail and for more generations.

What are the social experiences that have formed the new Taiwanese identity? Are these experiences significantly different from those that have formed identities in Enshi? Through 1949, we see the same major forces influencing identity changes in southwestern Taiwan and in Enshi—migration, intermarriage, and regime changes.[13] Migrations, especially migrations as large as Taiwan and Enshi experienced, have the potential to disrupt descent viability, a potential which is greater when the migrants are predominantly male. Migrations can also necessitate a readjustment of the local social hierarchy, as when Zheng Chenggong's troops invaded Taiwan in 1661 or when Enshi came under the direct bureaucratic administration of the Qing dynasty. Intermarriage served as an important mechanism of cultural change because it placed immigrants with different cultural ideas in the social role of parents, allowing them to pass on at least some of their culture to their children. Through intermarriage, aspects of Han culture were introduced into the local cultural models but aspects of non-Han culture were also maintained. Local people achieved Han identity on the basis of patrilineal ancestry, so this amalgamation of Han and non-Han culture came to be considered Han culture, at least locally. Han culture was simply the culture of those considered Han, regardless of whether that culture matched Confucian standards or Han culture elsewhere.

Why did people want to claim a Han identity? Intermarriage did introduce cultural ideas about the superiority of Han culture and thus could have introduced a desire to claim Han identity. However, it was changes in the social power hierarchy that made claiming Han identity important. In seventeenth-century Taiwan, regime changes made immediate Han identity desirable for tax reasons. In Enshi, the change to Qing bureaucratic administration strengthened the influence of Han society at the local level because it brought a new wave of migrants that included not only the farmers and ordinary folk of earlier migrations but also many soldiers and a significant number of educated officials to carry out administrative rule. In Taiwan, the Japanese colonial government instituted a change in customs that forced similar practices, and over time social experiences and cultural ideas, onto plains Aborigines and Hoklo.

After 1949, we see a divergence between the experiences of people in Taiwan and people in Enshi, which led to critical differences in identity. The experience of people in Taiwan is not so drastically different from previous historical experiences. Rather, we still see migration, intermarriage and subsequent changes in the power structure strongly affecting identity changes. As in Enshi prior to 1949, all Han who were in Taiwan when the Nationalists arrived—Hoklo and Hakka, including short-route and long-route Han—were locals, that is, Taiwanese *(taiwan ren* or *bensheng ren)*. Only mountain Aborigines were distinguished from Han Taiwanese. Initially, there were low rates of intermarriage, because so many Mainlander men were able to bring their families, but there was some intermarriage, especially among people at the very bottom of the social power hierarchy—Mainlander foot soldiers without wives, a small proportion of the very poorest Taiwanese women, and a large proportion of mountain Aborigine women. With time, however, intermarriage increased—many second- and third-generation Mainlanders, especially those who had learned to speak Minnan, married Taiwanese people.

A series of major sociopolitical experiences shared by most Taiwanese solidified "ethnic" Taiwanese identity. (Although major, these experiences were not drastically different in character from those of earlier eras. The Zheng invasion, for example, must have been at least as galvanizing as the 2:28 Incident.) Virtually overnight, the national language was changed from Japanese to Mandarin. Many Taiwanese people lost jobs because they could not speak the new language. Taiwanese grievances against Mainlander treatment of them culminated in the 2:28 Incident. Many if not most Taiwanese had a relative or friend affected by the crackdown, since the families of people executed or imprisoned were under suspicion for decades. The 2:28 Incident effectively suppressed the immediate political challenge to the Nationalist Party, but it solidified an ethnic identity which galvanized Taiwanese for decades to come. In fact, the political forces that ultimately pushed the way to democratization—including

the illegal Taiwan Independence Movement—were derived from Taiwanese reaction to the 2:28 Incident.

The experience of people in Enshi since 1949—because they are part of the PRC—is so drastically different that it demonstrates the increased difference between China and Taiwan generally. In contrast to Taiwan—where Han cultural ideas and practices, including patrilineal inheritance, were encouraged by the Nationalists, and the folk religion suffered relatively little interference—Enshi and the rest of the PRC experienced major upheavals as part of Communist efforts to restructure and re-educate the Chinese populace. The economic realignments of 1950s land reform had dramatic effects on the local social power hierarchy in Enshi, but they did not strongly affect cultural ideas and practices. People reported hiring Daoist priests to bury their dead well into the 1950s. In 1957, however, things changed dramatically. China began its spiral into social chaos, first with the Anti-Rightist Campaign, later with the Great Leap Forward—which resulted in the "excess" deaths of at least 23 million people (beyond the normal mortality rate), many from starvation—and then with the Cultural Revolution.

The devastating personal impacts of these years came home to me in the course of my fieldwork, even though I did not interview people about these political events specifically. In talking about the marriages and funerals in their families, people referred to events of that period. Most people had at least one relative who starved to death as a result of the Great Leap Forward. Reports about diet show that Wucun in the 1930s and 1940s—during the war—was economically much better off than Toushe, Jibeishua, and Longtian in Taiwan at that time. People in Wucun ate meat regularly—even poor people there could afford to slaughter pigs at least once a year. In Toushe, by contrast, most people could not afford to slaughter pigs and many people could not even afford to slaughter their own chickens. The Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution so devastated the local economy in Enshi that in 1996, after over a decade of economic reforms and boom, standards of living in Wucun had still not caught up to Toushe, the poorest of the villages where I interviewed in Taiwan.

Further political crackdowns in China—not just the June 4, 1989, massacre of demonstrators in Tiananmen Square, but also the subsequent suppression of any organizations which could potentially foment political opposition to the CCP—continue to assail ordinary people's views of their government. In the aftermath of its fear over the growing popularity of the quasi-religious organization Fa Lun Gong, the Chinese government even began to try to suppress the very popular quasi-religious, quasi-medical, quasi-exercise Han practice of *qi gong*. Such attacks continue the Cultural Revolution legacy of destroying Confucian cultural traditions, especially those related, even peripherally, to religion. Ironically, by crippling indigenous religion, the CCP is paving the way for foreign religions it is at least as suspicious of—such as Christianity—to enjoy a success in proselytizing that was impossible when Han folk religion was strong.

The lengths to which the Chinese government has gone in political crackdowns over the years is reflected in the attitudes of Chinese citizens. During the 1996 war games in the Taiwan Strait, one person asked me whether I thought that China was deliberately trying to provoke a war with the U.S. in order to decrease the surplus population in China. Such cynicism seems to reflect a belief that the People's government cares little about the ordinary people of China. At the very least, decades of capricious political crackdowns have led many people to distrust their government and to always be on edge. Politically, people do not know what to expect.

By contrast, Taiwan has been very stable politically since the 2:28 Incident. There were some capricious political crackdowns in the 1950s, but these were primarily aimed at Mainlanders as Chiang Kai-shek consolidated his control of the Nationalist Party. Taiwanese did experience the martial-law period as very repressive, but they knew what to expect. The only major unexpected event was a liberalizing one—the 1986 decision by then-president Chiang Ching-kuo *not* to crack down on those who had illegally formed an opposition party. In fact, this decision essentially led to a regime change in Taiwan because it set in motion political changes that moved Taiwan to a full electoral democracy over the next ten years. Amazingly, democratization has been peaceful and economically stable.

Democratization constitutes a regime change. Like previous regime changes, it has spurred identity change—this time the development of a new, inclusive, and national Taiwanese identity—and led to a series of galvanizing events for the people of Taiwan. They have now directly elected their government. Americans may take this privilege for granted, but people I have spoken to about it in Taiwan do not. They are cognizant of the empowerment it gives them. Moreover, because of Taiwan's democratization, the PRC has embarked upon a series of threats peaking before each of the presidential elections. In March 1996, before the first presidential elections, war games with live ammunition were held

in the Taiwan Strait. The PRC was strongly opposed to the election of Lee Teng-hui, who had previously been appointed president, but Lee won with strong voter support. In February of 2000, a month before the second presidential elections, the PRC put out a white paper adding a third reason it would consider legitimate grounds to invade Taiwan to the two it had previously declared (Taiwan declaring its independence and Taiwan being invaded by another country). The PRC announced it would be equally justified in invading Taiwan if Taiwan merely delays negotiating their reunification with the PRC indefinitely. On March 16, 2000—two days before the second presidential elections—China's prime minister, Zhu Rongji, warned the people of Taiwan not to elect "people who favor independence," (reported in Rosenthal 2000a), referring to the Democratic Progressive Party candidate Chen Shui-bian. Chen had explicitly endorsed Taiwan independence earlier in his career, although in the campaign he said he would not seek a referendum on the issue unless China attacked Taiwan. Chen won the three-way election.

These political threats are precisely the kind of sociopolitical events that consolidate identity (cf. Chang 2000:68). Moreover, rather than bringing Taiwan's people into line with PRC sentiment, they consolidate the identity of all people in Taiwan—ethnic Taiwanese (Hakka and Hoklo), Mainlanders, and Aborigines—as a single group, thus reinforcing the very Taiwanese national identity that the PRC wishes to undercut. Nor are these threats the only way that the PRC governmental policy has contributed to the formation of a national Taiwanese identity. Beginning in 1987, first Taiwan Mainlanders and then anyone in Taiwan were allowed by the government of Taiwan to visit the PRC. PRC policy was to treat all these visitors—Mainlanders and ethnic Taiwanese alike—as "Taiwan compatriots" *(taiwan tongbao)*, with largely the same combination of ingratiation and suspicion. Threats of invasion and bombing similarly fail to recognize the heterogeneity of Taiwan's population. Ren Hai, who is from the PRC, reports that, during his 1994 visit to Taiwan, mountain Aborigines asked him to inform his government not to bomb the Aborigines when they bomb the Han (Ren 1996:79). They were reacting to the PRC's treatment of people in Taiwan as a single group. Such treatment runs precisely counter to PRC goals by directly contributing to Taiwanese national identity, for sociopolitical treatment of people as members of a group promotes those people's identity as a group.

Observations about the enduring devastation wrought by the Cultural Revolution has also contributed to the new Taiwanese identity. For one

thing, people from Taiwan who visit China are struck by the poverty there, by the apparent sense among Chinese that those who escaped the Cultural Revolution owe them restitution in the form of material goods, and by the apparent loss of a Confucian work ethic (e.g., Hsiao and So 1996). They realize that people in China were often persecuted during the Cultural Revolution for practicing Han customs still common in Taiwan. Moreover, the political suppression and chaos of the Cultural Revolution actually makes Nationalist martial law rule in Taiwan, as repressive as it was, look good. In the 1950s, there was a joke that circulated among Taiwanese: "The Japanese were lucky because the Americans only dropped atomic bombs on them; Americans dropped Chiang Kai-shek on us." Now, it appears that Taiwanese feel they were not as unlucky as they might have been.

The clear differences in sociopolitical experience between Taiwan and China since 1945—differences resulting from two regime changes, first, the founding of the PRC in 1949 and, second, the realization of full electoral democracy in Taiwan in 1996—along with the PRC's treatment of everyone in Taiwan as a single group have formed a very real national identity for the people of Taiwan. A 1998 poll sponsored by the Taiwan government found that "only 18 percent of the people on Taiwan say they want to reunify with the mainland, even in the long run" (Kristof 1998). Taiwan national identity is real in the sense that it is meaningful and motivating to people of Taiwan: people in Taiwan act—collectively and individually—on the basis of this identity. They have already, by electing Lee Teng-hui president in 1996 and Chen Shui-bian president in 2000 against the wishes of the PRC. One voter said, leaving the polling booth on March 18, 2000, "We are not obliged to take any advice from China" (Eckholm 2000c).

Past attempts to suppress Taiwan national identity have only strengthened it; any future attempts are likely to do the same. Taiwan national identity is here to stay, and that fact is part of the huge problem facing any political negotiations over Taiwan's future. The PRC does not appear to accept this fact, nor to understand that many of the actions it takes actually strengthens this identity. However, the reality of this identity should come as no surprise to the PRC, since the PRC, like imperial regimes before it, has forced Han to migrate to troublesome non-Han areas—such as Lhasa (Tibet), Urumqi (Xinjiang or Chinese Turkestan) and Hohhot (Inner Mongolia)—and has encouraged intermarriage between Han and non-Han by allowing the children of mixed marriages to be registered as non-Han. Such tactics suggest that the PRC government

recognizes, at some level, that migration and intermarriage are compelling means of changing identities over the long-term.

The Rhetorically Claimed Basis of Identities in Taiwan and China

The various PRC white papers on Taiwan are classic narratives of unfolding in many ways. For example, in the February 21, 2000, white paper, the PRC claims that the Chinese nation has been in existence for five thousand years (TAIOISC 2000), even though the concept of a nation-state did not exist prior to the seventeenth century. This claim asserts the unity of a contemporary political domain since antiquity, a common feature of narratives of national unfolding. Some of Taiwan's new narratives of unfolding similarly claim unity since antiquity. *Island Nostalgia* (Liu 1991), for example, does so by claiming the migrations of Aborigines to Taiwan ten to fifteen thousand years ago as Taiwan's ultimate origin as a nation. The competing narratives put forward—officially by the PRC government and unofficially by Taiwanese in the popular media—are both selective in their construction of history, which is a standard feature of narratives of unfolding. The competition lies not in the fact that a selection occurs but in which events are selected and which are excluded.

More recently, and semi-officially, Taiwan's government and political leaders have been pushing a more politically based narrative of unfolding. In July 1999, then-president Lee Teng-hui said that Taiwan would only continue negotiations with China on a state-to-state basis. This statement sent Taiwan government officials into a series of meetings to clarify whether it indicated a change in policy. It did.

> "We believe there is one nation and two countries," said Chen Chien-jen (Chen Jianren), Taiwan's chief spokesman, speaking in English in an interview. . . . Invited to say the same thing in Chinese, Chen paused and then replied, again in English: "We are still looking for the right words." (Faison 1999)

In the 2000 presidential elections, all three leading candidates—Chen Shui-bian (DPP), Lien Chan (Lian Jan, GMD), and James Soong (Independent)—agreed that Taiwan is sovereign in practice (Eckholm 2000a). In its subsequent white paper, the PRC responded to this position, denying that Taiwan has been a separate state since 1945: "Chinese territory and sovereignty has not been split, and the two sides of the Straits are not two states" (TAIOISC 2000).

Taiwan appears to be trying to push the rhetoric towards a discussion of politics rather than culture. Reporters discussing the difference between "nation" and "country" in English focused on the frequent translation of both terms into Chinese as the same word *(guojia)*. In English, "nation" usually refers to a nation-state, but it can also refer to a politically activist ethnic group—for example, Native American tribes often refer to themselves as nations, using the double meaning of ethnic group and political entity. China itself invokes this same double meaning by translating *minzu*, the term for ethnic groups, as "nationalities." If "nation" is translated "minzu" and "country" is translated "guojia," then Taiwan appears to be claiming both Han nationality and non-Chinese statehood. The difficulty with such a translation into Chinese, however, is that the PRC refers to China as *Zhonghua Minzu*—a term that most Taiwanese, Overseas Chinese, and China scholars view as referring to a Han ethnic nation rather than the multiethnic PRC (cf. Borchigud 1996:160).

Ideological narratives can and do affect people's perceptions of the past and present and thus affect their choices and actions. The closer ideological narratives are to actual identities—that is, identities actually experienced socially and politically by their members—the more powerfully these narratives can motivate people to act. In Taiwan, ideological claims about identity are generally coming into line with people's actual identities. Taiwan's new narratives of unfolding claim that Taiwanese are a mixture of plains Aborigines and Han, genetically and culturally. Historical evidence from the seventeenth century indicates that this rhetoric has a strong basis in actual social experiences (chapter 4). Ethnographic evidence from the first half of the twentieth century paints a more complex picture. In spite of intermarriage, long-route Han adopted Han culture, having little if any effect on it (chapter 3). Moreover, long-route Han have been reclassified by Taiwanese as Aborigines or non-Han. Identification of the long-route Han as Han is so important because it would further Taiwan's position that Taiwanese are, in a sense, more Han—or at least more Confucian—than Han in China. Such a move would reinforce, in yet another way, the actual experiences of people from Taiwan who were shocked about the loss of so much Confucian cultural influence in the PRC in the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution. It would continue to closely link Taiwan's claimed and actual identities, making both stronger.

What about the PRC's narrative of Taiwan's unfolding as a Han Chinese domain? In Taiwan, this narrative is laughable because it is so far

removed from people's actual identities, from the actual experiences of people in Taiwan today. Taiwanese know they are not Chinese—they are not treated as Chinese in China and many have experienced for themselves that Taiwan is not China.

But what about in China? People in the PRC have no experience of contemporary Taiwan, so they have only ideological narratives to give them an understanding of Taiwan's relation to China and to them as individuals. This vacuum of actual social experience of Taiwan on the part of the Chinese people is another major factor in the Taiwan problem. China's ideological narratives about Taiwan tap into China's narrative of its own national unfolding. Taiwan is portrayed as the last piece of China ripped away by foreign imperialists and accepted by corrupt domestic regimes—first the Qing dynasty and then the Nationalists—that has not been returned. This link to foreign imperialism and to the corrupt regimes that failed to protect China from that imperialism brings Taiwan into the realm of the actual experiences of the Chinese populace. They remember—many still by personal experience and many more through family lore—the Japanese invasion of China and the Nationalist accommodation of that invasion. For the vast majority of Chinese, there is no more recent, more direct experience of Taiwan—and precious little direct contact with Taiwanese in China—to counter the associations invoked by China's ideological narratives.

Moreover, this link of the PRC's narrative of Taiwan's unfolding to China's national narrative of colonial humiliation *(bainian guochi)* also invokes a common but unofficial resentment about the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. Why did China's people have to suffer through those eras? Such resentment is directed broadly. For example, I have experienced resentment by Chinese, who expressed a belief that if the U.S. had not cut off diplomatic relations with the PRC then the Cultural Revolution could not have occurred. If such resentment is readily directed at Americans, how much more must Chinese resent the people of Taiwan—Nationalist Mainlanders who were important enough to be taken to Taiwan and ethnic Taiwanese who had been part of the hated Japanese empire? They were not only spared the turmoil of these eras, but the U.S. allied itself with them.

Additionally, as we saw among the Tujia, many people in China have themselves experienced the shock of having the PRC government classify them in contradiction to their actual identity (chapter 5; see also Cheung 1996, Harrell 1996b). Why should they object to their government doing so to Taiwanese? The difference, however, is that, within China,

these classifications become the basis of new social and political experiences, which reinforce the state-designated identity and can subsequently change actual identities (e.g., Harrell 1996b). As one Chinese ethnologist put it, "We tell them what they are and after a while they get used to it" (Hill Gates, personal communication, 2000). Because the PRC does not control Taiwan—a fact made embarrassingly clear by the results of the last two presidential elections there—the PRC government cannot institute sociopolitical experiences which would reinforce the identity it has designated for Taiwan.

What If? Reunification versus Independence

Analysis of the underlying identity issues in the "Taiwan problem" shows how difficult it will be to work out the political impasse over Taiwan's future. As we have seen, identity is the negotiated product of the interaction between what people claim for themselves and what others allow them to claim. The PRC white paper threatening to invade if Taiwan delays too long in negotiating reunification shows just how desperate the PRC is. At some level, PRC officials must be aware that Taiwan's actual identity is being solidified as a national identity. The longer that Taiwan remains a democracy, the less actual social basis there is for reunification. Moreover, with the passage of time, and the deaths of those generations of Chinese who remember the Japanese invasion, the Civil War, and the Cultural Revolution, sentiment within China may change as well.

What would be required for Taiwan to identify with China? Taiwan officials and ordinary citizens have said that the PRC would have to become a democracy before Taiwan will choose reunification. This position is not simply rhetoric. Because people in Taiwan have experienced democracy, they are very unlikely to identify with an authoritarian regime. The actual social experiences of people in a democracy are just too far removed from those of people in an authoritarian regime. Based on their experience of democracy, Taiwanese are developing an identity closer to the U.S. or Japan than to China, in spite of sharing a cultural heritage with China. In the early 1990s, a number of Taiwanese expressed their shame to me over the many fistfights in Taiwan's newly elected Legislative Yuan, as politicians disagreed with each other bluntly and publicly for the first time. These Taiwanese explicitly compared themselves to the U.S., noting that the U.S. Congress does not have such fisticuffs. They were greatly relieved when I assured them that there is a U.S. law which forbids discharging guns within the Capitol building because con-

gressmen once used to do so to punctuate their arguments. If the U.S. Congress could be so indecorous in the early years of American democracy, these Taiwanese felt there was hope that the Legislative Yuan would also become more dignified as democracy matures in Taiwan.

In fact, democracy has matured in Taiwan. Leading up to the March 2000 elections, a Taiwanese cable television program, called "An Interview with the Chairman," broadcast biting satires of the three main presidential candidates and of Lee Teng-hui every night (Eckholm 2000b). People in the PRC go to prison for less than that. Moreover, by electing Chen Shui-bian, an opposition candidate, Taiwan's voters set up perhaps the most important indicator of a maturing democracy: a peaceful transfer of power from one political party to another. This event was as unimaginable in Taiwan in 1980 as it still is in the PRC today.

Given all these ways in which Taiwanese identity is and continues to become more and more different from Chinese identity, the people of Taiwan would most likely rise up and prevent any attempted reunification with an undemocratic PRC—probably using democratic methods like challenging the policy in court, popular demonstrations, and removing those responsible from office. However, I can think of little else that might lead to a military coup in Taiwan than a deal to return to the PRC prior to democratization in China.

Then what can the PRC do? There are at least three options, none of which is likely to be favored by the PRC government. A first option is, as the PRC has threatened, to go to war. One benefit of war to the Communist Party is that it might rally the citizens of China and relieve current pressures to reform corruption in the government and the party. If the Communist Party feels it is faced with a real threat to its hold on power, then this awful step seems more possible. It may be that the PRC stepped up the pressure on Taiwan in February 2000 because of a behind-the-scenes struggle for control of the Communist Party and the government of the PRC. Then-president Jiang Zimin might have felt the need to appear tough on Taiwan in order to maintain the support of hardliners in the military.

On the other hand, China may have been testing the reaction of ordinary Chinese to a war over Taiwan. Although PRC government polls released the week before Taiwan's 2000 election claimed that 95 percent of Chinese approved using military force to prevent Taiwan's independence, reporter Elisabeth Rosenthal (2000b) presented signs that ordinary Chinese are ambivalent about such a fight. One young woman who only gave her surname said, "We strongly believe that Taiwan should return

to the motherland; after Hong Kong and Macao, it is the only one left. . . . But we don't support the use of force. That wouldn't be good for anyone" (Rosenthal 2000b). A middle-aged store manager who gave his complete name said, "Ordinary [Chinese] people just want to get on with their lives, and whether Taiwan becomes independent has no effect on them," although he did accept the inevitability of force—if Taiwan "takes steps toward independence, we'll surely just have to give them a beating" (Rosenthal 2000b). The problem for the PRC is that there is no guarantee it would win a war against Taiwan. In fact, a number of Western analysts predict that they would not win such a war (e.g., Smith 2000). This is a dangerous possibility. On the one hand, if the PRC lost, it would effectively reduce the power of military hardliners. On the other hand, not only would a loss be a source of international embarrassment to China, but it might also create a nationalistic backlash that would sweep the Communist Party out of power, an issue of much more pressing concern to PRC officials than Taiwan.

A second option is to proceed with political reforms that might actually lead to democratization in order to draw Taiwan in. Anthropologist Robert P. Weller (1999) has argued that China's current informal associations provide the potential for a peaceful transition to democracy, similar to that of Taiwan in the martial law period; Hill Gates (1996a: chapter 10) also sees a return in the PRC to the petty capitalist mode of production and patriarchal stratification familiar to many Taiwanese. Thus, it appears that democratization along Taiwanese lines may indeed be possible for China. Democratization is not good news to the Communist Party, however, for it would mean losing power.

A third option is to accept that Taiwan will not return to China. This course has no direct benefits to the Communist Party, although it maintains the political and economic status quo. The problem is how to reconcile the Chinese people to such a course so that the Communist Party is not perceived as accommodating continuing imperialism of China. The threat of such perceived accomodation is that it could shake Communist control of the PRC. Here, the PRC government must face the very rhetoric that it has stirred up. Can the PRC create a way for the Chinese populace to experience Taiwan as different? If so, then Chinese might well accept a separate Taiwanese identity. It is very unlikely that Chinese who might visit Taiwan are going to view it as sufficiently culturally different to be outside the realm of Chinese—or even Han—variation. China has so much internal cultural variation that Chinese can easily visit places within the PRC which are at least as culturally different from their own

community as Taiwan, if not more so. Thus, we return to experiencing sociopolitical differences. Can the PRC allow enough of its citizens to observe Taiwanese democracy that it will affect popular opinion about a separate Taiwan without committing itself to democracy? On the other hand, can they prevent news of Taiwan's democracy from reaching PRC citizens?

Ultimately the Taiwan problem is about the new Taiwanese identity forged in the 1990s. Although we have examined several instances of it, changing identities is not easy. Such changes may be contested even years after the fact—as in Toushe, Jibeishua, and Longtian in Taiwan and Enshi in China. In the end, all of these identity changes come down to changes in political regimes. Thus, I expect that whether Taiwan can succeed in negotiating a new non-Chinese identity for itself—making the claim and getting that claim accepted by China—will come down to whether the PRC accepts that a regime change has occurred in Taiwan. Perhaps the change in the political party governing Taiwan will spark such acceptance. The January 2002 announcement that Taiwan entered the World Trade Organization one month after the PRC suggests that there is growing international acceptance of their political differentiation.

What are Taiwan's options? Taiwan's government in the 1990s accepted the new Taiwanese identity as a real part of the political landscape. In 1999, it finally started to talk about that identity in terms of the social and political experience of its constituents—terms that resonate with voters in Taiwan. The problem now is how to make that message resonate elsewhere—in China and internationally—for if Taiwan can negotiate a separate identity in either realm, it has leverage for its negotiations in the remaining realm.

I suspect that Lee Teng-hui did not seek re-election in 2000 in part because he saw the opportunity to pursue international support for Taiwan's sovereignty as a retired elder statesman. Doubly retired, from the presidency and the chair of the Nationalist Party, he could get visas as a private citizen to the U.S., Japan, and elsewhere. Moreover, he has the stature in these democratic countries of being the man who oversaw Taiwan's transition to democracy, the first democratically elected president of Taiwan, and the first head of state to willingly hand over power to the opposition in at least two millenia of Han history. Current president Chen Shui-bian does not appear to have used Lee in this regard, though he has demonstrated willingness to work with other senior Nationalists to promote Taiwan's stability (for example, he appointed Tang Fei, Chairman

of Taiwan's Joint Chiefs of Staff under Nationalist rule, as his first premier, thereby securing the neutrality of Taiwan's military during the political turnover).

Such strategic cooperation across party lines is essential, because even with democracies sympathetic to Taiwan's goal of sovereignty, Taiwan's leaders have their work cut out. They must persuade the international community that the new Taiwanese identity is not only reasonable and justifiable but real, in the sense that it will motivate the actions of Taiwan's people. The international community must be persuaded not merely that supporting Taiwan is the morally correct thing to do, but that it is economically necessary. The international community is slow to act for moral reasons—for example, in Rwanda, Bosnia, and Kosovo—and quick to act for economic reasons—for example, in Kuwait. Taiwan is wealthy but has not yet learned how to use its wealth successfully. Lee's 1995 offer to buy a UN seat for several million dollars fell flat. Ironically, Taiwan's huge investment in China—$24.8 billion in 1998, according to the U.S. State Department—probably gives it the most international leverage, for it is China's objections that prevent most countries from recognizing Taiwan. If Japan, Taiwan, and the U.S.—the top three investors in China—were to coordinate economic pressure on the PRC, it could be effective, as long as other steps had been taken to prepare the people of China for a change in Taiwan's status.

What can Taiwan do to affect the experience and perception of Taiwan for people in China and to influence the PRC's choices regarding its options? Certainly, Taiwan's military capabilities influence the decisions of many governments, including the PRC. These moves influence governments, though, not ordinary people. Much more important at the level of ordinary individual experience are the myriad contacts from economic investment there. Taiwanese who travel to the PRC have an advantage over other foreign investors—they can speak directly with people in China without going through an interpreter. Thus, they can—and undoubtedly do—discuss Taiwan and the ways it is different from China, including the political differences. The proposal (announced in January 2002) to allow PRC businesspeople to live and work in Taiwan, following China's and Taiwan's admission to the WTO, promises that at least some PRC citizens will directly experience Taiwan's sociopolitial differences from China.

It is possible that, with time, such ordinary contacts can change Chinese public opinion. There are even small signs of such influence already.

After Taiwan elected Chen Shui-bian president in 2000, reporter Elisabeth Rosenthal (2000b) quoted a Beijing University student as saying, "I think both sides will have to make adjustments to their policies. After all, Taiwan is democratic now, and the people have exercised their own right to choose a president." If such acceptance of the new Taiwanese identity and its social and political basis spreads in China, it bodes well for Taiwan's future.