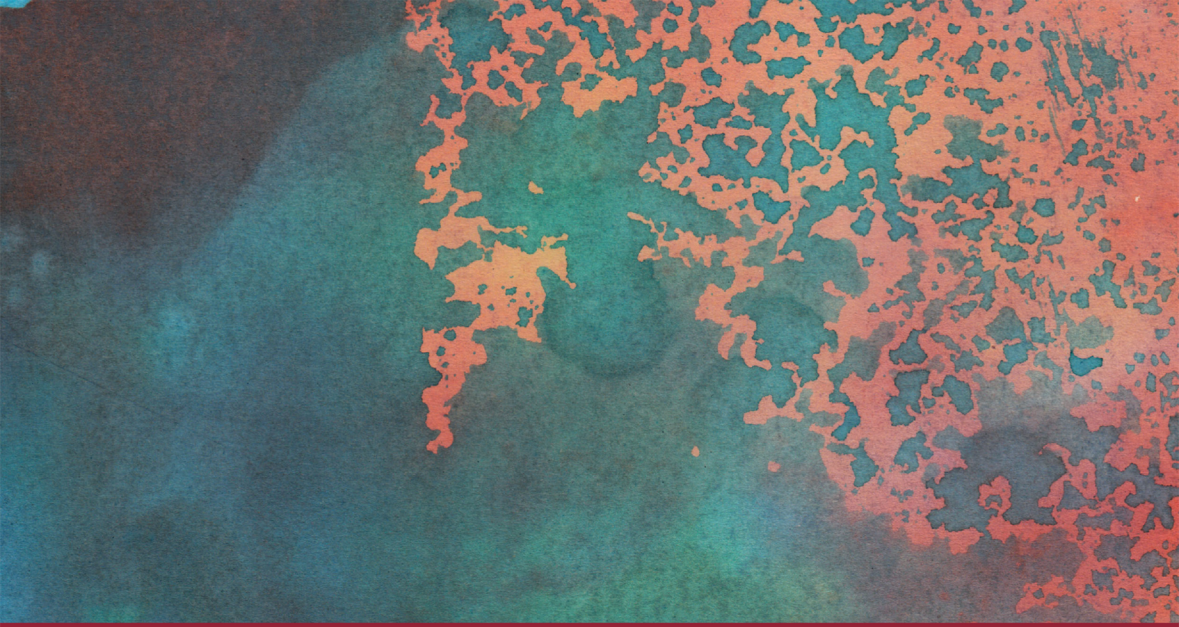

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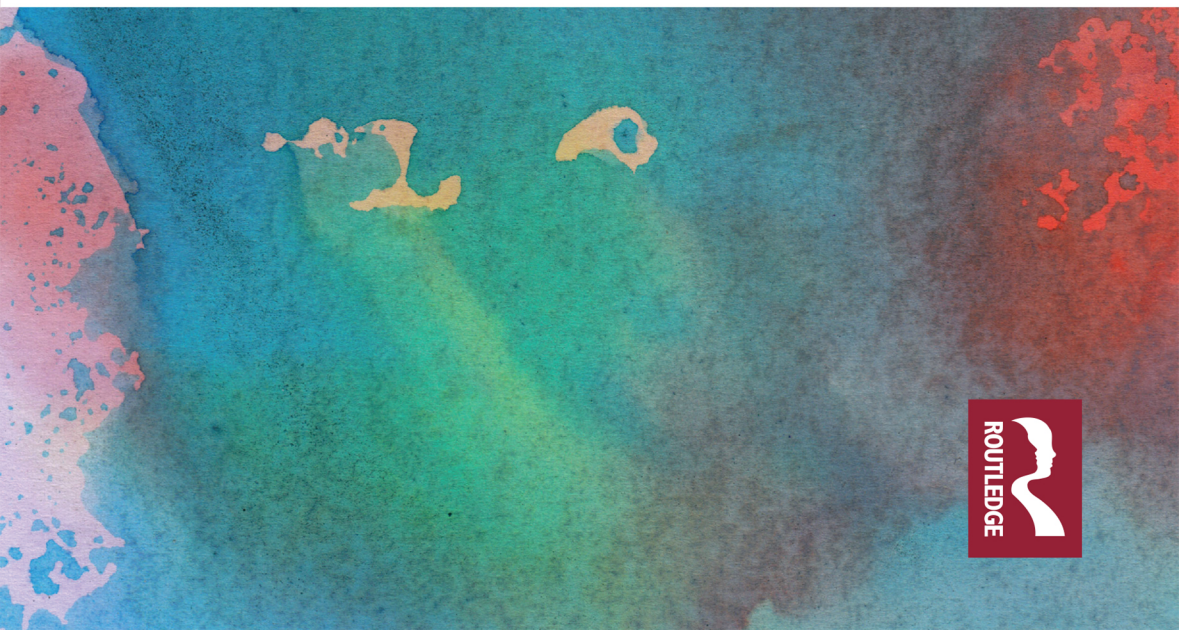

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Globalization and Civil Society in East Asian Space will appeal to students and scholars of sociology, political science, and Asian studies more broadly.

Khatharya Um is Associate Dean of Social Sciences, and Associate Professor in the Department of Ethnic Studies-Asian American and Asian Diaspora Studies Program at the University of California, Berkeley, USA.

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Globalization and Civil Society in East Asian Space

Edited by
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Acknowledgement

The volume grew from an initial generative symposium that took place at Rikkyo University in 2017, followed by another meeting in Tokyo in 2018. With generous support from Rikkyo University and Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, the convenings brought together scholars from Japan, Korea, Taiwan, the US, and the Philippines to engage, from their different disciplinary perches, questions of changing politics and societies in contemporary East Asia, with a particular focus on social movements and civil society. As co-editors, trained as political scientists, we were intrigued by the prospect of thinking deeply and collectively about Asia, a region that has emerged as an economically, socially, and politically dynamic site. It was an unpassable opportunity to collaborate.

While any such project is always a significant undertaking, this volume was especially challenged by the pandemic that bore down on us just as we were embarking on the project. Amidst illnesses, insurmountable personal challenges, and multifaceted constraints engendered by prevailing uncertainties, the volume survived largely because of the determination and dedication of the contributors—those who responded to the call for participation and stayed with the project from its inception through the turbulence of the pandemic, and those who joined later and rose brilliantly to the challenge of impossible deadlines and editing requests.

This volume also would not have been possible except for the confidence that Routledge had in the project from the start, and the team's generous understanding of the incredible unanticipated challenges of conducting an international collaborative project amid a global pandemic. Our special thanks go to Andrew Leach, our editor at Routledge, for the technical and intellectual support in the final production of the volume, and to Melissa Scott, our graduate student assistant, for her dedication and diligent assistance. Not the least, we are indebted to our families who graciously put up with lost weekends and holidays, and a great deal of frustrations during the completion of the volume.

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Khatharya Um, Berkeley, 2022
Chiharu Takenaka, Tokyo, 2022

Introduction

Globalization, Civil Society, and Changing East Asian Space

Khatharya Um

The global landscape of the post-Cold War decades is marked by rapid and significant changes. Heightened globalization has fostered increased connectivity and interdependence among countries and peoples through cross-border trade, outsourcing of production and services, multinational corporate ties, and transnational flow of commodities, people, capital, and ideas, including aspirations for change. Affordable transportation, accessibility of the Internet, and social media have essentially shrunk the world.

This connectivity and interdependence, on one hand, offer generative potential and new possibilities. On the other, they underscore the vulnerabilities of states and societies and engender uncertainties, anxieties, nativistic resistance, and reactionary backlash. Both through the global spread of the COVID-19 virus and the massive social and economic repercussions, the pandemic is a sobering reminder of the darker side of this globalized world of heightened mobility and interconnections. Though long-standing and deeply entrenched, it exposes, in ways difficult to deny, the disparities and injustices of this global system that is built not only on interdependence and complimentary, but also on asymmetrical power relationships, systemic inequities, and exclusion.[1]

The spaces of opportunity, as such, are also spaces of contention. Globalization involves uneven processes and differential impact. The world economic system rests on the generation of different needs, namely the need for labor, markets, and resources of the more established economies, and for jobs and capital in developing countries, conditions that engender different types of mobilities and immobilities, and inherent inequities. While enabling rapid growth, globalized economy and the spread of neoliberalism have also widened disparities among and within countries, created various forms of dislocations, and fueled social, economic, and political tensions. In developing regions, including Asia, growth is also accompanied by high concentration of wealth in few hands, essentially leaving behind segments of the populations, in some instances in even more precarious conditions. Many not only have gained little from the country's growth but have lost their livelihood and economic self-sufficiency. Many agro-development projects, export cropping, tourism, and other enterprises that account for much

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of the growth index have displaced families and communities—many of whom were once self-subsistent farmers—exacerbating immiseration, and further narrowing choices for vulnerable populations.

Globalization and development have also seen the growth of the middle class, diffusion of liberal ideals, and heightened social and environmental justice concerns that have catalyzed social mobilization. Liberalization and the democratizing impulse, however, stand in unsettling juxtaposition to that of illiberal democracies and reactionary movements that have also emerged as disconcerting features of the prevailing social and political landscape. As subsequent chapters will illuminate, the rise of China marks a fundamental shift in regional and global power balance, with profound ramifications for the push for a more accountable global system.

The global landscape thus is marked simultaneously by increased interdependence and economic vitality, and by conflict, devastating environmental and climate impact, socio-economic strife, and new imperial formations that reproduce earlier extractive and exploitative colonial logic. Prevailing precarities, as well as aspirations for upward mobility, fostered in no small part by increased global flow of information, account for the upsurge of movement of people throughout the world in search of economic security and opportunity. Migration thus has become a key feature of globalization,[2] occurring not only through established circuits but also from places that previously were not migrant sending, and toward new destinations. Some countries and regions have been transformed into both sources and destinations of migration. In turn, migration has profoundly impacted discourse about national identity, governance, citizenship, security, and state-society relations. While changes in national and global contexts have destabilized assumptions and norms and inspired mobilization for progressive reform, they have also evoked nativistic impulse and counter movements intent on protecting existing systems of power and privilege.

Globalization and Changing Asian Space

As in many parts of the world, these contestations play out in the Asia-Pacific region, including in established Asian democracies where change, particularly in the civil society sphere, is still unfolding in both hopeful and disquieting ways. The impact of globalization, rapid industrialization, and market economies on regional order, national governance, and trans/national civil society is well registered in Asia where profound economic and political changes have taken place, particularly since the 1990s. A pivotal development in East Asia was the shift from authoritarianism to democracy, and emergence of a politically engaged civil society. The state-led, growth-oriented strategies of the 1970s–1980s that had propelled rapid economic development in Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea had also produced an urban-based, cosmopolitan middle class, with new desires for political openness and social, political, and normative change. Pressured by these new demands and by the rapidly

changing societies, the strong state system of the earlier decades gave way to robust democracies in these East Asian countries.

In the communist corner of Asia, the introduction of market economies in China, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia in the late 1980s–1990s also paved the way for impressive economic growth. The impact on the countries' political systems, however, varies, with China confining liberalization to the economic sphere while tightly managing change, and poised to forcefully suppress any threat to state and party control, as its actions in Hong Kong unequivocally attest. While Vietnam and Laos lean more closely toward China's strategic approach to liberalization, an internationally endorsed peace accords propelled Cambodia's transition toward market economy, restoration of the monarchy, a national election and, theoretically, a multiparty system. In the last three decades since, the communist party and the country's kleptocratic elites, however, have remained firmly and uninterruptedly in control despite the massive international investment —political and financial—in the country's democratizing project.

Changing Demographics

The changes that impact East Asia and that shape the social and political dynamics of recent decades are not only political and economic but also demographic. Faced with aging populations and concomitant labor shortage, these industrialized societies have come to see immigration as a pragmatic and an increasingly inevitable recourse. Combined, East Asian societies' growing multicultural characteristics, spread of new globalized norms, and rising socio-political consciousness of the countries' expanding middle class and of the younger generations destabilized long-held assumptions about national identity and citizenship, and animated new discourse about governance, rights, state-society relations, and national security that has long been moored to growth. This convergence of internal changes and permeation of progressive ideologies from the outside catalyzed new social and political forces, and the emergence of democratic regimes in East Asian countries, with the exception of China, in the 1980s–1990s. The decades following this monumental turn herald in additional changes that reinforce the push for liberal reforms, but also engender a sense of national anxiety and concomitant rise of ultra-conservative counter movements. The global reverberations of the 2008 financial crisis and corresponding economic downturn, coupled with aging populations, are read by some as harbingers of decline for Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, in alarming contrast to China's exponential rise.

Economic and Political Ascendance of China

Catapulted by high speed industrialization and growth spurred by economic liberalization, China has surpassed Japan as the second largest economy in

the world. China's political and economic ascendance is a pivotal force that has altered the geopolitical, ideological, and economic power balance of the post-Cold War world order, with regional and global ramifications. With the collapse of the Soviet empire and decline of American dominance particularly in Asia, China is poised to fill the power vacuum with her rapidly expanding sphere of influence. Strategically leveraging her vast economic power and through cooptation of the countries' ruling elites, China has effectively cultivated allies in the developing world, many of whom are autocratic regimes of slippery standing in the international community. For governments with problematic human rights records such as in Myanmar and Cambodia, China is an indispensable patron, one that is willing and able to provide much-needed military and developmental aid as well as massive state and private investment not tethered to reform pressure that is often articulated, if not always enforced, by Western donors. Equally significant, China offers regime legitimacy and an alternative model of governance that validates illiberalism and the compatibility between authoritarianism and economic growth.[3]

By no means unconditional, China's assistance programs and direct investment are foreign policy implements in the drive to expand her global sphere of influence. They are integral to Beijing's political strategy of cultivating alliances that yield economic and geostrategic access, and political support on issues important to China such as the contested claims on the South China Sea. These are accommodations that authoritarian leaders and regimes in disrepute are willing to make, especially when they also yield lucrative opportunities for the countries' elites.

Both in terms of advantages and pitfalls, China's global rise and rapidly expanding influence are not lost on the world, not the least on regional states in Asia where China's presence looms large because of geopolitical proximity, vexed histories that it shares with neighboring countries, and allied countries' ambivalence about dependence despite the near-term gains. While China's foreign investment and assistance programs have fueled growth and development, the aggressive pursuits of natural resources, land, markets, exploitable labor, and strategic access needed to sustain her economic and geopolitical expansion have contributed to the dislocation of communities and lifeways and exacerbated inequities in less developed countries in the region. Development projects such as dams, land concessions for export cropping, and massive construction of condominiums, hotels and casinos have displaced families and communities, fueled land grabs and forced evictions, exacerbated landlessness and rural immiseration, and contributed to environmental strife. China's construction activities in Cambodia's coastal city of Sihanoukville and Ream, a former naval base where the US once had a foothold, for instance, is an emerging concern for local environmentalists as well as for regional and extra-regional powers.[4] As expounded in the volume, the implications of these developments on national and transnational civil society are multifaceted, intersecting, and significant.

Framing of the Volume

Addressing both the issues that have emerged in recent decades as well as the responses of state and civil society actors, this volume centers on change, both internal and external, that impact states and societies in Asia. Though studies on Asian economies, politics, and migration have proliferated, most remain disciplinarily bound, focusing largely on geopolitics, governance, economic development, or society. Comparatively little scholarly attention is placed on the intersecting ways in which globalization, economic growth, and mobilities have catalyzed new social mobilization, and impacted state-society relations. In Asia where societal change has animated discourse about governance, citizenship, and social justice, the last two decades in particular have seen the proliferation of civil society organizations, including over 460,000 officially registered nonprofit organizations in China, and mounted pressure for progressive change toward a more democratic, inclusive, and equitable society in East Asia.[5]

The civil society sphere, however, is also a space of contestation that pushes against and alongside other spheres such as the market, at times generating more openness and inclusion, other times becoming more restrictive and exclusionary. Both progressive and regressive change thus inhabit the East Asian social and political space. The strengthening and proliferation of rights movements and call for a more inclusive and equitable society are also accompanied by the rise of counter movements, fueled by threat perceptions, however unfounded, and racial-cultural anxieties. Reflecting democratic as well as reactionary impulses, change in the Asia-Pacific region, as the chapters underscore, is neither linear, predictive, nor necessarily in the direction of social progress and justice, involving regression as well as progression. While the literature largely focuses on civil society as the anti-systemic "third force" aimed at countering state centrism and autocracy, the rise of extreme right-wing movements and illiberal practices in Asia and globally, and incursion into the civil society sphere destabilize these underlying assumptions, calling for a new analytic emphasis on the internal diversity and complexity both of society and social movements.

Conceptualizing "East Asian Space"

Globalization and the different mobilities that it engenders have necessitated a reconceptualization of spatiality. While borders and territoriality remain important, globalization and ease of mobility have rendered them more porous. Whether reflected in remittance flows, transborder movement of people, goods and capital, or transnational civil society mobilization, the porosity of borders, and of the concept of space in general, is an undeniable feature of our globalized postmodern world. In this increasingly interdependent landscape, social relations are now stretched across different spatialities, linked together through flows, encounters, and resistance. Analytical

attention to spatiality thus allows us to understand how negotiations across different and multiple domains inform the social, economic, and political realities of those who live, work, and govern in this increasingly globalized world, adding a new and important facet to the historical and social dimensions of lived experiences.

In this volume, we draw upon the concept of space as social and political geography that is defined not by its physical boundedness but by its interconnectedness.[6] As such, it is not conceived in terms of territoriality but of environment and social fields that are produced and signified by relationality, contestation, and negotiations of what Lefebvre refers to as "multiple and overlapping social processes."[7] These spaces are sites of entanglement and interplay between global, national, and local forces that re/produce new conditions, connectivities, and dynamics fueled by mobilities, technologies, and imaginaries. Evoking Edward Soja, our notion of space deployed in the volume is as something perceived, conceived, and lived, hence abstract and concrete, real and imagined.[8]

The East Asian space that provides the analytical and empirical frame for the volume, as such, is one that is structured, represented, imagined, lived and experienced differently, multiply, and relationally. Shaped by the convergence of global, regional, and local forces and conditions, it lies at the nexus between system, the collective, and the individual as social and political actors. Thus, while centered on East Asia, namely China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, the "East Asia space" addressed in the volume extends beyond the region to different sites of encounter through circulations and connectivities. Within this wider frame, the volume is attentive to forces and conditions beyond East Asia, and even beyond Asia, but that are integrally tied to developments in East Asian countries.

Organization of Chapters

Comprised of contributions from Asian, European, and American scholars, and drawing from the fields of political science, law, public policy, sociology, Asian studies, gender studies, sexuality studies, and ethnic studies, and from various empirical case studies of East and Southeast Asian countries, this volume seeks to address some of the gaps in current scholarship by critically examining, through multidisciplinary lenses, the changing social, political and strategic landscape of East Asia that simultaneously shapes and is shaped by new mobilities, encounters, and interconnections. In its interrogation of the critical relationships between globalization, demographic change, mobilities, and state-society relations, it focuses on the nexus between global forces—from migration, to international trade, foreign assistance programs, transnational civil society, and social media—and their impact on societies and communities, paying attention to both the catalysts of and the responses to change. More specifically, it engages with the following three interrelated dimensions of change that also inform the

organization of the three parts of the volume, namely (1) shifts in regional and global power balance and challenges to the liberal international order, (2) changing demographics, nationhood, and peoplehood, (3) globalization, pluralism, governance, and civil society.

The three parts build on each other. Part 1 "*Global Shifts and Challenges to the Liberal International Order"* examines the political and economic changes affecting East Asia in recent decades, their implications for foreign and national policies, and the opportunities and challenges presented, particularly for civil society. The three papers in this part complement each other in their attention to different sites, facets, and catalysts of change, converging on the global and regional implications of the rise of China and attendant anxieties felt by neighboring states. Chiharu Takenaka's paper (Chapter 1) examines the transformations of state and society in Asia, particularly as a result of increased globalization. Through a comparative analysis of Northeast and Southeast Asian countries, and with particular attention to the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it engages the question of whether these changes shrink or enlarge the space of civil society. David Arase's paper (Chapter 2) focuses on a pivotal force, centered in Asia but with global ramifications, namely China's political and economic ascendance. It discusses Beijing's strategic usage of foreign assistance and other economic levers to draw nation-states into its sphere of influence, and the implications for geopolitical balance and for liberal democracies. The paper argues that China's assertive campaign is aimed at remaking global governance, and that this alternative model of governance that it represents threatens the foundation of liberal democracy. While China, with its economic prowess, offers developing countries an alternative to dependency on the West that is altering regional and global power balance, Beijing's support of autocratic regimes helps stifle democratizing impulse, with adverse implications for state-society relations, and for regional security. Centering its analysis on another East Asian power, namely Japan, Franziska Schultz' paper (Chapter 3) examines the response of the Abe Shinzo administration to China's rising influence in the global arena during his two terms in office. Arguing that the policy shifts and turns reflected both changes in the international environment as well as domestic political reverberations, it analyzes the ways in which Japan seeks to navigate China's global influence and assertive foreign policy, the changing geostrategic environment, and the implications that that entails for Japanese domestic politics.

The discussion of power politics provides an important backdrop for understanding the dislocations that catalyze migration and civil society mobilization, issues that are elevated in Part 2 "*Changing Demographics, Nationhood and Peoplehood: Migration, Diversity and Inclusion."* Centering on the themes of dislocation and change, and situating them in the context of both sending and receiving countries, the papers in this part examine factors that compel outmigration in Asia, and the impact of these mobilities on receiving societies, particularly on the evolving and contesting notions

of national identity, governance, rights, citizenship, and inclusion. Leading in with a historicized discussion of Japanese society, John Lie (Chapter 4) traces the discourse on ethnic and cultural pluralism in Japan, and the ways in which migration and the growth of immigrant communities have reinforced and perpetuated the ideology of monoethnicity. Though situated within the particular context of Japan, the paper provokes critical reflections about the construction and deconstruction of national myths and ideologies during the period of transition for democracies, including those in East Asia. Exploring the different forms of dislocations and migration flows that shape the East Asian space, Khatharya Um's paper (Chapter 5) examines the forces and conditions that catalyze migration, both regular and irregular, from Southeast to East Asia, underscoring the links between globalized economic forces, and the effects on communities. It also addresses the responses of governments and of civil society actors and institutions to the causes and consequences of migration, both those that promote and those that undermine migrant rights and protection. Min Zhou's and Hong Liu's paper (Chapter 6) picks up and centers the discussion of the new Asian migration on one—namely Chinese—diaspora in Singapore and the US. Examining the catalysts of migration and the experiences of migrant incorporation, it discusses the interplay between global dynamics and institutional and individual factors that informs migration, extending the analysis beyond economics and labor concerns to the relationships between diasporic formation, socio-economic integration, and identity construction in a globalized world.

Extending and deepening the theme of societal change, the last part of the volume expounds upon the links between changing demographics, globalization of ideas, and social and political mobilization in East Asia. Part 3 "*Globalization, Pluralism, Governance, and Civil Society"* illuminates the varied, multi-sectoral response to change in its exploration of the ways in which East Asian states and societies address growing pluralism, amplified minority rights discourse, heightened mobilization, and national anxieties. Hannah June Kim's and Lev Nachman's paper (Chapter 7) looks at Taiwanese citizens' conceptualization of and support for democracy and whether and at what level such support translates into active political engagement. Its findings caution that despite the present structure of democratic governance, Taiwan may face continued societal pressure for expanded reform. In his discussion of Singapore's securitization imperative (Chapter 8), Yee-Kuang Heng analyzes the ways in which the Singapore state has effectively coopted civil society into its securitization project, thus effectively undercutting the mediating potential of non-state actors. Placing the question of governance in the specific context of Hong Kong's democracy movements, Toru Kurata's paper (Chapter 9) situates the current political mobilization within Hong Kong's historic and contemporary locations in the circuit of global capital and her colonial and post-colonial histories, as well as in the context of political developments in other parts of East Asia, and the world.

The connections made across time and space chart the transnational flow of ideas, underscoring the importance of both global and regional forces and contexts, as well as local particularities. Keiko Tamura's paper (Chapter 10) moves the discussion and analysis of rights and social activism beyond immigrant and ethnic minority concerns to those of sexual minorities in Asia in her comparative study of Taiwan and Singapore, two countries with differing approaches to sexual politics despite their shared Confucian roots. It addresses not only the rising consciousness about and mobilization around sexual minority rights, but also state and civil society response to these trends.

Together, the essays in the three parts of the volume provide a textured, critical reading of East Asia as an economically, socially, and politically dynamic region, one shaped simultaneously by progressive as well as regressive pulls. On one hand, globalization has spurred critical shifts—real and symbolic—toward more diverse, inclusive, and just societies in East Asia. Taiwan for instance, legalized same sex marriage in 2019. Though similar attempts at legalization have incurred conservative backlash in Japan, some local municipalities have acknowledged same sex unions, and the Japanese government has recently adopted measures to prevent harassment of sexual minorities. Likewise, South Korea has recently introduced an anti-discrimination bill, including against sexual orientation and gender identity, though such proposals have failed to secure the adoption by the National Assembly over the past 14 years. Similar anti-discrimination bills are being entertained in other Asian countries.[9] In the same vein, civil society mobilization for labor and immigrant rights, and for social and environmental protection remains robust despite brutally repressive measures in some countries, and entrenchment in others.

Along with these positive developments, unabated government crackdown on dissent, notably but not exclusively in Hong Kong, Myanmar, Cambodia, and the Philippines, autocratic rule and state-condoned, if not state-sponsored, violence against oppositional forces, human trafficking, labor exploitation, environmental degradation, heightened securitization campaigns, tightened borders, and rising nativism remain unabated concerns in Asia. The introduction of anti-discrimination bills, while hopeful, is also suggestive of the persisting, even escalating, problems of racism, hate crimes, and nativistic violence.

As this volume neared completion, COVID-19 was just beginning to register its ravaging impact on the global scene. Even in the early stage of this global turbulence, racism was already rearing its monstrous head in the form of anti-Asian violence and hate crimes that spread with equal virulence as the virus. If history is at all instructive, the economic fallout is but one of the ravaging effects of this global crisis. While the pandemic put in sharp relief deeply entrenched systemic inequities and precarities in communities and nations, amplifying the call for change, it has also created openings for authoritarian measures to be enacted in the name of public security. Against

this backdrop, East Asia—already pulled by countervailing forces of progress and setback—will remain an important and dynamic analytic site. It is our hope that this volume will spark new research and policy interests and continued engagement with these important issues.

Notes

1 Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*.
2 Castles, "Towards a Sociology of Forced Migration," 14.
3 Ford and Haas, "Democracy in Asia."
4 *Reuters*, "U.S. Calls Cambodia Opaque."
5 World Economic Forum, "The Future Role of Civil Society," 6.
6 Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*; Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*; and Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*.
7 Lukasz, *Henri Lefebvre on Space,* ix.
8 Soja, *Thirdspace*.
9 Amnesty International, "South Korea."

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Part 1

Global Shifts and Challenges to the Liberal International Order

1 State and Civil Society in East Asia in the Age of Globalization

Chiharu Takenaka

Global Crisis, State, and Civil Society

As the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored, one of the pitfalls of globalization is that it helps facilitate the spread of diseases: AIDS, Ebola, mad cow disease (bovine spongiform encephalopathy), SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome), MERS, bird flu, swine flu, and various kinds of influenza. While experts have been warning of the possibility of a pandemic for decades, the peculiarity of COVID-19 is that the virus was not confined to the global south but hit the global north as well as emerging economies such as Brazil, Russia, India, and South Africa.

The effect of the pandemic, including in Asia, is uneven and reflects the different state and societal responses. West Asia and South Asia have been seriously impacted. In Southeast Asia, the island democracies of the Philippines and Indonesia have registered a high number of cases, while Singapore's preventive measures against the pandemic have proven effective, and the communist state of Vietnam has likewise reported success in containing the disease.[1] East Asia also has fared relatively well, with China, where the outbreak originated, being remarkably successful in implementing a stringent public health policy. The Chinese economy was already projected to recover its substantial productivity by mid-2020.[2] South Korea and Taiwan, two liberal democracies, have also demonstrated exemplary performance in countering the pandemic—South Korea has effectively utilized the nation's technological capability to address the challenge while Taiwan's democratic leadership and consultation with civil society seem to have worked efficiently.[3]

Overall, the pandemic shines the light on the capability of the state and civil society in responding to unprecedented crises. Although the calamities may be natural in origin, Thomas R. Oliver, Professor of Public Health at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, contends, "Politics, for better or worse, plays a critical role in health affairs. Politics is central in determining how citizens and policy makers recognize and define problems with existing social conditions and policies, in facilitating certain kinds of public health interventions but not others, and in generating a variety of challenges in

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policy implementation."[4] Like other acute crises, the COVID-19 pandemic compelled not only experts but also ordinary people to reassess the competence and effectiveness of their governments' responses and compared them against responses by other governments. From such a comparative perspective, China, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore have appeared as examples of uniquely effective models of managing this public health crisis.[5] In the process, civil society is expected to play a critical role, serving "as an advocate, a watchdog and at trusted authority."[6]

Not only did Asia's share of global gross domestic product (GDP) further expanded during the pandemic, but seeing the quick economic recovery of China and several East Asian countries in contrast to the severe struggles of G7 countries raised some potentially unsettling questions for the future of democracy and civil society in Asia. What kind of impact would the decline of the influence of the United States, European Union (EU), and Japan, as well as the ascendency of China and other undemocratic states make in post-pandemic politics and society? What are the ramifications of these events on civil society in Asia? Could we hope to sustain liberal democracy in many countries in this region in the near future? These are the central questions that this chapter seeks to address.

Situating State and Civil Society in Contemporary Asia

The idea of civil society reflects a long history of political and philosophical discussion. To avoid a lengthy summary of the complicated debates over its definition, it would be better to simply refer to the practical description provided by the United Nations (UN) which defines civil society as the "third sector" of society, along with government and business, comprising of civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The UN "recognizes the importance of partnering with civil society, because it advances the Organization's ideals, and helps support its work."[7] As a club of sovereign states, the UN is in a clear position to collaborate with social organizations in all countries with different regimes, whether democratic or not, as well as to work with the business sector in both liberal market economies and state-controlled economies. The concept of civil society was revived as one of the central topics of the social sciences and the humanities with the democratization of many southern European and the 1970s–1980s was a period of right-wing dictatorships in places like El Salvador and other countries in Latin America.

Although the idea of civil society sounded alien to ordinary people in East Asia, and probably because it was, the number of CSOs drastically increased in the region from the late 1980s to 2000s along with the tide of liberalization, democratization, and globalization. From the numbers, we could guess that civil society in East Asia has been progressing largely due to people's increased mobility and urbanization. According to the available data, the registered organizations in the Philippines, for example, increased

from about 27,000 in 1986, the year of democratization in this country, to between 60,000 and 90,000 in 2000. In South Korea, the number of organizations grew from around 9,500 in 2000 to more than 35,000 in 2003. The number also grew in Taiwan from 3,960 in 1980 to 18,465 in 2003. In 1998, Malaysia had 29,754 organizations registered under the Societies Act.[8] A series of global crises, such as the Asian financial crisis in 1997, the September 11th attacks and the War on Terror since 2001, the outbreak of SARS in 2002–2003, and the Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami in December 2004, presented opportunities for the growth of CSOs despite certain hindering effects of the calamities on their development.

However, given the diversity of governance among Asian nations and in the relationship between the state and society, the development of civil society in the region has been uneven. A global alliance of CSOs, CIVICUS, publishes periodical region-wide reports on the conditions of civil society, and its report on the Asia-Pacific in 2008 observes two opposing tendencies in the region: the growth of civil society or "associational revolutions" in liberal democracies such as Taiwan and South Korea, and the political hindrance of civil society under authoritarian regimes such as China and Vietnam where the state tightly controls society despite the steady economic growth and development of civil society without substantial freedom. Many countries are situated between these two extremes, and there is potential for CSOs to emerge in newly democratized countries such as Indonesia and Mongolia, especially with the support of foreign donors. The report concludes that the influence and role of CSOs in the political sphere have been restricted in many countries owing to the lack of political freedom and liberal democracy.[9]

The state continues to be the most powerful institution in Asian countries and "has a strong impact on the nature and development of civil society," Muthiah Alagappa wrote in 2004. It has been argued that democracy could not function without civil society, but that civil society could survive under an undemocratic regime. In other words, the state would be able to maintain its dominance over society, even when economic development might nourish a certain feature of civil society. His three categories of the relationship between the state and civil society provide a useful framework for understanding the current situation of Asia. The first is a system with an established organic civil society and democratic space such as South Korea and Taiwan, as the CIVICUS report described. The second is a controlled and communalized civil society managed by a reinforcing state such as Malaysia and Singapore, which could be considered "hybrid regimes" operating between democracy and authoritarianism. The third is a repressed civil society with the state penetrating and co-opting civil society. China and Vietnam could be listed in the last category.[10]

Taken as a whole, it is true that civil society has been developing in Asia, as in other parts of the world, but its relationship with the state is conditioned by multiple factors: the degree and method of state control, the protection of

freedom of speech and freedom of association, the function of legal systems, the availability of economic and social resources, the international influence, and more. Unlike in previous decades, in a drastically changing and globalizing world, it is the state that requires the service of CSOs to meet the multiple needs of governance such as development, poverty alleviation, education, public health, and even national security and anti-terrorist strategies. At the same time, CSOs are also adjusting their attitudes toward the state; while a certain number of CSOs stick to the opposition camp, most CSOs are ready to collaborate with the government that, in turn, provides them with financial resources and political authority to conduct their activities. As a tentative assessment of the pandemic politics in Asia might prove, the state could achieve the high level of resilience to overcome the threat of new global challenges, regardless of regime type, by effectively co-opting CSOs in the policy process.

The Origins of Strong State and Resistance of Civil Society in Asia

What is the origin of the strong state in the Asia-Pacific region? Why does the state retain such influential power over society in Asia? Digging into the historical development of the formation of the Asian modern state and its relationship with indigenous societies in the previous centuries helps provide the answer to these questions.

Political Heritage of Colonial State

In parts of Asia, colonial states were implanted by Europeans in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and later by Japanese and Americans. These alien states dominated local societies through the use of the army and police, bureaucracy, legal institutions, and imperial capitalist economies. Foreign rule, however, laid the ground for new political representation, and World War I and the following decades instigated an upsurge of popular nationalist movements in colonial and semi-colonial societies in this region. In the wake of the devastations and massive loss of lives engendered by the Japanese War and World War II, lager-scale liberation movements appeared in many countries in Asia. After the collapse of the Japanese empire and the drastic loosening of European and American imperial control after the war, newly independent nation-states were established which emphasized independence, sovereignty, and national integration while inheriting the territories and state institutions of the colonial state.[11]

Social and civic organizations also have historical lineages of their own. Communal networks, caste and class groups, religious organizations such as mosques, churches, temples, and shrines have survived the colonial period and metamorphosed in modern society, even though many of these organizations were excluded from the dominant Western idea of civil society

as they were considered remnants of traditional society and therefore a hindrance to modernization. Indeed, indigenous social organizations have a long history of resistance against the dominance of modern state, market economy, and westernization. Colonial states therefore eventually had to rely on traditional native elites such as kings, landlords, and religious leaders to contain the resistance of indigenous population.[12]

By the late twentieth century, the legacy of the colonial state was mostly inherited by many postcolonial states, which retained the basic political structure of the previous decades under the banner of nation-states. The dominance of state over society without hegemony, the original feature of colonial states, was handed over to the newly established sovereign states, many of which could not sustain postcolonial liberal democracies for long and proceeded to develop various types of authoritarian regimes.[13] In contrast, where communist parties fought liberation wars in East Asia, they reorganized indigenous societies to build the people's liberation armies, pushing out the former imperial forces and forming one-party-states instead.[14] In both cases, it is noticeable that the state acquired overwhelming supremacy over society in the process of nation-building and its development.

National Security State and Developmental State Under American Hegemony

The decolonization process overlapped with the emergence of the Cold War in the region. While the United States was a key player in forming the post-war international order to contain the threat of communism, the Soviet Union had its own vast territory in Eurasia while Communist China emerged as the winner in the war against imperial Japan and in China's civil war, followed by the new communist states in the neighboring Korean peninsula and former Indochina. The United States assisted anti-communist governments in the region, sending vast amounts of military and economic aid as well as stationing its military forces. Fighting the Korean War in the 1950s and the Vietnam War in the 1960s–1970s, the United States strengthened pro-American governments by oppressing anti-government and leftist movements as well as offering the fruits of economic gains.[15]

While Samuel Huntington analyzed the emerging military regime and dictatorship of Latin American countries during the 1950s–1980s, several nondemocratic regimes appeared in East Asia in this period as well with the rise to power of generals, dictators, and authoritarian leaders.[16] The concept of "developmental dictatorship" was introduced to legitimize such regimes, with reference to the historical precedence of Italian fascism led by Benito Mussolini. National security, most specifically the need to combat the threat of communist infiltration, was echoed, while economic development was deemed essential for political legitimacy of the state. Although the policy of import-substitution was pursued as a development strategy by independent states in the 1950s and early 1960s, the newly established

authoritarian governments shifted to an export-oriented strategy in the late 1960s and 1970s. To that end, they sought American investment and military commitment, while the landed oligarchy demanded state intervention to maintain their dominance in rural areas. Protests by peasants, workers, and impoverished people were crushed by the military and police of the state as the fifth column of the communist bloc.

Drawing from Latin American cases, the theory of "bureaucratic authoritarianism," which Guillermo O'Donnell proposed in the late 1970s and early 1980s, inspired many scholars who worked on South Korea, Taiwan, and Southeast Asian regimes. The theory argued that a new type of military regime and/or dictatorship, supported by technocratic elites with bureaucratic careers in large organizations such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), and transnational corporations gripped power not only in Latin America but also in East Asia, regardless of differences in history and culture. Many of the technocrats, sharing a similar educational background in development studies and other scientific technologies in the United States and other developed countries, found reliance on a strong state to be a convenient shortcut for development. The strong state was also legitimized under American hegemony for the sake of economic development and the maintenance of stability, when in fact it meant the repression of political opponents, labor disputes, and rural unrest for the benefit of national elites and foreign stakeholders.[17]

Asian Values, Nationalism and Leftist Legacy

Several juxtaposing historical factors gained influence in the 1980s and 1990s. The first is the legacy of the strong state as power holders continued to reinforce their control of the state, even when the democratization wave washed over the shores of East Asia. Authoritarian governments continued to depend on American military and economic aid under the banner of anti-communism in order to silence opposition through counter-insurgency measures while pursuing rapid economic growth. The United States and Japan, the main investors in the region, supported the ruling elites of these governments as they were campaigning for national security and development. Even in the mid-1990s, the leaders of authoritarian governments such as Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, and China spoke out the word of "Asian values" to resist external intervention in the fields of democracy, human rights, gender equality, and other issues, preaching that political culture and social values in Asia were different from Western culture and values which had been influential since the age of imperialism.[18]

The second is the legacy of Marxism and leftist movements, representing persistent resistance against state repression. Looking back, the 1905 revolution in Russia had already impacted Asia, and the October Revolution in 1917 immediately brought the communist movements to colonialized societies in the region as the Communist International gathered revolutionaries

under the guidance of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Two decades later, Japan's invasion sparked a rise of anti-Japanese armed struggles often organized by the communists. After Japan's defeat in 1945, the region's various communist parties established independent states in mainland China, North Korea, and Vietnam, while counterparts supported by the United States were established in Taiwan, South Korea, and South Vietnam to contain possible communist expansion. Strong states were consolidated under both camps during the Cold War.

Among America's close allies such as Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia, leftist movements were brought under control or otherwise oppressed by their states, but a number of intellectuals and students continued to be attracted to Marxism and were organized by communist parties. In post-war Japan, for example, the leftists managed to organize labor unions, peace movements, environmental movements, and other social movements. The Communist Party of the Philippines found their proponents in the academic community, while their militant organization, the New People's Army (NPA), maintained their armed conflict against the state. Under the Philippine's dictatorial government, the NPA was active in Mindanao where the Moro ethnic minority group was fighting for liberation. The state was viewed as a puppet of "American imperialism" that was conducting war in Vietnam to stop the communist revolution.[19]

The third is the historical factor of class-based divided societies that facilitates social resistance against the state when necessary. The ruling elite such as politicians, government officials, military juntas, big landowners, and business tycoons dominated the state and society, while the majority of the marginalized population were disconnected from political representation and were left struggling for survival as marginalized workers and peasants. The middle class, who should be categorized as "citizens" in a classical sense, as a minority and dependent on the state in reality, largely became implicated in the oppression of country's impoverished population.[20] It could be said that conditions for civil society were still unfavorable for some time.

The situations seemed to change drastically in the late 1980s. Economic growth transformed the social milieu of political communities, while urbanization, the expansion of education, growing wealth and social mobility, and the emergence of civic consciousness through media, all prepared citizens in the region to refer to new ideas such as civil society, liberalism, globalization, and even democratization. In other words, "developmental states" which went through the "compressed modernization" had finally brought the dividends of growth to society.[21]

The fourth factor is international influence. The changes in the international environment from the 1980s to 2000s reinforced domestic initiatives in the push for liberalization, democratization, and the nurturing of civil society. The UN and other international organizations as well as leading countries such as the United States, the European Community, and Japan, as well as international NGOs, all started to emphasize civil society and

human rights when extending international assistance. Japan, as a leading donor in Asia, revised its guidelines of the Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in 1993 to align with the push of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to facilitate liberalization and democratization in developing countries. Naturally, governments and civic stakeholders, old and new, shifted their strategies when seeking international assistance for democracy and civil society building.[22]

Developmental State and Democratization in Times of Globalization

When the global wave of liberalization and democratization reached the domestic and international contexts of East Asia, it challenged the existing political structures of these countries, even though they were relatively unfamiliar with these concepts. Popular movements emerged, voluntary activities and social organizations flourished, and state dominance was critically questioned. Several countries, labeled as the "developmental dictatorships" in this region, went through various crises and were eventually successful in revising the relationships between the state and society in bringing about political transformation.

Growth of Japan and Newly Industrializing Economies

When developmental dictatorships and bureaucratic authoritarianism were questioned, the success stories of East Asian growth were often evoked as a justification for why. Citing the case of Japan which at the time of this writing had recently become the second largest economy in the world, studies pioneered by Chalmers Johnson's *MITI and the Japanese Miracle* in 1982, pointed to the crucial role of the developmental state in steering society toward rapid industrialization by intervening in the economy through administrative guidance as well as private sector regulation. As Japan had been a liberal democracy since 1947, Johnson argued that the political stability necessary for effective developmental policies was supported by the dominance of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) which had won every general election since 1955.[23]

Following the path of Japan, the achievements of the "newly industrializing economies" (NIES) of South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong were also attributed to strong government measures of their authoritarian regimes including tariff protection, tax evasion, special subsidies, financial control, land control, price control, and strict labor control.[24] There was military rule in South Korea, one-party rule supported by the military in Taiwan, semi-authoritarian one-party rule in Singapore, and British colonial administration in Hong Kong that all could be branded as developmental dictatorships and/or bureaucratic authoritarian regimes like many Latin

American countries. The idea of the "flying geese" in East Asia with Japan "flying" in the lead was lauded by the United States and global market, especially after the Second Oil Shock in 1979.[25] Besides the colonial city Hong Kong, three other geese—Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan—came to help establish the apparent relevance of the strong state in the process of economic growth.

The Wave of Democratization and Embedded Social Contract in East Asia

While authoritarian regimes showed their resilience in East Asia, the wave of democratization eventually arrived to the region in the late 1980s. The Philippines was the first country to experience peaceful democratization in East Asia. President Ferdinand Marcos had held dictatorial power since 1972 and seemed unshakable given his support from the United States and Japan, but opposition grew steadily under economic downturns and political instability. In the presidential election in February 1986, the opposition candidate, Cory Aquino, widow of Senator Benigno Aquino who was assassinated in 1983, attracted massive popular support, especially in the capital city of Manila and the military decided to concede to the "People Power Revolution" to restore democracy as Marcos fled the country.[26]

Other countries followed a more or less similar path. In South Korea, President Chun Doo Hwan's military rule faced an increasing challenge in 1987, when opposition leaders, calling for democracy and reunification of Korean peninsula, were joined by labor unions, student unions, teachers, journalists, professionals, and other concerned citizens in protests against the government. The military government acceded to start the democratization process, holding the presidential election in 1988, the year of the Seoul Olympic Games.[27] Taiwan was also struggling through the democratization process when the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) government decided to begin political reform, lifting martial law and taking steps toward democratization in 1987, following growing political dissent and protest movements as well as a newly organized opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party. With the formation of the first democratically elected parliament in 1992, Taiwanese citizens chose a democratic future different from mainland China.[28]

Southeast Asian countries were simultaneously impacted by the democratizing impulse. In Thailand, the military had held political power through a series of coups under the monarchy. However, the winds of change came in late 1973 when student movements were violently oppressed by the military and the King stepped in to signal his support for democratization. After the general election in 1975, there was an unstable period of parliamentary democracy in the 1980s under the leadership of Prem Tinsulanonda. In the early 1990s, the former governor of Bangkok led demonstrations to stop the military coup, again inducing the King's call for military restraint. Riding

on the popular wave, the Democratic Party won the election in 1992 to form a government, and a new constitution was adopted in 1997 that helped consolidate democracy.[29]

The military regime survived the democratic waves longer in Indonesia, owing to the stable leadership of President Suharto and to the success of green revolutions as well as an abundant reservoir of oil resources. However, the Asian financial crisis in 1997–1998 severely hit the country, triggering mass protest to call for "*reformasi* (political reform)." Although the military continued to suppress the demonstrations by force, bloody incidents in Jakarta in June 1998 constituted a turning point that compelled Suharto to step down from the presidency. Vice President Habibie succeeded his place as head of the caretaker government in charge of political transition. A general election was held in December 1999 to form the first democratic government led by S. B. Yudhoyono.[30]

In his 1991 article, "Democracy's Third Wave," Samuel Huntington discussed the conditions that facilitate democratization, and the process of democratization in East Asian countries generally seemed to prove his hypothesis. The first condition is the loss of performative legitimacy by authoritarian governments, especially on issues of national security and development. The second condition is the emergence of an urban middle class and an educated, politically-aware youth. The third and fourth conditions are, respectively, the transfer of loyalty to the new political leadership by traditional social organizations, such as churches, Buddhist temples, mosques, and other religious organizations, and influence of international factors. In East Asia, several developmental states lost their credibility due to the economic downturn following the Second Oil Shock in 1979 as well as the Asian financial crisis in 1997–1998. Moreover, the United States, EU, Japan, Australia, Canada, and other leading countries jointly supported the democratization process during the 1980s and 1990s, while the collapse of the Soviet Union and its satellite states in Eastern Europe also generated snowballing effects.[31]

The development of civil society, however, was not a unilinear process. Each country has a complicated historical legacy as discussed previously: the nature of the regime, the colonial heritage and experience of nationalism, the constellation of classes, the legacy of leftist movements, religious institutions, and other elements. The various social composition of each country should also be considered. For example, it was found that the issue of immigrants could complicate the political transition as seen in the case of several Balkan countries. In the Philippines and Thailand, however, the emerging idea of civil society could help achieve the national consensus to establish liberal democratic governments rather than inviting violent interethnic conflicts. In both cases, Chinese immigrants were well assimilated into the nation and Chinese businesses could be merged into the national bourgeoisie with democratization.[32]

Overall, several countries in East Asia could adjust the pre-existing relationship between the state and society to respond to the challenges of the

global market economy and international system in the past decades. In order to achieve strong economic growth, governments were expected to be in control of society and to collaborate with social organizations, even during the transition from authoritarianism to liberal democracy. Therefore, many of the states in this region have managed to sustain a kind of embedded or historically implanted social contract with its people, that is the commitment to ensure national security and development. As a result, it could be argued that the essential nature of the developmental state, or the powerful institutions of the state over society, has been kept alive in the contemporary political culture of East Asia even through the process of liberalization and democratization.

Civil Society of China Model and its Opponent

However, what is unique about East Asia is the persistence of communist states such as China, Vietnam, and North Korea despite the impact of globalization and democratization. The dissolution of the Soviet Union, which marked the end of communist bloc and Cold War military confrontation, accelerated the process of liberalization and democratization in Europe, but not in East Asia. Unlike democratized East Asian countries, the communist parties of China and Vietnam have managed to invent different types of developmental states without experiencing regime change. One of the prominent reasons that prolonged the survival of communist states in this region is the fact that the United States, Japan, and other liberal democracies have constantly helped facilitate the economic development of China and Vietnam since the late 1970s.

Experiment of China's Developmental State

As it became clear that the United States could not win the war in Vietnam, President Nixon established diplomatic relations with Communist China in 1971 as part of his administration's efforts to withdraw from Indochina. Following the death of Mao, the discrediting of the Gang of Four in 1976, and China's defeat in the Sino-Vietnamese War in 1978, Deng Xiaoping launched a new policy of "the Four Modernizations" in agriculture, industry, defence, and science and technology to revitalize the Chinese economy in 1979. The United States and Japan welcomed Deng's efforts and began providing aid and investment for its development. Naturally, the Chinese Communist Party could choose to keep its political system unaltered despite adapting itself to market economy.[33]

Inspired by democratization movements in the Philippines, South Korea, and Taiwan, Chinese students started the protest movements of their own, most notably in Beijing in 1989. With the country's economic take-off, the urban middle class began to grow and soon sought political reform and liberalization. Such hopes were dashed when the People's

Liberation Army crushed peaceful demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in June 1989. A number of people were killed, injured, arrested, or fled the country. BBC, CNN, and other international media reported the brutality of the incident, and the United States, EU, Canada, Japan, and many more condemned the brutal oppression of the Chinese government. Yet such criticism did not have much of an impact on the Chinese government's attitude. Since then, the relationship between Communist China and the major liberal democracies, and chiefly the United States, has been double-edged. The two sides could confront each other politically, especially on issues of human rights violations and political freedom, but they are closely intertwined economically. In short, autocratic but fast-growing China was too important for the global market economy to lose.[34]

The Tiananmen Square incident was fatal for the growth of civil society in China. General Secretary Jiang Zemin tightened state control over Chinese society in the 1990s to ensure political stability and economic growth. Voluntary associations were seen as dangerous to the ruling party, leading to the enactment of the Regulations on the Registration and Management of Social Organization which restricted organizational activities in general and resulted in a decrease of the number of registered social organizations to 107,304 in 1991. This tendency was gradually changed in the late 1990s and the number of social organizations rose again to 180,000 in 1998, with more than 2,000 registered as national organizations. In Shanghai, they grew to more than 7,000.[35] Rapid industrialization, urbanization, and internal migration changed the landscape of Chinese society, while the expansion of the educated class, mass communication, information technology, and the growing consumer market encouraged people's social activities. Growing interaction with international society stimulated the formation of a number of non-governmental organizations and non-profit organizations (NGO/NPOs), and even under the tight state control, a Chinese version of civil society started to flourish.[36]

In 2002, Hu Jintao assumed the role as supreme leader of the party-state with more favorable attitudes toward liberal values and principles of multilateralism. Even the expression "civil society" came to be used in official policies and the state control over society was eased relatively. Such liberalizing measures coincided with China's earnest efforts to be welcomed as a formal member to the World Trade Organization and other multilateral institutions in international society. The "peaceful rise of China" was frequently discussed in the United States and her allies. The 2008 Beijing Olympics was highly appreciated as a tremendous achievement of Chinese growth and collaboration with the world.

Reflecting such trends, civil society in China grew steadily in the 2000s under state guidance. According to the Ministry of Civil Affairs, "by 2007, the number [of organizations] had grown exponentially to 386,916, including

211,661 social organizations, 173,915 GONGOs (Government-Organized Non-Governmental Organizations in China), and 1,340 foundations while the sector as a whole employed more than 4.5 million people."[37] GONGOs were defined as the constituent units created and recognized by the state as monopolizing representatives of respective sector. According to a report by the Chinese government in 2005, 32% of GONGOs were trade associations and other business sector organizations, another 30% of them professional associations such as accountant ones, and 23% of academic associations. The remaining organizations were related to friendship, sport, hobby, and cultural groups, with a few that could be seen as voluntary citizens groups for advocacy.[38] Most of the board of directors of these organizations were government officials or party members, and the state could oversee the entire activities of these organizations. Such a relationship between the state and social organizations could be described as a system of state-corporatism in China.

China's global position drastically changed again in the 2010s as it became the world's second largest economy, surpassing Japan. In 2013, new President Xi Jinping launched his plan "to achieve the Chinese dream of great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation."[39] His agenda of a "Third Revolution" included anti-corruption campaigns, anti-pollution environmental policies, controlling the situation in Hong Kong and the South China Sea, and enhancing Chinese influence through the Belt and Road Initiative. The government and the Communist Party strengthened their control over society, applying new technologies as well as restricting online activities of the private sector. The policy goal of a "new era of socialism" meant "an ambitious effort to remake civil society in the party-state's image."[40] International exchanges were strictly controlled, and the reform of the ministries on environment, national health, justice, and foreign aid was conducted in order to better regulate GONGOs. Those recognized by the state and the Party would gain governmental sponsorship and subsidiaries, while universities, the media, and other social organizations would face scrutiny by the National Security Law, the so-called Foreign NGO Law, Cybersecurity Law, and other regulations.[41]

The Dilemma of "One Country, Two Systems"

The situation of Hong Kong presents a dilemma for China, since residents in the territory used to have a high level of civil liberties for more than a century.[42] Though the city has never had democracy under the British rule nor after the handover to mainland China, people enjoyed a degree of liberty. As Wai-man Lam and Irene Tong wrote, "Hong Kong might be a classic case of political liberation (guaranteeing civil liberties) without democratization."[43] The principle of "one country, two systems" was certified between the United Kingdom and China in 1984 to be observed by the Chinese government for 50 years after the transfer of power in 1997, when it was

agreed that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) would oversee the management of the city. Chris Patten, the last British Governor, introduced a semi-democratic election system for the Legislative Council of Hong Kong, having witnessed the violence in Tiananmen Square in 1989 and hoping to deter central control from exerting more authoritarian pressures over Hong Kong.

A survey of the Central Policy Unit of the Hong Kong government, published in 2004, found that there were 16,662 CSOs, although the percentage of advocacy and political groups among them was not high. Quoting this figure, Alvin Y. So explained, "Hong Kong has evolved into a hybrid regime that can be labeled as liberal, authoritarian featuring a limited electoral franchise and strong civil liberties as well as increasingly active civil society."[44] Ma Ngok analyzed, "Hong Kong is a paradox of democratization and modernization theory: it has a vibrant civil society and high level of economic development, but very slow democratization. Hong Kong's status as a hybrid regime and its power dependence on China shape the dynamics of civil society in Hong Kong."[45] However, the Chinese government has been impatient with such a hybrid regime and the world has been watching civil resistance in the city against state control for decades. On July 1, 2003, about 500,000 people participated in protest movements, and CSOs fought for the autonomy of the public sphere and for civil liberties.[46] The growing middle class demanded an "ethical civil society" of freedom and autonomy for citizens. The Umbrella Movement began in 2013–2014 and since then, protest movements have persisted despite severe repression by the Chinese government. Civil protests were organized in June 2019 for the Tiananmen Square Memorial Day and developed into massive movements for the election of Council members in 2020, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. The movements won all the electoral seats, but the imperfect representation system hindered further development. The Chinese government continued to pressure the HKSAR and mercilessly suppressed the opposition.[47]

Tentatively, it seems that the China Model of state-corporatism has proved to be successful in containing the pandemic in 2020–2021, since social organizations as well as ordinary citizens in the country have been obediently collaborating with the government and the party for the purpose of crisis management. The situation in Hong Kong is a different story. The history of "one country, two systems" has deepened the schism between China's one-party rule and Hong Kong's liberal civil society without democracy. So far, the public opinion in China seems to support government policy, staying calm on the issue of Hong Kong. It also seems that the policies of the leading liberal democratic countries led by the United States and EU have not been effective in changing the course of the Chinese government on the issue of Hong Kong. Would the China Model, the communist version of the developmental state, overwhelm Hong Kong's civil society? Would such a model gain influence in other parts of the world through the Belt

and Road Initiative as well as through the vaccine diplomacy in the post-pandemic era? We might be standing at a crossroads of globalization and liberal agendas.

Global Challenges to State and Civil Society

We have now come to understand that globalization could not only empower civil society but also endanger it as any number of global challenges could destabilize the relationship between the state and society. Such challenges could provoke a series of crisis that help facilitate political transitions from authoritarianism to democracy, as occurred in the 1970s to 2000s, as well as weaken the foundations of liberal democracy and political freedom, which has often been observed since the 2010s.

The primary challenge presented by global instability, however, is economics since it is capable of directly affecting people's lives. In the early 2000s, the IMF defined globalization as "the process through which an increasingly free flow of ideas, people, goods, services, and capital leads to the integration of economies and societies." Globalization presents "a political choice in favor of international economic integration, which for the most part has gone hand-in-hand with the consolidation of democracy."[48] Is this definition still relevant in the 2020s, more than ten years after the global financial crisis since 2008? Does global integration worsen the economic inequalities that deepen social splits and endanger democracy? Does the movement of populations threaten states in such a way as to evoke anti-immigrant campaigns? And wouldn't such tendencies strengthen anti-globalization movements? The whole world was affected by persistent economic difficulties in the 2010s, and East Asia has not been immune.

Security risks represent the second global challenge. After the attacks of September 11th in 2001, the United States started the War on Terror with major operations in Afghanistan and Iraq with the assistance of many countries including Japan, South Korea, and ASEAN countries as the hub and spoke of the US alliance. The UN and other international institutions also devoted themselves to the work of peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction, but all those efforts seem to have failed to deliver peace and prosperity in both Afghanistan and Iraq after nearly two decades of war. Armed groups or individuals related to Al Qaida, the Islamic State, the Taliban, or other groups, as well as home-grown terrorists, remain a serious threat to citizens anywhere in the world, not least of all the United States. In Southeast Asia, countries with substantial Islamic populations such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines have been deeply affected by the War on Terror, which brought new tensions into their societies. China also has dealt with the issue of unrest in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region with its the Islamic majority, as well as similar issues regarding Islamic minorities in other parts of the country. As a by-product of the counterterrorism strategy and operation led by the United States:

East Asian countries, for the most part, have generally adjusted well to the new agenda of "securitization" of the state and society to contain both international and domestic terrorism, which has meaningfully transformed the milieu of civil society and political freedom.[49]

The third challenge is global migration. Wars and intrastate conflict, poverty, natural disasters, climate change, and other serious forces are pushing masses of people to look for homes in other states as immigrants, refugees, internally displaced persons, and others. Oppressive states and armed groups force minorities and dissidents to leave their homes, while fragile states are unable to deal with economic and political turmoil to such a degree as to cause their citizens to leave. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported, "There are 70.8 million people around the world who have been forcibly displaced—the highest level of displacement since World War II."[50] East Asia, as a fast-developing area, faces both sides of this issue as it represents both the global south and global north. The region sends a number of students and laborers to the United States, EU, Japan, Australia, Canada, and other major developed countries as well as within the region to affluent neighbors such as Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, oil-producing Middle Eastern countries, and others. At the same time, this region is receiving a significant volume of immigrants from developing countries in Asia and the rest of the world.[51] Each country has its own policy to control immigration, an issue which has been crystallized by the ongoing pandemic. Even as most countries face challenges with immigration, political instability and genocidal oppression trigger more acute and immediate immigration crises, such as the humanitarian crisis caused by the flight of the Rohingyas from Myanmar.

Additionally, various non-traditional issues such as global warming and climate change, natural disasters, and water shortages are also emerging. The crisis of human rights and human security is caused by the problems of poverty, hunger, fatal diseases, human trafficking and slavery, gender and minority discrimination, and other severe challenges. The tremendous efforts of international society, regional organizations, states, CSOs and NGOs, experts and concerned citizens notwithstanding, the challenges are colossal and disconcerting. As the crisis of COVID-19 pandemic illustrates, the question is how states and civil societies can effectively work together with other countries and societies as well as international institutions in time to address these multiple challenges. Further, the question might be whether East Asia, being at the forefront of the global economy, could lead such international and regional cooperation to overcome common challenges.

Anti-Globalization Movements Versus Activation of Civil Society

Two contrasting reactions were observed with regards to global insecurity in the 2010s and 2020s. One is the new popular initiatives to address imminent issues such as the agendas of civil society, to seek transnational cooperation,

and to emphasize future-oriented alternatives, like climate action movements in the late 2010s. Right-wing populist nationalist movements are the second type of reaction that denies the prospect of global dangers, demanding to revive traditional values such as state sovereignty, territorial control, national glory, and so on. The latter example is seen in the Brexiters' campaign in the United Kingdom in 2016 as well as the movements to support the Republican candidate, Donald Trump, during the US presidential elections in 2016 and 2020. Their relative opponents, the Remain Camp in the United Kingdom and the Democrats in the United States, were severely accused by the jingoistic voices for "deceiving" the nation as EU supporters or globalists.

Various protest movements occurred in the first half of the 2010s, initially triggered by the global financial crisis in 2008 which created the atmosphere for the activation of civil society and democratization. The Occupy Wall Street movement in New York City began as a movement of young educated citizens to protest against corporate behavior and government policy. Protests then appeared in the Middle East and North Africa, where citizens and youths began to stand against the autocratic regimes in the "Arab Spring" of 2011–2013. In East Asia, protests rose in Hong Kong, where the Umbrella Movement started. In Taiwan, the Sunflower Movement organized mass demonstrations and occupied the parliament for weeks in 2014, forcing the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) government to make concessions to the opposition regarding the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement with China.[52] The educated youths at the front of the movement criticized the government's neoliberal policies that allowed Taiwanese capital to be invested in mainland China. In 2008, candlelight vigils were organized in South Korea to stop the import of beef from the United States from fear of mad cow disease. In 2011, students protested against the university tuition policy and, in 2015, South Korean students and women raised their voices to criticize the Japanese government and society for their negligence of the issue of "comfort women," sexual slavery programs administered by the Imperial Japanese Army during the war.[53] Koreans again took to the streets to demand the resignation of President Park Geun-hye following corruption charges in 2017.

Even Japan, where civil society is generally calm and conservative, rode the wave of protest movements. The long-standing government of the LDP was replaced by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) in the general election of 2009, but the DPJ government could not maintain the support of voters after the crisis of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in 2011 and the accident of Fukushima nuclear power plant that followed. The LDP, led by Shinzo Abe, recaptured power in the general election in December 2012. Yet, this did not mean that public opinion had settled since the nationwide protests were mobilized against the government plans to continue operating nuclear power plants in 2014, and again there were mass movements to defend Japan's "peace" constitution against the introduction of the new security laws in 2015.[54]

In their analysis of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan as post-high-growth countries, David Chiavacci and Simona A. Grano point out that "East Asia's 'mature' democracies have witnessed their own share of protests and conflicts" resulting from the impact of globalization and the 2008 financial crisis.[55] The interactions between the state and civil society have been experiencing entanglement and contention in each country. In responding to the new citizens' movement, South Korea and Taiwan saw the ascension of popular governments led by progressive leaders: President Tsai Ing-wen in Taiwan in 2015 and President Moon Jae-in in South Korea in 2018.[56] In Southeast Asia, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand experienced lively popular protests in response to various issues. It is interesting to note that even communist governments could not completely erase the voices of the people in China and Vietnam, such as on issues of environment, natural disasters, and public health. The military junta of Myanmar paved the way for democratization in 2011, resulting in the establishment of a new government led by Aung San Suu Kyi after parliamentary elections in November 2015. Massive numbers of people, citizens, and youths, went to the streets and voted for the National League for Democracy.[57]

Revival of Exclusive Nationalism and Authoritarianism

In addition to the growing engagement of civil society, an opening was also created for the rise of aggressive nationalist movements and various types of "political backlash" in East Asia. There are some similarities with the Brexiters' nationalist movements in the United Kingdom and the ultra-nationalist Trump supporters in the United States.

Diplomatic relations between China, South Korea, and Japan have been constantly challenged by antagonistic nationalism in civil society. Although the three counties are closely interdependent in the field of trade and economy, northeast Asia is politically divided not only along the strategic boundaries of the Cold War with China lined up against South Korea and Japan but also along the boundaries of colonial history, with China and South Korea lining up against Japan. There are certainly legitimate reasons for the tensions, but during times of domestic political crisis or general elections, political leaders tend to rely on populistic nationalism to obtain the support of the majority or suppress the opposition. Diplomatic standstills and hate crimes would deter the involvement of ordinary citizens in debates on Japanese militarism, wars and colonialism, the island and immigrant issues among others.[58] In Japan, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, backed by right-wing supporters, promoted the nationalistic agendas of "Abenomics," revision of the "peace" constitution, and the hosting of the Tokyo Olympics in 2020.

The revival of aggressive nationalism and the resulting political backlash are also observed in Southeast Asia. The Philippines stands out in particular; the country enjoyed the most prosperous decade in the 2010s, securing

a GDP growth rate of 6.3%. Remittances from overseas Filipinos fueled domestic consumption, while the government kept a low interest rate and maintained spending for public works, health, education, and cash transfers for the poor.[59] Benigno Aquino III maintained a liberal progressive approach to his presidency from 2010 to 2016, but Rodrigo Duterte, the former mayor of Davao, dramatically won the presidential election in mid-2016. Like President R. T. Erdoğan in Turkey or Prime Minister Narendra Modi in India, he presented himself as a strong leader of the Filipino nation and declared "the drug war" to eliminate the criminals by force. With many suspects killed on the streets during the campaign, it was reported that he remained extremely popular with support rate of 91% in September 2020, even during the pandemic.[60]

The experience of the Philippines is not unique. The Civil Society Index of 2019 by CIVICUS suggests that the space for civil society in Asia and the world is clearly shrinking. State regulations and other measures have been introduced in many countries to curtail the activities of CSOs, while the intimidation of citizens through threats of violence has been frequently reported. Journalists and public intellectuals in particular have been targeted for oppression. Independent judiciaries as well as the rule of law have become impaired under the executive power of the state. V-Dem, a Swedish research organization writes, "The number of democratic countries and regions stood at 87 in 2019, while the number of nondemocratic countries and regions came to 92. It was the first time in 18 years that democratic countries and regions had been outnumbered by nondemocratic ones."[61]

Authoritarian Path or Regenerating Civil Society?

American retreat from Asia during the Presidency of Donald Trump and the powerful rise of China have shifted the power balance and political atmosphere in East Asia, which would be difficult for the new administration of President Joe Biden to undo immediately. The "Chinese Dream" has been pursued through the Belt and Road Initiative since the 2010s, together with the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the New Development Bank (BRICS Development Bank), and other new policies and institutions led by China. With the retreating influence of old donors such as the United States, Japan, and the EU, China has been expanding its influence into developing countries through the investment and infrastructure building. Sri Lanka, for example, has been relying on Chinese resources since the mid-2000s, not only during the civil war but also in the process of post-conflict reconstruction, transforming the course of domestic politics and international relations.[62]

Unlike the old donors such as the United States, Japan, and EU, Chinese strategies for investment and infrastructure building are not bound by the conditions of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD. As a result, it is becoming known that a sizable investment from China could

cause a serious debt trap of many developing countries, together with other problems such as forceful land acquisitions, environmental damages, labor disputes, human rights violation, political tensions and conflicts, interference in electoral process, corruption of politicians and bureaucracy, legal and constitutional challenges, and others. The Maldives and Seychelles, the island states in the Indian Ocean, shares the experience of Sri Lanka, while several countries in the region of Asia-Pacific, Africa, and even the EU face a similar crisis of debt trap. The policies for the "Chinese Dream" are changing the relationship between the state and society in many countries, beyond the landscape of economic development.

Will the authoritarian tendency be prevalent in the coming decade? Will the China Model or other nondemocratic ways of state control prevail? Will the brinkmanship of strongmen, backed by political backlashes, miraculously solve the problems of the world, while millions of people are suffering from marginalization and oppression? Or, will the United States and other affluent democracies be able to sustain the liberal international order? Will it be possible to empower civil society, enlarge democratic space and international cooperation? It is uncertain yet, but as the World Economic Forum has endorsed given the quick recovery of the Asian economy, especially that of East Asia, in the post-pandemic era, it would be a mission for *Asians,* or citizens in Asian countries, to find an alternative to regenerate the human community in times of global crises.

Notes

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2 The Rise of China and the Future of Democracy and Civil Society in East Asia

David Arase

Introduction

It is clear by now that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) under the leadership of Xi Jinping is working to replace the liberal international rules-based order with something of its own design—a so-called "community of shared destiny for humankind" (*renlei mingyun gongtongti* 人类命运共同体) built by the People's Republic of China (PRC) using the economic leverage, political influence, and military might of a newly risen great power. A post-liberal, post-western global order is the ultimate goal of Xi Jinping's signature "Chinese Dream" agenda. The military, state, economy, and people of the PRC work under CCP directives to build a PRC-centered model of global governance that celebrates the superiority of socialism with Chinese characteristics over the existing liberal international rules-based order. This Chinese Dream agenda is pursued everywhere starting with neighbors in East Asia. "East Asia" here includes Northeast Asia—encompassing China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan—as well as Southeast Asia; when only one subregion is discussed it will be identified.

The PRC now says it played no role in creating the liberal rules-based order, and that western imperialism forced it to accept and abide by this system of governance. Now, however, as a rising great power destined to replace the declining West at the apex of world order, the PRC under CCP leadership not only has every right to revise global governance, but it has an actual duty to do so in order to bring the advantages of socialism with Chinese characteristics—effective poverty alleviation and rapid development with assured political and social stability—to the rest of humanity. The key to unlocking this new era of PRC predominance is to respect the interests and dictates of the CCP leadership as it rectifies historical injustices and reshapes global norms and institutions to give full play to the benefits that flow from development under authoritarian auspices.

This chapter will discuss how this agenda poses a challenge to liberal governance at three levels: open multilateralism among equal sovereign states under the international rule of law; national governance where rulers respect democracy and human rights norms; and civil society where individuals and

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groups enjoy the freedom of thought, expression, and association as rights protected by the rule of law.

The Chinese Dream

When Xi Jinping assumed leadership of the CCP in 2012 he called for the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" in order to achieve a "Chinese Dream" that envisioned the PRC under CCP leadership presiding over center stage of world affairs by 2049. Xi has pointed to the unprecedented success of socialism with Chinese characteristics in raising the PRC from poverty to great power status, and he promised to bring these lessons of governance onto the global stage to create more widely shared peace, social stability, and economic development than the liberal international order has provided to date. The Chinese Dream propaganda narrative holds that the West is in irreversible decline, while the rise of the non-western developing world—now led by the PRC after almost all developing countries have signed up for Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) cooperation—represents the dawn of a new world historical in which PRC power guided by socialism with Chinese characteristics defines a new kind of global order.

To understand why civil society and democracy in Asia are challenged by this agenda some background is needed. When Xi took power, he highlighted a century of Chinese national humiliation that began with the Opium War (1839–1842) and ended with the CCP victories over Japanese imperialism in 1945 and over the Nationalist Party (KMT)—a puppet of US imperialism—in the Chinese Civil War (1946–1949). Ignoring how it was the KMT-ruled Republic of China that fought and defeated Japan in World War II (WW II), this CCP narrative goes on to say that the Chinese people were stood on their feet when Mao Zedong established the PRC in 1949. Eliding the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution debacles, the narrative continues with Deng Xiaoping's reform and opening up to the West to make China modernized and rich; and Xi Jinping vowed in his new era of leadership to rectify historical injustices and make China strong and proud again. He called for the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" (*zhonghua minzu weida fuxing*中华民族伟大复兴) to produce a new golden age to surpass the golden ages of ancient China. He pledged to achieve a Chinese Dream (*zhongguo meng*中国梦) of paramount PRC power and status, widely shared material abundance, and global peace by 2049, the centennial of the CCP's victory over the KMT. Along the way, Xi pledged to rectify historical injustices and humiliations inflicted by western imperialism and lead the Chinese people to new heights of abundance, status, power, and privilege. This message was a popular hit, and he was rewarded at the 2018 National People's Congress when the ten-year presidential term limit was abolished (his was supposed to end in 2022), allowing Xi to supervise the Chinese Dream agenda for the rest of his natural life.

From 2012 Xi began radical institutional reforms and set benchmark targets in all policy spheres to attain the overarching goal of unmatched superpower capabilities by 2049. He put the world on notice that the PRC would adhere to a "principled bottom line" that would never sacrifice CCP core interests (i.e., regime security, state sovereignty, and continuing economic growth and development broadly understood) for the sake of peace. The main near-term goal was to achieve moderate prosperity (i.e., the elimination of absolute domestic poverty) by 2021, the centenary of the founding of the CCP. He also set a 2035 mid-term benchmark—a modern socialist governance with high living standards for all, and more international power and status than the US.[1]

The 2049 Chinese Dream end goal was to usher in a new post-western world historical era dominated by the PRC under socialism with Chinese characteristics. To bring the coming epic struggle to victory, the CCP would reform all aspects of party, military, state, and societal administration; wrest control of the commanding heights of the global order from the US-led western allies; use BRI to draw developing countries into the PRC's economic orbit to form a "community of shared human destiny" under PRC control safeguarded by an unmatched People's Liberation Army (PLA). The whole enterprise would be guided by "Xi Jinping's thought on socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era" (*Xi Jinping xin shidai zhongguo tese shehuizhuyi sixiang* 习近平新時代中国特色社会主义思想), which is a revised and updated version of Chinese socialism inherited from the Mao and Deng eras.[2] Xi Jinping's thought has abandoned the idea of leading a worldwide peasant and worker revolution against western imperialism, as well as the "hide intentions and bide time" (taoguang yanghui韬光养) posture of the Deng Xiaoping era to openly "strive for achievement" (*fenfa zuowei* 奋发作为).[3] However, the goal is still the victory of socialism over western capitalism attained by placing the PRC atop a global order governed by socialism with Chinese characteristics.

This agenda is supported by a historical narrative of inevitable western decline and the unstoppable rise of the PRC supported by the Global South. The Chinese Dream propaganda/historical narrative and its constituent policy agendas (e.g., the Belt and Road, the community of shared human fate, global military predominance, Made in China 2025, the establishment of the PRC as the network architect and operator of global infrastructure and digital connectivity, etc.) mobilize vast PRC human and material resources in every sphere of human activity to make this dream come true. Rather than wars of conquest, the CCP strategy is to rely on peaceful political struggle using mainly economic, political, information, and psychological warfare techniques carried out by party-state actors in global, regional, and bilateral discursive spaces. The goal of this "non-contact warfare" is to disrupt the status quo and teach obedience to PRC dictates without having to fight a full-contact kinetic war against the US or another major power. Nevertheless, this strategy requires a massive military modernization to

upend the balance of power and give the PRC decisive diplomatic and hard power leverage in all psychological and discursive settings.

As described later, party-state actors carry this political struggle into overseas international and national venues in order to bend policy discourse toward deference for the PRC and its interests. The easiest and most effective technique is to enlist like-minded autocracies beholden to the PRC for this purpose. Autocrats that overthrow democracy or egregiously violate human rights are offered PRC assistance, protection, and partnership to shield them from international ostracism and sanctions, which wins their cooperation and support for PRC agendas, including the community of shared destiny project that put authoritarian norms at the basis of global governance. Southeast Asian cases in point would be Cambodia, Laos, post-2014 coup Thailand, and Myanmar. The latter case is detailed below to show how the PRC assists in the suppression of civilian protesters, thwarts human rights sanctions, and ensures regime consolidation and international recognition. In return, the Myanmar junta gives the PRC trade and investment concessions, permits unpopular PRC infrastructure projects, and supports PRC governance agendas. Liberal norms and institutions are undermined, but PRC power and status is strengthened as success in Myanmar advances its regional and international governance agendas.

How a Community of Shared Destiny Supports the CCP Revisionist Governance Agenda

The PRC's community of shared human destiny is shaping up to be a collection of flawed democracies and authoritarian regimes. Many fail to qualify for western aid or may even face western economic sanctions for scandalous governance practices and therefore become irretrievably dependent on economic and political benefits that the PRC gives without western-style good governance conditionality in exchange for return favors. Consequently, such regimes populate the core of the community of shared destiny.[4]

However, the circle of PRC political influence based on BRI cooperation, for example, extends well beyond present and former pariah regimes such as North Korea, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Zimbabwe. It is noteworthy that all 53 Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries attending the PRC-sponsored Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2018 expressed support for the PRC's "one China principle" regarding the Taiwan question. In 2019, 22 African countries signed a letter to the UN Human Rights Council supporting the PRC's policies in Xinjiang, and 25 signed a 2020 letter to the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) endorsing the PRC's National Security Law in Hong Kong.[5] As a region, SSA most closely follows PRC voting behavior at the UN General Assembly,[6] supplying a significant bloc of votes to support PRC efforts to reshape governance norms in the UN and its specialized agencies.[7] The quid pro quo is the significant flow of PRC economic and political favors to supporters of the PRC international governance agenda.

In Asia, the regional countries' positions are more diverse, largely because many have serious historical and geopolitical conflicts with their PRC neighbor. Nevertheless, economic dependence remains a potent inducement to support, or at least tacitly accept questionable PRC governance agendas. For example, Cambodia, Laos, North Korea, Myanmar, and the Philippines all signed the 2019 letter supporting PRC policies toward the Uighurs in Xinjiang. Only rich democratic Japan signed a letter condemning those policies. Countries like Malaysia and Indonesia—democratic Muslim-majority societies—signed neither the supporting letter nor the opposing letter, abstaining from the latter perhaps because they could ill-afford to anger their largest trading partner.[8] Similar reservation registered over the controversial Hong Kong National Security Law of 2020, and in the response to Germany's letter of concern to the UNHRC, signed by 39 countries. The only Asian signatory was Japan. In rebuttal, Pakistan introduced a letter of support for the PRC that was signed by Cambodia, the PRC, Laos, Myanmar, North Korea, and the Philippines.[9] Left silent were South Korea, Taiwan (a UN non-member), Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam—some of which had strong popular support for Hong Kong civil society demands for continued local autonomy under the One Country-Two Systems formula.

These cases illustrate the complementary roles of the BRI and the community of shared destiny agendas in the larger Chinese Dream project. BRI cultivates the economic dependence, political connections, and social relationships that the PRC party-state uses to organize BRI members into a PRC-led community of shared human destiny. In this alternative template of global order, regimes that violate liberal democracy, human rights, and the rule of law norms suffer no opprobrium and remain in favor so long as they follow PRC leadership. This agenda works against the cause of democracy and civil society in Asia.

The Extended Third Wave of Democratization in East Asia

In the earlier years, liberal democracy and civil society in Asia did make notable advances in the Philippines (1986), Taiwan (1987), South Korea (1988), Myanmar (1988–1990), Thailand (1992), Cambodia (1993), Indonesia (1999), and Myanmar (2010–2012). Most of these advances occurred in the extended era of "Third Wave" of democratization. As noted by Samuel Huntington, democracy, which is meant to keep government accountable to the freely expressed will of the people, is a child of the modern world. After its birth in the American Revolution, it proliferated across the world in three waves. The first wave (1820–1926) produced 29 democracies, but the rise of fascism caused a reverse wave that reduced democracies to only 12 during WW II. Allied victory in 1945 led to a second wave of democratization that produced 36 democracies by 1962, before the Cold War engendered a second reverse wave, reducing democracies to 30 by 1975. In Huntington's third wave (1975–1990),

with 30-some countries, mostly in the non-communist world (attributed to modernization), transitioning from authoritarianism, the number of democracies grew to approximately 60. These transitions were mostly initiated by civil society protests, demonstrations, and movements that negotiated with autocratic regimes to achieve peaceful transitions to democracy through elections. This third wave pattern was extended by the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union after 1989, which led to early and rapid democratic transitions (1989–1992). This was followed by a period of so-called "color revolutions" (2000–2007) and the "Arab Spring" (2011–2012. According to the V-Dem Annual Democracy Report (2019), the number of liberal and electoral democracies has steadily climbed from the start of the third wave to the present, where it has leveled off. In 1980 there were 41 democracies vs 114 autocracies (both electoral and closed); in 2001 there were 88 democracies and 88 autocracies; and in 2018 there were 99 democracies vs. 80 autocracies.

In this extended third wave period, the process of democratic transition in Asia even reached the stage of consolidated liberal democracy in Taiwan, South Korea, and Mongolia, but unlike Europe, East Asia did not see the collapse of communist regimes.[10] Despite efforts by the advanced democratic western powers to engage and socialize these regimes to democracy and human rights norms, little progress was made. Unlike their European counterparts, Asian communist regimes did not tolerate popular criticism or demands for political liberalization, and used overwhelming military and police power to quash any threat to communist party authority, as epitomized by events at Tiananmen Square in 1989. For this reason, post-Cold War western cooperation that promoted democracy and human rights never made great strides in these countries, but this was overlooked as long as western trade and investment were earning good profit and hope for political change remained alive. Except for North Korea, Asian communist regimes took the offer of western engagement in order to benefit from trade and foreign investment. They permitted western officials, aid agencies, human rights-related NGOs, and private foundations to engage with the people under strictly supervised conditions. This contact sustained the liberal west's hope to promote political liberalization through economic engagement.[11] The ruling Asian communist parties in Vietnam, Laos, and the PRC have remained in power precisely because they systematically blocked the development of democracy and civil society while they industrialized. Having now the wherewithal to challenge the US and its western allies for control over the future direction of international governance, the CCP promotes the reversal of Third Wave democratization and the adoption of its own authoritarian vision of governance with some success so far.

A Democracy Recession in East Asia?

Today we see erosion in the quality of democracy in every region and at every income level. Freedom House notes that in 2020 some 45 more democracies

have retreated than advanced in key measures of democratic governance.[12] In Asia we also see actual democratic reversals.[13] For example, in 2014 the Thai military overthrew an "electoral democracy" (a political system that features regular constitutionally mandated popular elections without full freedom of speech, political association, and other relevant rights protections for citizens). The Thai coup leader then drafted a new constitution with an electoral process that put him in power, i.e., it created an "electoral autocracy" where elections are rigged by the state to maintain an autocratic regime in power.

In Cambodia under Hun Sen, the national court-ordered dissolution of the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party before parliamentary elections were held in 2017 in order to maintain Hun Sen in power. In Hong Kong (2014-present) challenge to Hong Kong electoral democracy under One Country-Two Systems began with targeting of democracy and rule of law advocates for violating PRC laws that criminalize such behavior. In Myanmar this year a military coup (discussed in detail below) reversed a National League for Democracy party electoral victory to return Myanmar to the days of military dictatorship that preceded the 2008 Constitution. In each case, the PRC actively helped these reversals in order to form a PRC alliance of autocracies and advance its revisionist international governance agenda.

There are endogenous national factors such as historical and cultural experience as well as path dependency in institutional development that help to explain the more tenuous development of democracy in Asia. Fukuyama suggests that Asian historical development and situational imperatives caused the emergence of a strong state before the formation of a national civil society,[14] which makes it harder to evolve democratically accountable governance. Cheng and Chu note that of 18 Asian self-governing polities (including Mongolia, Taiwan, and Hong Kong), only nine experienced third wave democratization advances.[15] The other nine remained basically unchanged as electoral autocracies or closed autocracies (i.e., unelected dictatorships). Of the nine democratization advances, only five were called functioning (liberal) democracies (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Mongolia, and Indonesia). The remaining four (the Philippines, Cambodia, Thailand, and Myanmar) were considered fragile, unconsolidated democracies subject to periodic setbacks. So, only five of 18 Asian polities were functioning democracies compared to the global average of six functioning democracies out of every ten countries.

In addition to these endogenous Asian national and regional factors, two global factors may also help to explain today's democratic recession. One is that, after the 2008 global financial crisis, slower GDP growth, ballooning debt, chronic fiscal austerity, growing income inequality, diminished social protection, rising social tensions, rising protectionism, and sharpening geopolitical conflict, and the rise of identity politics everywhere work to intensify distributional conflict at local, national and international levels.

The COVID-19 pandemic only intensified resort to authoritarian methods to maintain government functions and domestic order, making democracy and civil society norms more difficult than ever to sustain.

The other factor is the end of a unipolar structure created by post-Cold War US global predominance. Today is a transitional period of multi-polar or poly-centric international structure that gives autocratic regional powers such as Russia, Iran, Venezuela, and the PRC an opportunity to establish a regional sphere of influence governed by their respective national interests and authoritarian norms at the expense of the global liberal rules-based order. PRC leadership in reversing Third Wave advances in democracy and civil society may thus be seen as part of a global restructuring of power relations.

Civil Society in Asia

Asia's post-WW II, post-colonial nation-building effort gave the task of constructing modern bureaucratic state administration to narrowly based elites who, in the absence of a cohesive, educated civil society able to advocate national policy agendas and demand democratic accountability, were able to monopolize state power. In some cases, the survival of traditional forms of authority, whether monarchical or religious, worked against secular, rational notions of individual and civil rights. In other cases, the seizure of state power by communist parties (North Korea, the PRC, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia 1975–1979) led to the total suppression of traditional and liberal conceptions of society and politics.

Civil society is an institution that guarantees individual and civil rights and enables democratic self-governance under the rule of law. To capture what local, national, and transnational civil society actors do to defend and extend democracy and individual rights, a "third sector" definition of civil society focuses on private citizens who voluntarily organize to promote shared values and interests. Third sector organizations and movements are not created by governments or political parties, organized religions, or business entrepreneurs.[16] However, in Asia and elsewhere, cultural and religious traditionalists, post-colonial theorists, ethno-nationalists, and Marxist-Leninist ideologists will attack liberal secular third sector civil society and "western" agents promoting "non-Asian," "western," "racist," or "colonialist" agendas. It is worth noting, however, that Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea, who are "Asian" and "anti-imperialist," actively defend liberal norms and values, and promote third sector cooperation and capacity building. The basic point is that third sector civil society actors in Asia face entrenched elites that advocate illiberal Marxist-Leninist, religious, ethno-chauvinist, monarchist, and militarist approaches to rule. They need international support to resist unlawful suppression and punishment from hostile local elites, and it is precisely such international democracy promotion that threatens the CCP system of governance and its Chinese Dream ambitions.

How Democracy and Civil Society Ideals Pose an Existential Threat to the CCP

In 2013, the CCP leadership issued Document 9, an ideological directive to all high-level cadres.[17] It called on them to conduct "intense struggle" against seven liberal concepts (i.e., constitutionalism, universal values, civil society, free markets, press freedom, historical nihilism (i.e., anything other than the CCP's reading of history), and the idea that the PRC has a state *capitalist* economy). These ideas were said to represent "false ideological trends, positions, and activities" that must be actively stamped out because they can undermine the ideological foundation of perpetual rule by an unelected CCP, the legitimacy of the PRC dictatorship, and popular support for Chinese socialism. The 2018 version of the Constitution of the PRC in its preamble states that the PRC is "socialist state governed by a people's democratic dictatorship." It goes on to say that "leadership by the Communist Party of China is the defining feature of socialism with Chinese characteristics…" and that "It is prohibited for any organization or individual to damage the socialist system."[18]

In a world dominated by liberal norms, the suppression of civil society in the PRC discredits the regime and disqualifies it from international leadership. The CCP feels wronged by this situation because the *raison d'être* of the "people's democratic dictatorship" is to lead "the people" or "the masses," who lack sufficient wisdom to know their own best interests and cannot be trusted with autonomous political agency. Only the CCP is equipped to determine what is best for the people and what they must strive for. As Rousseau wrote in *On the Social Contract*, "whoever refuses to obey the *general will,* will be forced to do so by the entire body. This merely means that he will be forced to be free." That is, social progress and human freedom is not found in the pursuit of private interests and individual liberty but in individual conformity with the collective will guided by the CCP. With this kind of world view, the CCP lacks respect for civil society and will seek to instruct and control it.

The CCP has had success in molding the thinking of the people and winning its support by successfully raising the PRC to unprecedented global power and influence. As a great power that seeks to revise international governance norms, the CCP now targets civil society abroad to remove its ability to (wrong-headedly) obstruct the Chinese Dream. Penetration of civil society overseas by the party-state apparatus and its undisclosed agents of influence is eased by the open and inclusive nature of open liberal societies wherein diversity is valued, equal treatment is a right, and accommodation of foreign interests is a norm.

International Governance under Socialism with Chinese Characteristics

The UN Charter is one of several frameworks of global governance conventions that commit signatories to respect democracy and human rights

principles and norms. Such respect is absent from the people's democratic dictatorship under the exclusive leadership of an unelected CCP leadership. Well-known examples include June 4, 1989 events at Tiananmen Square; mass incarceration and re-education of Uyghurs in Xinjiang; and the criminalization of previously lawful Hong Kong democracy and civil society behavior by the PRC's enactment of the 2020 National Security Law, and thousands of small scale examples of human rights abuses that occur unrecorded in the PRC every year. Such PRC governance practices and the resulting international opprobrium threaten CCP legitimacy and PRC pretensions to global leadership because they call attention to the fact that the CCP maintains power precisely because the PRC repudiates the normative basis of the existing system of global governance, namely, sovereign state power dedicated to the protection of democracy and human rights under the impartial rule of law.

To remove this impediment to the Chinese Dream project, the PRC touts Chinese socialism's ability to eliminate poverty and accelerate economic development while maintaining political and social stability using autocratic means that are more effective than liberal governance norms in delivering these achievements. Chinese socialism is thus offered as a better standard of best practice in global governance. As it works to implant this new political orthodoxy in global governance discourse in step-by-step fashion, the party-state uses its overseas social, cultural, business, and professional relations to recast the perceptions, cognition, and behavior of foreign actors. As discussed in more detail below, *huayuquan* (话语权),[19] or discursive power backed by sharp power influence techniques are used to teach acceptable answers to all questions concerning PRC practices and ambitions. Liberal criticism of the PRC and other autocratic regimes is dismissed as unfair and undemocratic "ideological prejudice."[20]

"New era" Xi *Jinping's Thought*

The achievements of "Xi Jinping's thought on socialism with Chinese characteristics in a new era" are performative and conceptual. The performative aspects feature unprecedented success in eliminating mass poverty, raising GDP, and modernizing agriculture, industry, science and technology, and the military. The cumulative conceptual achievements build on Mao Zedong's success in planting the thought of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin in Chinese soil and on Deng Xiaoping's success in rectifying the defects of the socialist command economy by opening up to foreign trade and capital and by adapting market and private enterprise institutions to the needs of modernization, all within the framework of a party-state managed society and economy. This led to a phenomenally successful modernization in agriculture, industry, science & technology, and military, while remaining under absolute CCP power and authority. Chinese socialism survived the collapse of Soviet and European communism and it gained membership in the global

liberal trade order without having to provide trade partners with equal property protections and market access. Today's propaganda narrative all but states that under Xi Jinping the party-state has abandoned Deng's "hide and bide" posture to quickly claim its rightful place at the head of global order and world affairs, while the West sinks into a mire of domestic and external contradictions.

With respect to world revolution, Xi's thought has abandoned the old Stalinist and Maoist ideas of peasant and working-class-driven revolution, relying instead on the mobilization of the support of a global united front of "have-not" developing countries (community of common destiny members that need not be communist) to overturn the system of rules-based global governance established by the advanced capitalist West using political or non-kinetic warfare techniques. The economic resources powering this agenda are generated by a Chinese-style socialist economy that puts market mechanisms, private entrepreneurship, and PRC integration into a capitalist global economy within an overall framework of firm CCP control. Thus, in this new era of Chinese socialism, the CCP is confident and remains dedicated to the original dream of socialism—a world revolution that ushers in a new era of socialism for humanity. Only this time, it will be a state-led and top-down process—guaranteed by the overwhelming power and influence of the PRC guided by Xi Jinping's thought on socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era.

In line with this meta-narrative, the developing world is told that PRC governance (unencumbered by liberal western conditionality) will bring peace, regime security, and a rising standard of living. Contending that western free trade, liberal democracy, civil rights, and rule of law has put developing countries at a disadvantage, the PRC points to its success as a developmental dictatorship as proof of the superiority of its governance model. In his keynote address at the 2021World Political Parties Summit, attended by representatives of over 900 parties from around the world, Xi Jinping said:

> "History and practice have proven and will continue to prove that [socialism with Chinese characteristics] is not only the correct path that works, but also the sure path that pays off… All efforts of individual countries to independently explore the path to modernisation in light of their specific national conditions are worthy of respect. The CPC is willing to share with political parties of all countries modernisation experience to enrich each other's toolbox to modernization…"[21]

At the same time, the PRC advocates open globalization and commitment to international institutions in its propaganda pitch toward advanced democratic countries to induce them to stay open to PRC trade, investment, and science and technology cooperation; avoid "China threat" thinking, speech, and "containment" policies while continuing to respect the PRC's right to maintain its own distinctive form of governance.

Using Political Warfare to Penetrate and Manipulate Liberal Discourse

Since the birth of the communist party in 1921, the CCP has depended on covert agitation and propaganda techniques to spread its influence and direct political operations to gain popular support, enlist allies, isolate enemies, and capture state power. Today, the CCP uses state- and party-affiliated cultural, educational, research, trade, investment, industrial, and professional entities to establish ties with private, and civil society counterparts in overseas target societies. Though party-state actors pursue seemingly mundane purposes abroad, the hidden sharp power aim of the party-state is to use these relationships opportunistically to shape civil society thinking, speech, and behavior regarding the PRC and its interests. The CCP's United Front Work Department, the International Department, and the Propaganda Department use state ministries, agencies, and enterprises as well as party- and state-affiliated academic, cultural, media, business, and professional associations to carry out their respective mandates. Individual CCP members that number over 90 million are tasked to monitor the fidelity of state agencies, affiliated enterprises, professional organizations, and socio-cultural associations to party directives. Party members can be asked to carry out centrally approved United Front, International Department, and Propaganda Department directives and give feedback regarding propaganda messaging (Propaganda Department), political engagement with overseas political leaders (International Department), and the cultivation of reliable local collaborators (United Front Department).

PRC sharp power and discursive power help to make up for soft power deficits vis-à-vis the US and its allies. Soft power is about "getting others to want what you want."[22] It is generated by the spontaneous cultural achievements of a free civil society that inspire international respect and emulation. In contrast, sharp power is an authoritarian state's use of its material and human resources to create proxy advocates in international and national discourses to advance the interests of the state sponsor. The method is to create social relationships in which business and professional opportunities, flattery, coercion, bribery, and blackmail may be used to recruit a new witting or unwitting proxy.[23] Such proxies may have prominent roles in media, industry, and finance; educational and cultural exchange activities (e.g., Confucius Institutes and Chinese Scholar and Student Associations); academic and research cooperation; social media; overseas ethnic Chinese communities;[24] and local politics. Even hallowed institutions such as Cambridge University are not immune to such influence operations.[25] The aim is to empower friendly voices and silence critics so that thought, speech, and behavior within a targeted institution will align with approved party-state narratives and current interests.

Other political warfare techniques include the "three warfares" (psychological, legal, and information warfare), which will use coercive

diplomacy, threats of force, legal maneuvers, propaganda narratives, and fake news and social media content to place cognitive, legal, and political constraints on countries resisting PRC aims and interests.[26] Since the start of the Xi era, the idea of international discourse power (*huayuquan* 话语权) has been developed to do battle with the soft power and institutional power of the liberal West.[27] The aim is to propagate a global narrative that disciplines what may be thought, said, and done regarding the PRC. Discourse power not only marginalizes liberal opprobrium, but it also incites uniform praise for PRC governance practices. An early articulation of this agenda says the following:

> By means of the *right to speak* (italics added), the commanding heights of public opinion can be occupied to guide public opinion in a direction that is beneficial to oneself by setting (designing) the topic of discussion, thereby shaping a good national image and occupying a favorable position in international competition.[28]

The Limits of Sharp Power in Asian and the Western Democracies

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute did a study of PRC coercive diplomacy and concluded that it typically involves threats and sanctions in trade, investment, travel, tourism, consumer boycotts, and diplomatic contacts as well as arbitrary arrest, detention, and execution of citizens of the offending state. It counted 152 such cases since 2010 targeting 27 separate countries and the EU, with a sharp increase of frequency after 2018.[29] According to a co-author of the study, though the mix of punishments is tailored to opportunities and the vulnerabilities of the target, the same pattern is followed in almost every case. "It starts off with a state-issued threat and if the activity isn't ceased by the target state, then trade restrictions are put in place, or investment restrictions or tourism restrictions, and it essentially keeps going until the target state rectifies its behaviour."[30] The question, then, is whether PRC overt and covert political warfare against civil society in Asian and western democracies have achieved their intended results.

Asian Civil Society

Compared to western democracies, Asian democracies are fewer in number, lack solidarity, and viscerally feel the strong pull of PRC economic gravity and geopolitical influence. They tend to avoid overt criticism of PRC domestic (e.g., Xinjiang, Tibet, and Hong Kong governance) and international governance practices (e.g., the South China Sea jurisdictional boundaries and maritime security governance or Mekong River water resource management) because of the serious damage that retaliatory PRC punishments for such "disrespect" can cause to their economic interests and sovereign

rights. Aside from Japan, which maintains political solidarity with its G-7 allies, liberal and procedural Asian democracies can be expected to tip-toe around political issues that could raise PRC ire as far as possible. And so, with some notable sanctions imposed on Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, the PRC struggle against the Asian democracies tends to stay below the level of overt coercive diplomacy.

The effects on Hong Kong and Taiwanese civil society need separate treatment because the PRC considers these heretofore democratic polities to be subject to sovereign party-state authority. Hong Kong residents, however, have demanded preservation of the one-country-two systems agreement and have resisted step-by-step PRC efforts to harmonize local governance with the mainland that began with a proposed security law in 2003. Local popular resistance gained stridency as local civil rights were progressively eroded. Taiwan wants the peaceful cross-strait relationship (in which it continues self-governance in all matters including foreign and defense policy) maintained indefinitely or until a peaceful, non-coercive, and voluntary change of status can be negotiated.

These rejections of CCP governance have caused intolerable embarrassment that has led to more overt and coercive PRC efforts to bring these recalcitrant polities under direct administrative control. An edited collection by Fong, Wu, and Nathan details how PRC entities penetrated both Hong Kong and Taiwanese civil societies to set up networks of social, religious, political, media, and business organizations that worked to influence elections and bring local social, cultural, and political discourse in line with CCP dictates.[31] Despite considerable organizational and material efforts, these covert influence operations failed to bring about the peaceful, voluntary Hong Kong and Taiwanese submission to PRC rule. Interminable delay could not be tolerated in view of Xi Jinping's timeline for fulfillment of the Chinese Dream. To bring the fate of these Asian democracies to an acceptable and timely conclusion, the PRC's covert political struggle to tame civil society was escalated to the overt threat and use of force against Taiwanese and Hong Kong citizenry. This has precipitated a crisis in relations with the community of democratic nations, and it causes serious concern among other nations that simply want the world's would-be guardian of global order to remain peaceful and law-abiding.

Democratic Consolidation and the "Milk Tea Alliance"

Research on generational attitudes toward democracy and civic involvement using Asiabarometer surveys shows that after a democratic transition, each successive generation living under democratic arrangements registers a stronger commitment to democratic values, and that as each generational cohort grows older pro-democracy attitudes formed during youth become marginally more favorable. For Asia, one implication is that countries that transitioned to democracy during the Third Wave have better prospects

for sustaining democracy the longer democratic norms and institutions have been sustained. Another is that youth maturing into politically active adulthood under democratic norms constitute an endogenous demographic factor that may, under the right circumstances, help to further consolidate democracy even in the face of adverse developments. Decade-old Asiabarometer data that documented this demographic factor, however, do not capture how the recent boom in internet and social media penetration in Asia among the Generation Z cohort may have catalyzed youthful transnational propagation of pro-democracy attitudes and behaviors.

Social media such as Twitter and Facebook permit the creation of an Asian youth cohort of cyber civil society activists, many of whom have sophisticated understanding of social media, digital technologies, and computer coding. They are able to detect and expose state-sponsored information warfare conducted via fake news and social media accounts. Noteworthy in this regard is the online solidarity between Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thai, and Myanmar online activists dubbed the "milk tea alliance." Taiwanese student activist mobilization against efforts by the ruling KMT to pass and enact an unpopular Taiwan-PRC bilateral free trade agreement laid the groundwork for sophisticated cyber activism. They used social media to organize a three-week occupation of the national legislature that galvanized support by the majority of the island's population and inspired a broad-based Sunflower Movement against further political and economic integration with the PRC (Ho 2018). The student-led movement stood for protection of Taiwan's democracy and civil freedoms, and a Taiwanese identity separate from the PRC. The appeal of this message caused even young KMT supporters to defect and set the stage for the landslide presidential and legislative election victory by the anti-unification Democratic People's Party (DPP) in January 2016.

These events in Taiwan inspired the spontaneous 2014 Occupy Central demonstration and the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong.[32] The impetus was a PRC-proposed electoral reform law requiring those seeking election as Hong Kong's chief executive to go through a selection process that allowed only CCP loyalists to pass. Under the original "one country-two systems" formula, established by the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1997, both state parties had agreed that, for a period of 50 years, the Hong Kong Special Autonomous Region would have an independent international legal personality and its own constitutionally based governance with separate citizenship, flag, British common law justice system, independent ability to contract with other states, independent WTO (World Trade Organization) jurisdiction, and self-administered border controls leaving only security and foreign policy questions to Beijing. Therefore, a CCP decision to integrate Hong Kong with the mainland PRC well before 2047 aroused popular fear and indignation. Images of umbrella-holding demonstrators standing their ground against vigorous police efforts to disperse them with batons and tear gas stimulated popular support rallies in 64 cities around the world.[33]

Five years after Occupy Central, another wave of mass protest was triggered by a criminal extradition law proposed by Hong Kong's Chief Executive Carrie Cheng Yuet-ngor Lam at Beijing's behest.[34] The law would compel Hong Kong to arrest and extradite Hong Kong democracy and civil rights advocates to mainland courts for violating PRC criminal laws. Peaceful protests began in March 2019 and reached a million or more participants by early summer. In July, youthful protesters occupied the Hong Kong legislature, and confrontations between youthful demonstrators and police tasked to disperse and arrest them became violent. As police began targeting leaders for arrest, demonstrators adopted a "be water" motto and used the securely encrypted Telegram app to organize "flash mob" style demonstrations.[35] In September 2019, the government withdrew the bill, but Beijing became determined to break the will of Hong Kong's pro-democracy civil society. Taking orders from Beijing, Carrie Lam suspended the scheduled 2020 legislative elections that pro-democracy candidates could have won under existing law, and began drafting draconian police legislation. In 2020 protests resumed, this time against the impending National Security Law that would make demands for democracy and criticism of government authorities a political crime.

The spirit of Hong Kong protestors inspired Thai pro-democracy student activists who began campus demonstrations in February 2020 after the Supreme Court ordered the dissolution of the Future Forward Party (FFP).[36] This start-up party had unexpected electoral success in 2019 opposing the military-dominated constitutional order established by a military junta that had overthrown Thai democracy in 2014. The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted student demonstrations but these restarted in late summer. Reform demands went beyond elections to include curbs on the power and privilege of the Thai monarchy. Youthful demonstrators adopted the three-finger salute popularized by the Hunger Games novels and movies to symbolize resistance to oppressive elite rule.[37] They borrowed Sunflower, Umbrella, and Be Water movement techniques to avoid state suppression to maintain their movement. Similarly, in Myanmar, local student activists drew from the experiences of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Thailand to launch a vigorous civil protest movement in league with established civic and political associations after the February 2021 military coup.

Pro-democracy student activists from these four countries have adopted milk tea as a symbol of solidarity in the struggle against authoritarian regimes.[38] Milk tea is a sweet tea drink popular among East Asia's youth. Its political meaning derives from a transnational social media "milk-tea alliance" spontaneously formed among young Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Thai Twitter users in 2020 to counter hyper-nationalistic "little pink" Chinese internet trolls that heaped abuse on Thai TV star Vachirawit "Bright" Chivaaree after he posted a photo on Twitter of Hong Kong that referred to it as a "country." Little pink abuse also targeted his nationality, his girlfriend, and the Thai monarchy. This sparked a flame war between Chinese

little pinks and Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Thai social media users who became a self-designated "milk tea alliance" against hyper nationalist Chinese social media trolls who poured scorn on the open societies of neighboring free civil societies. The milk tea designation has morphed to denote mutual encouragement in defending free expression and personal freedoms.

Targeting Western Civil Society

Unlike Asian democracies that have mostly taken a low-cost passive resistance strategy against the PRC's aggressive efforts to revise regional governance and silence criticism, western democracies have not been as vulnerable to PRC economic, political, and military coercion. Cases in point include Australia's call for an independent international inquiry into the causes of the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, and the EU's targeted sanctions against four CCP officials and the public security bureau of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps for their roles in implementing draconian policies toward the Muslim Uyghur population in Xinjiang. Desirous of favorable trade and China's markets, they are not, however, immune to PRC threats.

Assisting the Overthrow of Democracy and the Suppression of Civil Society: The Case of Myanmar

If the PRC has difficulty convincing freedom-loving peoples in Asia and the West to buy into the Chinese Dream, it does have success in winning the allegiance of autocratic regimes that face western sanctions and domestic unrest due to human rights abuses. The PRC has positioned itself to enable regimes that engage in egregiously oppressive and corrupt domestic governance practices to receive its aid and support. Such regimes are then willing to return the favor by, for example, granting the PRC valuable land development and investment concessions, giving it political support and security cooperation, and suppressing critical voices The PRC defends its assistance to pariah regimes by arguing that neither international forums nor state and non-state actors have legal and political standing to sanction the sovereign actions of a state.[39] This fallacious argument ignores the fact that criticism and international sanctions may be based on treaties and conventions that states in question have signed and ratified. It brushes aside the question whether the government in question legitimately wields state authority. It also ignores the more fundamental fact that state sovereignty is the invention of the same legal system that constructs international treaties that bind contracting state parties to honor their provisions or suffer the lawful consequences. It conveniently overlooks the solemn purpose of human rights conventions and rejects the idea that international law binds states to legal commitments undertaken as sovereign entities, and that respect for the international rule of law is the basis for a state's recognized right to sovereignty.

By thus employing the "three warfares" stratagem, the PRC is able to recruit pariah regimes as supporters in the struggle against the liberal rules-based order, promote the reversal of Third Wave democratization, and normalize governance that lacks "a decent respect to the opinions of [human]kind". These regimes can then be relied upon to help silence anti-China messaging.[40]

Beijing's relationship with the military junta in Myanmar is illustrative of the PRC's cooptive approaches and the symbiosis that it cultivates with autocratic regimes. It also illuminates the ways in which ASEAN member states are also implicated in the undermining of democratizing trends.

The Case of Myanmar

On February 1, 2021, the Tatmadaw, the Myanmar army, launched a coup, canceled an overwhelming electoral victory of the National League of Democracy (NLD), suspended the Constitution, and arrested NLD leaders including Aung San Suu Kyi. Without any popular mandate, coup leaders declared themselves Myanmar's new governing state authority. In the following weeks and months, the junta headed by army chief Min Aung Hlaing resorted to bloodshed to quell civic protests and ethnic resistance to military rule in violation of the international legal obligations of the UN Charter and human rights-related treaties of which Myanmar is a signatory. The next day, the United Kingdom and the EU proposed a UN Security Council statement condemning the military takeover and calling for a return to democracy.[41] It was blocked by the PRC, which holds a veto in the Security Council, citing undue outside interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state. Referring to the coup as a "cabinet reshuffle," the PRC advocated non-intervention, and stressed the need to re-establish domestic stability. In contrast, the US began sanctioning military leaders that same day.[42]

Precipitated by reports that the PRC was flying in IT equipment and technical experts to help the junta shut down access to the global internet and censor social media,[43] crowds of civilian protestors gathered outside the PRC embassy in Yangon on February 11, 2021 to denounce PRC support for the military junta.[44] By late February, to dispel growing mass resistance to military rule, the junta began indiscriminately shooting civilian protesters. In mid-March, rising anti-Chinese sentiment led protestors to burn down two factories owned by PRC companies. The PRC embassy issued a statement urging Myanmar "to take further effective measures to stop all acts of violence, punish the perpetrators in accordance with the law and ensure the safety of life and property of Chinese companies and personnel in Myanmar."[45] The junta dutifully declared martial law in the Chinese factory zone and cracked down harder against protesters.

UN Sanctions Are Stymied

At the UN, Myanmar's Ambassador Kyaw Moe Tun refused to switch allegiance to the military regime and called on the UN General Assembly and

the international community to undertake the "strongest possible action to immediately end the military coup, to stop oppressing the innocent people, to return the state power to the people and to restore the democracy."[46] Though the military junta announced Kyaw's dismissal and replacement, the UN continued to recognize his ambassadorial status. Despite PRC counterefforts, members of the UNHRC issued an official statement on February 12 deploring the coup and issued another on March 24 calling for a halt to violence and investigation into the human rights situation.[47] On March 31, Christine Schraner Burgener, the UN's special envoy on Myanmar, called for immediate action by the UN Security Council "to prevent a multi-dimensional catastrophe in the heart of Asia" because "a bloodbath is imminent." By then, some 521 civilian protestors had been killed, of which 141 deaths occurred in one event only days before Burgener's plea.[48] In remarks supporting Burgener, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres stated that "We cannot live in a world where military coups become a norm." Requisite action by the Security Council, however, was blocked by PRC and Russian threats to veto anything more than verbal disapproval of the violence. The PRC ambassador to the UN stated, "one-sided pressure and calling for sanctions or other coercive measures will only aggravate tension and confrontation and further complicate the situation, which is by no means constructive.[49] The Security Council approved a statement that said it "strongly condemned the use of violence against peaceful protesters and the deaths of hundreds of civilians, including women and children." The clause "readiness to consider further steps" (i.e., UN authorized sanctions) that was in the original UK-drafted statement had to be removed before the veto-wielding PRC would approve the text. In May, a UN General Assembly resolution sponsored by 60 countries demanded that the Myanmar junta "stop all violence against peaceful demonstrators" and called for an arms embargo and a halt to arms shipments into Myanmar. Special envoy Burgener noted that "the risk of a large-scale civil war is real" and she supported the idea of an arms embargo.[50] One involved party pointed out:

> The UN Secretary General, the UN Human Rights Council, the UN Special Envoy and the Special Rapporteur have all condemned the violence in the strongest possible terms. But as many have observed, words are not enough. What is required is a global, mandatory arms embargo, mandatory sanctions against senior members of the Myanmar military, referral of the worst offenders to the International Criminal Court, and international agreement not to accord diplomatic recognition to the military junta.[51]

Procedural delay allowed the PRC to delete the call for a UN embargo on weapons shipments to Myanmar before the resolution came to a vote. It passed with a vote of 119 in favor, one (Belarus) against, and 36 abstentions (including China, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand).

Engineering Regional Recognition of the Junta

The decision of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)—a 10-country regional organization that included Myanmar—to invite junta leader General Min Aung Hlaing to a special ASEAN leaders' meeting was also indicative of the Association's problematic position. Forced to adopt a policy of non-interference because of their complex internal problems, ASEAN allowed military-ruled Myanmar to join the association after the Cold War. Subsequently, though it agreed on the importance of democracy and human rights norms and formed a human rights commission, the diverse collection of regimes types among ASEAN members did not allow it to agree on a response to Myanmar's 2012 terror campaign against the Muslim Rohingyas in Rakhine state who sought recognition as citizens. The ensuing Tatmadaw terror campaign to suppress this movement forced over two million Rohingyas to flee abroad as stateless refugees. In 2021, ASEAN was again at a loss on how to deal with the Tatmadaw and its overthrow of democracy and brutal violations of human rights.

In response to this disappointing turn of events, Myanmar civil society leaders, including jailed NLD party leader Aung San Syuu Kyi, asked to send a civil society representative to the ASEAN leaders' meeting.[52] This move was supported by ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights, which announced "ASEAN must make it abundantly clear that [Senior General Min Aung Hlaing] is not there as a representative of the Myanmar people…."[53] Human Rights Watch urged ASEAN to abandon the meeting entirely.[54] ASEAN leaders, however, ignored these civil society voices and gave Hlaing head of state treatment. As Bilahari Kausikan, a veteran Singaporean diplomat, cynically explained "as long as ASEAN gives the appearance of activity, other countries can let 'ASEAN take the lead.'"[55] By inviting Hlaing to represent Myanmar at the April 24 leaders' meeting with other ASEAN leaders, ASEAN seemingly conferred international recognition and legitimacy on the junta.[56]

In reaching a 5-point consensus with Hlaing to end violence, begin constructive dialogue with civil society, and work toward the restoration of peace, ASEAN made no demands for a return to democracy, nor did it call for the release of political prisoners, respect for international treaty obligations and human rights norms, or the release of Aung San Syuu Kyi from prison. That Aung San Syuu Kyi was hauled into court to face criminal charges just weeks before the visit of the ASEAN secretary-general on June 4 made a mockery of ASEAN's call for constructive political dialogue.

As with ASEAN, the PRC ambassador to Myanmar implicitly endorsed Hlaing as the sole legitimate ruler of Myanmar by calling on Hlaing while refusing to meet with NLD leaders and NUG representatives. The PRC also worked to promote the junta's legitimate regional standing by hosting a trilateral meeting between ASEAN, Myanmar, and the PRC's own foreign minister, Wang Yi, where Wang remarked that "China has supported,

is supporting, and will support Myanmar in choosing a development path that suits its own circumstances."[57] Myanmar's foreign minister, Wunna Maung Lwin's response, affirming that martial law would continue until a new constitution and new elections could be arranged, blatantly dismissed ASEAN's plea for an end to violence, constructive dialogue, and a meaningful role for an ASEAN representative to broker a return to normalcy. Moreover, on June 8, the PRC made Lwin a co-host to the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation group annual Foreign Ministers' Meeting that it convened in Chongqing. Besides the foreign ministers of Myanmar and the PRC, those of Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam were in attendance.[58] The meeting issued a joint statement rejecting international sanctions against the Myanmar junta, calling such actions "inappropriate interference" in Myanmar.[59]

In response to these machinations, Myanmar civil society representatives issued the following statement on June 10:

> 426 civil society organizations express their strongest condemnation of the actions taken by the People's Republic of China since June 5, 2021 to acknowledge Min Aung Hlaing and his so-called State Administrative Council (SAC) as the "leaders" of Myanmar.
>
> By issuing public statements referring to Min Aung Hlaing as the "leader of Myanmar," inviting the SAC Foreign Minister to Chongqing to represent Myanmar at the China – ASEAN Special Foreign Minister's meeting, and by pledging to provide economic aid to the SAC as part of the solution to the current political crisis, China has grossly interfered in Myanmar's domestic affairs, posing a grave threat to the security of Myanmar and to regional stability.
>
> …Min Aung Hlaing … is not the legitimate leader of the country, and his failed attempts to use violence to take de facto control have resulted in the deaths of thousands of Myanmar citizens as well as the displacement of over 100,000 people.[60]

As the junta received regional recognition and normalized relations facilitated by the PRC and cooperative ASEAN diplomacy, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet stated, "In just over four months, Myanmar has gone from being a fragile democracy to a human rights catastrophe."[61]

Lessons from the Myanmar Case

The case of Myanmar illustrates the key roles that the PRC plays at multiple levels to support authoritarian regimes. In addition to undermining the efforts of the UN Security Council and UN General Assembly measures to uphold democracy and human rights principles and norms, it also secured ASEAN's cooperation in legitimating a military regime that violated both

domestic constitutional law and the country's international legal obligations, normalizing autocratic national governance and the silencing of pro-democracy and civil society in Myanmar. As a result, Myanmar's political support and economic resources now more closely serve PRC interests and strengthen PRC influence over Southeast Asia at the expense of the democratic Indo-Pacific Quad powers (the US, Japan, Australia, and India) that seek to maintain the rules-based order. The Myanmar junta has no choice but to support the Chinese Dream project, by granting the PRC new trade and investment opportunities and strategic access by enabling it to develop the Kunming-Kyaukphyu infrastructure corridor to give Southwest China economic access to the Indian Ocean and the PLA Navy a port on call in the Bay of Bengal.

Conclusion: An Uncertain Future for Asian Civil Society—And the Chinese Dream

The success of Deng Xiaoping's reform and opening up that was celebrated at the 2008 Beijing Olympics has won the CCP widespread domestic support and international respect. In the new era of Xi Jinping's Chinese Dream, the BRI has attracted 140 country partners, which lays the groundwork for expanding access to the world's markets and resources to sustain the PRC's economic development as well as a PRC-managed community of shared human destiny safeguarded by the rapidly growing might of the People's Liberation Army.

Today, "wolf warrior diplomacy," economic coercion, and the threat of force have become trademarks of PRC foreign relations as Xi Jinping's "struggle for achievement" drops all pretenses and becomes openly hostile to democracy, civil society, and the rule of law wherever they rub CCP sensibilities the wrong way. As a rising great power, the PRC has had success in promoting democratic reversals in Asia and inducing the new autocratic regimes to cooperate with Chinese Dream agendas, by enabling allies, including Asian communist regimes to effectively suppress pro-democracy advocacy by their peoples. Nevertheless, civil societies' demand of democracy and civil rights under autocratic governments and ability to promote successful democratic transitions in Thailand, Cambodian, and Hong Kong during the Third Wave suggest that democratic reversals are themselves reversible, and we have not yet arrived at a Chinese socialism "end of history" moment in Asian political development. The history of Asia in this millennium is yet to be written.

Who Will Write the History of Asian Democracy?

Meanwhile, the region's remaining democracies show little sign of wanting to live under PRC regional governance, and in fact are tacitly moving toward cooperation with the so-called Quad Powers (the US, Japan, Australia, and

India) to maintain liberal rules-based regional governance even as they seek to maintain PRC trade ties under this order. Liberal democracies in Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, and Mongolia remain steadfast in their commitment to defend their democratic ways of life. All firmly align with the US and other democratic powers in supporting the liberal rules-based order.

Beijing's belief that ASEAN's contradictions make it vulnerable to a PRC-sponsored political makeover and regional governance takeover, ASEAN member states have pledged to respect human rights, democracy, and the rule of law in the 2012 ASEAN Human Rights Declaration.[62] The 2021 report of the State of Southeast Asia Survey also reveals prevailing anxieties about the PRC. Of the elites in each ASEAN member country surveyed, 88.6% were worried about the PRC's rising strategic influence and 55.1% were worried about its rising economic influence. Only 16.5% registered trust in China. In contrast, 67.1% trusted Japan, 51.0% trusted the EU, and 48.3% trusted the US. If forced to make a strategic choice between the US and China, 61.5% would choose the US and only 38.5 would choose China. These numbers suggest that even among Southeast Asia's illiberal and authoritarian regimes the anti-western Chinese Dream narrative is unconvincing, and the soft power attraction of states governed by multilateral institutions under the international rule of law remains intact. ASEAN is suspicious of PRC political and security ambitions and so it remains receptive to closer economic, political, and security relations with the US, Japan, India, and the EU to counterbalance the distrusted PRC.[63]

The realist "balance of threat" alliance theory may explain this paradoxical ASEAN orientation.[64] In a cut-throat world, states seek to maintain security and sovereignty by balancing against states perceived to be the most threatening to one's sovereignty rather than against the most powerful country which may, for example, be seen as more benign that threatening. After identifying the gravest threat to security and sovereignty, states look for allies to deal with this threat. Clearly, Southeast Asian regimes feel most threatened by the PRC and they so turn to the liberal democratic powers to balance this threat.

In the post-Deng era, the proliferation and intensification of non-kinetic ("three warfares," coercive diplomacy, sharp power, discourse power) and quasi-kinetic warfare (the dispatch of military and paramilitary forces in disregard of other states' sovereignty claims to occupy disputed territories, sink foreign fishing vessels and hinder or obstruct foreign military vessels inside the nine-dash line claim, military intrusions into neighboring countries' airspace) in PRC foreign relations that have threatened peace and security in the East China Sea, the Taiwan Strait, and the South China Sea—has helped consolidate renewed autocracy in Myanmar, Thailand, and Cambodia. It has failed, however, to win over society in these countries, much less the stable Asian and western democracies. In fact, the threat presented by the PRC to their own open societies and liberal governance has compelled the world's democracies to close ranks. The same might be said for

the PRC's autocratic neighbors and erstwhile allies, who nevertheless seek relations with the democratic community of nations to counter predatory PRC designs on their own sovereign rights, authority, and interests, which in the past have resulted in severed relations and even armed conflict with the PRC and its proxies. The question going forward is whether Xi Jinping's Chinese Dream agenda is sustainable or even strategically achievable given the mounting resistance evoked by escalating PRC threats and bullying.

CCP Hubris

The CCP has staged a stunning comeback from the edge of the abyss it confronted at the end of the Cultural Revolution to regain the support of the masses, integrate its state-planned economy into the global market economy, survive the collapse of communism, and bring its industry, science and technology, and military to world-class levels. The CCP under Xi Jinping strives to become a disciplined, organized political weapon responsive to the commands of Xi Jinping. It governs the world's largest economy in material production, deploys the second largest military, and focuses the energies of the Chinese people, state, and military on achieving the Chinese Dream. There is much to be proud of, but the myth of Party infallibility and belief in the truth of CCP propaganda engenders hubris and reckless behavior that makes achievement of the Chinese Dream far from certain. The reasons for doubt are simple.

First, Edward Luttwak identified one strategic flaw of the Chinese Dream agenda and called it "the fallacy of unresisted self-aggrandizement." The PRC's rapid "catch-up" growth and modernization was achieved by disregard for liberal norms and the ruthless pursuit of relative gain in all relations with foreigners. In the post-Cold War era of western "engagement strategy," this self-aggrandizing behavior was tolerated because liberal powers believed that with prosperity and greater confidence, the PRC would become less defensive and come into compliance with reciprocal openness and mutual benefit under liberal governance norms. The PRC strategic miscalculation was to believe that it could continue its self-aggrandizing behavior indefinitely to allow continuing exponential rise to global predominance. Luttwak pointed out that after naked efforts to accumulate power advantage in all areas come to threaten the existing order and the sovereignty of other states, the logic of strategy will induce other powers large and small to "monitor, resist, deflect, or counter Chinese power." He goes on to say that:

> The logic of strategy itself presages the slowing down or even partial reversal of China's rise, with the former more likely if Chinese policies are more conciliatory or downright emollient, and the latter if they are more alarming. If Chinese leaders ignore the warning signs and forge ahead, the paradoxical logic will ensure that instead of accumulating more power, they will remain with less as resistance mounts.[65]

Second, by the beginning of the Chinese Dream program, the easy catch-up growth opportunities of the Deng era were disappearing. Population aging and a declining birth rate have brought an abrupt end to the "demographic dividend" provided by a youthful population from the 1970s to 2000s. The reduction of growth due to a shrinking workforce and fiscal drag caused by growing eldercare costs will compound over time. Third, a growth model based on public investment-led growth in infrastructure services, real estate development, and investment in successively higher-value added export industries scored impressive results by employing low-skilled migrant workers, sacrificing the environment for growth, and cycling abundant national savings and the current account surpluses into investment. But this growth model is now exhausted, with household, corporate, and public debt amounting to almost 300% of GDP. Growth has also been highly uneven in terms of regional distribution and income group with glaring wealth and income inequality built on overinflated asset bubbles that put industries, banks, local governments, and households at severe risk. Unluckily, the COVID-19 pandemic required more massive credit impulses to maintain growth that exacerbates the condition. Debt aside, the days of easy export-growth and migration up global value-chains have ended in an era of slow global growth, geopolitical rivalry, trade war, techno-nationalism, and value-chain decoupling. Pollution, environmental destruction, and climate change are forcing a shift to sustainable development at the expense of growth. A new post-catch-up growth mechanism has yet to appear.

Finally, the CCP is ignoring gathering reality of geopolitical risk in Asia. As resistance to the Chinese Dream agenda led by the Indo-Pacific Quad powers, whose economic, military, and geopolitical assets outweigh those of the PRC, come together in common cause to defend the democratic order, PRC will need to exponentially expand its effort to achieve an illiberal PRC-centered global community of shared destiny. Meanwhile, the PRC's ability to generate surplus is diminishing for the above-stated reasons, and access to rich markets and advanced technology is suffering as liberal economies erect defenses against predatory PRC stratagems. In a more disorderly, post-unipolar, deglobalizing world of sharping great power conflict and reviving regional rivalries, the open trade, widespread prosperity, and geopolitical stability that allowed the PRC to catch up in spectacular fashion is now gone.

Regarding Asian democracies that have suffered authoritarian reversals, their respective civil societies have ways to maintain their value commitments and resist PRC-aided autocracy as suggested by the Taiwan-Hong Kong-Thai-Myanmar "milk tea alliance." If complemented by a more focused, intentional defense of democracy organized by liberal states and global third sector civil society associations, civil societies under assault may be supported, and autocrats that attempt to extinguish human rights can be denied legitimacy to make the recovery of democracy possible. The long-term trend of history shows that humanity has been repudiating

autocracy to embrace freedom and democracy in ever greater numbers. As Huntington showed, democracy has advanced in successive long waves, with each one followed by a short recession and democratic consolidation, to progressively shrink the number of autocratic regimes in the world in the 250 years since the American Declaration of Independence in 1776. If today's democracies rally to the cause, there is no reason to believe that this historical trend cannot be carried to its logical conclusion—a community of culturally diverse democratic nations enjoying peace and prosperity within a mutually agreed and impartial international framework of law.

Notes

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3 Yan, "From Keeping a Low Profile."
4 Rolland, "Examining China's 'Community of Common Destiny'"; *Xinhua*, "Xinhua Insight."
5 China-Africa Project, "Score Keeping."
6 Fu, "Who Votes with China."
7 *Deutschwelle*, "Kenya vs. Djibouti."
8 *The Diplomat,* "Which Countries Are for or Against China's Xinjiang Policies?"
9 Tiezzi, "Which Countries Support China."
10 Diamond, *The Spirit of Democracy.*
11 Brookings, "Workers' Rights;" OECD, "Civil Society Engagement"; Ottaway and Carothers, *Funding Virtue*; Soci et al. "The Role of Civil Society."
12 Freedom House, "Freedom in the World 2021."
13 Ford and Haas, "Democracy in Asia."
14 Fukuyama, *Political Order and Political Decay.*
15 Cheng and Chu, "East Asian Democratization in Comparative Perspective."
16 Viterna, Clough, and Clarke, "Reclaiming the "Third Sector" from "Civil Society"
17 ChinaFile, "Document 9."
18 National People's Congress, "Constitution of the People's Republic of China."
19 Literal meaning is "right to speak."
20 *Global Times*, "China Needs to Catch Up"; Zhao, "China's Rise."
21 Xi, "Strengthening Cooperation."
22 Nye, *Bound to Lead.*
23 Brady, "Magic Weapons"; Le Corre, "On China's Expanding Influence."
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29 Hanson, Curry, and Beatty, "The Chinese Communist Party's Coercive Diplomacy."
30 *ABC News*, "Norway Once Felt China's Wrath."
31 Fong, Wu, and Nathan, *China's Influence.*
32 Bush, "Hong Kong."
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34 BBC, "Hong Kong."

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3 Mutually Assured Assertiveness? The Abe Government's Response to China's Global Rise

Franziska Schultz

Introduction

When Shinzô Abe first became Japanese Prime Minister in 2006, he visited China one week after assuming office and refrained from visiting Yasukuni Shrine during his first cabinet (2006–2007) to avoid political frictions. In contrast, in his second term, it took almost six years after he took office in 2012 before he visited China for a bilateral meeting with Chinese leader Jinping Xi, and only after he had visited over 50 other countries to promote international cooperation. Abe also visited Yasukuni Shrine in 2013, a continuous thorny issue in Japan-China relations, showing that he was not willing to pay special consideration to China's sensibilities in his second term in office. However, in 2018, Abe visited China and hosted the Japan-China High-Level Economic Dialogue in Tokyo. Given that maintaining stable relations with China is vital for Japan as well as for the stability and prosperity of the region, Abe's change of behavior is perplexing. How can we explain these changes of Abe's foreign political behavior toward China?

This chapter argues that, in both his first and second term as Prime Minister, Abe's foreign policy can be understood as a response to the international environment. Deteriorated relations with China and Korea from 2001 to 2006, damage to economic relations from political conflict with both countries in 2005, and the shift in Sino-Japanese economic interdependence in favor of China because of its increasing global influence provide an explanation for Abe's foreign policy in 2006. Changes in his foreign policy behavior from 2012 and new domestic actions such as the Yasukuni visit and constitutional reinterpretation underscored by public statements do not reflect a change in mindset. Rather, these changes can be seen as reactions to considerable changes in the international environment. Since he stepped down in 2006, Abe has closely monitored domestic political developments in Japan and has made continued efforts since 2012 to maintain public support. Nonetheless, international developments between 2006 and 2012, such as difficult relations with the US and China, the Lehman shock, US presidential change, developments on the Korean Peninsula, tense US–China relations, Chinese leadership change and newly assertive foreign policy can

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be identified as factors influencing Abe's foreign policy. Simultaneously, Abe has successfully used the international environment to legitimize his consistent personal political agenda and ensure domestic support during his second cabinet.

To support these claims, this chapter analyzes Abe's changed foreign political behavior with a special focus on his approach toward China during his two administrations in view of the changes in the international environment and its implications for Japan. The analysis draws on theoretical findings by Amako, Jervis, and others,[1] and focuses on texts published by Abe, relevant foreign policy statements, as well as MOFA documents.

A states' international environment refers to its "external situation,"[2] i.e. other states in the international system with an impact on this state or its allies or rivals, and their balance of power. The international environment can "influence the general outline"[3] of a states' foreign policy. Changes in the international environment can entail policy changes even in cases of unchanged domestic regimes, bureaucratic structures, or leader's personalities and opinions.[4]

The international environment has a larger impact on the policy of less powerful states.[5] As less powerful states have less military capabilities, resources, and smaller populations, they can be expected to face more severe environmental constraints when interacting with more powerful states, as they have less leverage during disputes and negotiations. For instance, with China's global rise and increasing economic and military capabilities, Japan also faces a more powerful state and will likely have less leverage during territorial disputes or trade negotiations.[6] Japanese close relations with the US since the end of World War II have also worked as environmental constraint for Japanese foreign policy. Other examples are the "Yoshida Doctrine"[7] or US influence on Japanese policy toward Russia, such as when the US intervened in Japan-Russia peace talks in the 1950s.[8]

For the policy of more powerful states in a bipolar world, such as during the Cold War period with two great powers, the US and the Soviet Union, and/or with the existence of nuclear weapons, the international environment has a greater impact.[9] As an example of today's multipolar world, North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons has influenced US foreign policy in 2017, when the US government chose to conduct military exercises with South Korea and present US President Donald Trump made confrontational statements toward North Korea.[10]

While domestic political factors cannot be ignored when attempting to explain a government's behavior, developments within a states' international environment can "be made the occasion for a change in policy."[11] As not all state leaders will react in the same way to similar developments in the international environment, policy changes as a reaction to states' external constraints or opportunities are worth investigating in order to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of the international environment on policy changes.

Japan's International Environment Before 2006

When Abe was elected in 2006, he was aware that political relations with Korea and China had deteriorated. Reasons were his predecessor Jun'ichirô Koizumi's visits to Yasukuni Shrine[12] in 2001–2006 and the Japanese government's endorsement of a history textbook in 2005 sparking Chinese and Korean anti-Japanese protests, as the treatment of Japanese wartime history in the new textbook reflected a divergent understanding of the historical issues between Japan and her neighbors. Demonstrations entailed boycotts, property damage, and project cancellations.[13]

A shift in Sino-Japanese economic interdependence in favor of China from the mid-2000s can explain this spillover. It resulted from China's global rise triggered by its rapid economic growth initiated by Chinese modernization reforms in the 1980s. Interdependence shifted to Japan's disadvantage for two main reasons. Firstly, Japanese importance as Chinese trading partner has declined. Japan used to be China's most important trading partner between the 1970s and the mid-1980s. In 1972, Japan's share of Chinese imports was 22%, while the Japanese share of Chinese exports was only 12%.[14] Thereafter, the Japanese share of Chinese trade has decreased from 30% in the mid-1980s to 15% in the mid-2000s. In addition, whereas Chinese exports to Japan increased on average by 20% between 1996 and 2001, China's imports from Japan only increased at an average rate of 8%, underscoring the fact that the importance of Japan as Chinese trading partner has declined, while China has become more important for Japan.[15] Secondly, when Abe first assumed office in 2006, China's former dependence on the import of Japanese high-quality products or technology transfers had significantly declined. China has produced high-tech products since the mid-2000s.[16] This shift of economic interdependence as a result of China's global rise offers one explanation as to why China tolerated anti-Japanese protests in spring 2005 and their economic effects.[17]

Abe's Foreign Policy in 2006/2007

Changes in Japan's international environment before 2006, i.e., deteriorated relations with neighbors, economic damage from political conflict, and the increased economic importance of China, called for responses from Abe in 2006 to differentiate his foreign political course from Koizumi.

The shift in Sino-Japanese economic interdependence led to asymmetric economic interdependence, with China being less economically dependent and Japan being more dependent. Political bargaining power of less dependent states in dyads with asymmetric economic interdependence is expected to increase.[18] Therefore, asymmetric economic interdependence can serve as constraint for Japanese political demands, as it is the more dependent state. Chinese political bargaining power because of increased economic capabilities and leverage over Japan increases if there are differences concerning

territory or trade.[19] China's increased economic importance for Japan, as such, explains Abe's strong willingness to improve relations in 2006.

In his 2005 book *Utsukushî kuni e* ("Towards a beautiful country") and also in the revised version *Atarashî kuni e* ("Towards a new country") from 2013, Abe emphasizes that political and economic relations with China should develop according to the *seikei bunri* principle, i.e., separately, as nobody will benefit from damage to economic relations from political differences.[20] The use of the term "seikei bunri" and the additional explanations in his books mentioned above show that one of Abe's foreign political objectives is to ensure that economic relations are not hampered by political conflict. Consequently, Abe's efforts to improve relations would prevent spillovers as in 2005, reestablishing a separation of politics and economics. Having observed the changes in Japan's international environment from China's global rise, Abe visited the country immediately, making his first official trip to China instead of the US, showing that his first foreign political priority at the time was to improve Sino-Japanese relations.[21] Abe also refrained from visiting Yasukuni Shrine in 2006/2007 to avoid tensions.

This policy stance is also evident in statements from 2006. In Abe's speech at the "Tokyo-Beijing Forum", he emphasizes the importance of Sino-Japanese relations, dialogue, exchange not limited to governments, and moving toward mutual understanding. Abe states that the world will welcome Japan and China taking international responsibility as fellow Asian major powers (*taikoku dôshi*), referring to Japanese values of freedom, democracy, the rule of law, but also notes different political systems as a source of possible frictions.[22] Abe's 2006 meeting with former Chinese leader Jintao Hu successfully improved political relations. Hence, meetings of scholars to discuss controversial historical issues and negotiations to jointly explore resources in the East China Sea proposed by Abe at the meeting were initiated.[23]

Apart from special consideration of China, Abe's foreign political choices in 2006 did not differ from those of Koizumi. Both adhered to the "Yoshida Doctrine," constrained by a combination of US interests and domestic nationalist voters' support.[24] However, between Abe's resignation in 2007 and his second cabinet beginning in 2012, the international environment and Japanese domestic politics had experienced significant changes affecting Abe's actions from 2012.

Changes in Japan's International Environment and Japanese Public Threat Perceptions (2006–2012)

Between the two Abe administrations, Japanese relations with the US were tense. 2007/2008 Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda contributed to diplomatic tensions by rebuffing requests to send the Japanese self-defense forces (SDF) to Afghanistan. Having publicly announced he would not visit Yasukuni Shrine, relations with China were harmonious. Additionally, Japan had been

rocked by the 2008 Lehman shock, while the transition from US President George Bush Jr. to Barrack Obama raised the hope of a new American foreign policy after the Afghanistan and Iraq war.[25] Under Naoto Kan (2010–2011) and Yoshihiko Noda (2011–2012), Sino-Japanese tensions over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands erupted in 2010 and 2012, followed by deteriorated relations, anti-Japanese demonstrations and economic consequences.[26] A second Japanese "China Threat" discussion in Japan evolved from the mid-2000s to 2012. The 2001 to 2004 view of a Chinese economic threat had been discarded from the public debate between 2004 and 2005, when the Japanese economy recovered and Japan profited from increasing Chinese demands.[27] Therefore, Abe had expressed the view that China is not a threat for Japan in his 2006 speech at the Tokyo-Beijing forum.[28]

In 2010, when China overtook Japan in GDP, Japanese awareness of Chinese economic success increased, and the idea of the Chinese economic threat regained momentum.[29]

Before 2010, the notion of China as a security threat was confined to parliamentary discourse and "not reflected in Japan's China policy."[30] Xi's assertive foreign policy from 2012, including a growing military budget and persistent territorial claims, heightened threat perceptions in Japan.

Apart from growing public threat perceptions and changes in the international environment, Abe witnessed domestic political turmoil and an LDP decline with Prime Ministers changing every year between 2006 and 2012.[31] Yukio Hatoyama's 2009 election as the first DPJ Prime Minister marked a turning point for the LDP as strongest Japanese party that had governed since 1955. Hatoyama's successors Kan and Noda seemingly continued that shift of political power to the DPJ, but with Abe's 2012 reelection, the LDP returned to power with a landslide victory.

The two Abe cabinets differ significantly. Close political allies, but inexperienced politicians, were appointed for ministerial posts and advisors in 2006. Competition among them, scandals and a DPJ Upper House majority made governing inefficient. This affected Abe's popularity, leading to his 2007 defeat by Fukuda.

Involved in policymaking as deputy chief secretary and learning from previous mistakes, Abe chose experienced personnel for his second cabinet, e.g. chief cabinet secretary Yoshihide Suga, economic minister Akira Amari, or financial minister and Deputy Prime Minister Tarô Asô. He strengthened the Prime Minister's position, reduced the role of bureaucrats and opposition to exert increased influence on the policymaking process than his predecessors.[32]

Therefore, Abe could be expected to be less constrained in his foreign political decisions from 2012. In contrast to Abe's increased influence on foreign policy decisions from 2012, the influence of the "China School" within the MOFA[33] traditionally affecting Japan's China policy had declined from the 2006 Abe government to 2010. Under Koizumi, the China School was trying to convince him not to visit Yasukuni Shrine or change the date of

the visit. While its influence was not strong enough to prevent the visits, they convinced him to choose less sensitive days for most visits, and negotiated to contain the political damage.[34] Given the strengthened position of the Prime Minister and the China School's decline, Abe could pursue his foreign political line with less constraints since 2012.

Assertive Foreign Policy from 2012

Profound changes in the international environment between 2007 and 2012 demanded a new, firm political response. To distinguish himself from previous, short-lived Prime Ministers and determined not to ignore domestic threat perceptions and appeal to nationalist voters, Abe emphasized his hardline position regarding the Senkaku/Diaoyu dispute during the election campaign in 2012, promising to visit Yasukuni Shrine. He stressed his agenda consisted of Japan's economic revival and restoration of national pride and international influence.[35] As Noda's island purchase had led to the eruption of the conflict in 2012, public disappointment over the DPJ's approach to the dispute and concerns about future Japan-China cooperation contributed to Abe's reelection.[36]

Campaign statements proved not to be mere rhetoric: Abe annually increased Japan's defense budget since 2012, e.g. by 3.5% in 2015, when the Ministry of Defense, noting Chinese military spending and artificial island building, requested the largest budget in its history.[37] Budget increases have likely been influenced by the 2010 boat collision incident, the 2012 island purchase and 2013/2014 tensions involving Sino-Japanese ships and airplanes. The annually increasing defense budget and corresponding actions to decrease Japanese military dependence on the US since 2012 show Japanese new assertiveness under Abe's second cabinet, responding to the perception of a Chinese threat and to the opportunity to realize personal political goals Abe had expressed previously to 2012.

Assertiveness and Domestic Legitimization

Parallel to Abe's reelection in 2012, a new Chinese government under Xi was established. An Abe-Xi meeting after the Senkaku/Diaoyu purchase in 2012 could not be arranged until 2014, when they had a brief sideline conversation at the APEC summit. This meeting was interpreted as sign of recovery of the Japan-China relationship.

Abe's decision to meet Xi was influenced by the goal to appear more pragmatic than the previous Noda administration whose decision to purchase the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in 2012 had resulted in the worst deterioration of relations since 1972. Abe's gesture toward China was not as decisive as in 2006 and can be interpreted as an attempt to appeal to domestic voters. The pragmatic 2014 meeting contributed to Abe's reelection that he had called for that year.[38]

Similar to Abe's second government, Xi pursued an assertive foreign policy stance regarding sovereignty claims in the East and South China Sea. Chinese perseverance and unwillingness to negotiate claims can be explained by the fact that the respective territories are either tied to Chinese export-based economic growth or national identity. Both provide an important legitimization for the Communist government, and access to resources and traffic routes in the South China Sea is vital for securing continued growth and Chinese foreign trade.[39] Being connected to access to the South China Sea, one of the world's most important sea routes for trade, the Spratly Islands and the Paracel Islands claimed by e.g. Vietnam and the Philippines have strategic value for the state holding sovereign rights.[40]

However, Chinese assertiveness in disputes over the Spratly Islands, Paracel Islands and Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in the East China Sea cannot be solely explained with tangible values, national pride cannot be ignored.

This is highly evident in the conflict over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, which have high symbolic value: Japan assumes they were incorporated in the Meiji period (1868–1912) when it became the most powerful state in the region. China believes the islands were taken by Japan with an 1895 unequal treaty, and regaining sovereignty of former territories presents a national objective for the government.[41]

Like Abe, the Chinese government is constrained in its actions as well, having to avoid appearing weak in the disputes to appeal to nationalist netizens.[42] Compared to average Chinese media users, netizens are up to three times more likely to be politicized and participate in collective action, such as boycotts or petitions.[43] They could potentially take action against the CCP and present a political risk for the government.[44] Therefore, it has to consider these groups in order to secure domestic support and social stability.

Abe's government faces a similar problem: domestic legitimization is based on Japanese economic revival and restoring an influential international position. Although the Xi-Abe 2014 meeting demonstrated a willingness to work against further deterioration of relations, both continued more assertive political measures in 2014 and 2015. Xi began to propagate a more elaborated idea of a "China Dream," including a "strong army dream" being part of a more assertive Chinese foreign policy that also encompasses increasing military capabilities.[45] Artificial island building since December 2014 raised Japanese concerns, as China increased their surface area from 200 hectares to 800 hectares from 2014 to 2016. In November 2015, China sent bombers and planes in the airspace near Okinawa, which were scrambled by Japanese jets. Abe's decision to scramble them led his approval rates to rise by 3.5–48.3% in a poll following the event.[46]

State Visits and International Cooperation

Abe's distinct foreign policy from 2012 onwards that he had announced in the election campaign in 2012 was labeled "Abegeopolitics"[47] or "Abe

Doctrine."[48] Abe's strategy from 2012 consistently stems from a proactive contribution to peace policy (or proactive pacifism, *sekkyokuteki heiwashugi*). This includes visiting numerous countries and stepping up international cooperation, e.g. in the security realm, to counterbalance against China, responding toward its assertiveness. Domestically, Abe reacted by strengthening the role of the SDF and pursuing Japanese economic revival.

With these international and domestic measures combined, he also attempted to reestablish Japan's status as a great power.

State visits are an important part of Abe's proactive pacifism since 2012. The June 2019 visit to Iran and the January 2020 Middle East visit, attempts to mitigate during ongoing US-Iran militarized tensions and securing Japanese energy supply from the region that distinguishes him from most Japanese Prime Ministers, can be cited as examples.[49]

Since 2012, Abe has visited more countries than any of his predecessors and he refrained from further visits after January 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. His visits became opportunities to intensify cooperation with previous Asian security partners, e.g. Indonesia or India, and to establish new security cooperation with countries previously unimportant to Japanese security policy, e.g. Cambodia and Mongolia. He conducted joint maritime drills with the Philippines and Vietnam. In 2015, Abe received visits from the Malaysian and Philippine leaders, countries that have territorial conflicts with China. For the Philippine leader, Benny Acquino, it was the sixth visit in five years, emphasizing the importance of the partnership during 2015 Sino-Philippine tensions over the Spratly Islands.[50]

Restoring Japan's Status as a Great Power

In a speech in May 2014, Abe reaffirmed that Japan "intends to play an even greater and more proactive role […] in making peace in Asia."[51] He reemphasized the values Japan shared with cooperation partners, such as freedom, human rights, democracy and the rule of international law at sea. Abe does not criticize China in this speech, but points out he and former Chinese Premier Jiabao Wen established communication channels for unexpected situations at sea and air in 2007 and that Japan does "not welcome dangerous encounters […] at sea."[52] The latter can be interpreted to refer to encounters around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands.

This emphasis on "value diplomacy" and the concept of Japan as a great power is a continuation of his policy position from 2006/2007. There are indications that he has changed his foreign political strategy, but not his mindset, in response to the changing international environment. In his books *Utsukushî kuni e* (2006) and *Atarashî kuni e* (2013), Abe explains that his foreign policy is based on the values of Japanese society, i.e., democracy, freedom, basic human rights and the rule of law. He emphasizes that most Asian countries share with Japan the system of the market economy.[53]

While Abe's two cabinets do not reveal a difference in foreign policy mindset, there are differences concerning foreign political measures. Observers note the establishment of a new foreign political doctrine, the "Abe Doctrine," and argue it has replaced the previous "Yoshida Doctrine," by referring to Abe's efforts increasing security cooperation with a large number of countries *and* strengthening Japanese-US cooperation since 2012.[54] Abe escaped the Japanese strong dependence on the US by assigning a more active role to the SDF, for instance, with the revision of the bilateral security guidelines in 2013 at a meeting with former American secretary of defense, Ashton Carter. Meeting Obama in 2016, Abe suggested Japanese patrol boats could accompany US freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea.[55]

Intensifying Japanese-American defense cooperation and revising the security guidelines present the Japanese response to Chinese increased military capabilities and activities in the South China Sea. Efforts to counterbalance China's regional influence offered an opportunity for Abe to secure increased regional influence as US partner. This international environment provided a legitimization for Abe to pursue his agenda to reinterpret the constitution, which is why Abe was "pointing to the threat of China […] to realise his pet policy of allowing Japan to exercise the right to collective self-defence."[56]

Abe's positions on collective self-defense are consistent: he first stated in parliament on February 29, 1995, as Lower House member that Japan must seriously discuss exercising the right of collective self-defense with the US against an invasion.[57]

Developments in the South China Sea and US interests provided a legitimization "to supply the United States […] in any future […] clash with China."[58]

Economics First, Yasukuni Visit and Constitutional Reinterpretation

Abe has focused on economic revival and appealing to his nationalist voter base by visiting Yasukuni Shrine and pursuing constitutional revision. An economically strong Japan can achieve domestic legitimization and is part of the Abe Doctrine to gain international influence.[59] Therefore, one can say Abe's foreign political course is interwoven with domestic actions, as both visiting Yasukuni Shrine and pursuing constitutional revision do not only serve to secure voter support, but have foreign policy implications. Abe has promoted his "Abenomics" reforms at various summits, such as press conferences in 2013 after the G8 summit and the G7 summit in 2016.[60] With an annual growth rate of 2.8% forecasted by the OECD in 2013, Abe promoted the initial success of "Abenomics" during the campaign in 2013 after having called for a general election and "Abenomics" was important for the 2013 LDP victory.[61]

Until the reelection in mid-2013, Abe focused on Japanese economic revival, turning to his goal of restoring Japanese national pride thereafter,

visiting Yasukuni Shrine in 2013.[62] Compared to Chinese reactions in 2005, 2010 and 2012, the 2013 visit did not engender demonstrations and vandalism, simply official critique by Xi. Given the economic damage for Japanese companies in China caused by the 2010 boat collision incident, the island purchase in 2012, and the fact that continued economic growth provides part of the legitimization for the Chinese government, Xi could not risk demonstrations that could cause economic damage. Such demonstrations could also present political risks to the Xi government.[63] In 2006, the importance of Japanese economic relations with China and the prevailing difficult relationship did not permit Abe to visit Yasukuni without risking further deterioration of relations. With Xi preventing demonstrations, Abe's 2013 visit did not involve such risks, and could secure nationalist voter support.[64] In July 2013, Abe took another step to restore national pride, seeking to revise the constitution, explaining this would enable Japan to contribute to regional stability and global peace to a greater extent.[65]

Abe's pursuit of constitutional revision can be explained by his belief that the Japanese constitution has been drafted by the US occupation and that "the time has come for the Japanese people to adopt a Constitution […] from the fundamentals of LDP formation when his father Kishi Nobusuke played a powerful role in […] postwar Japan."[66]

Despite resistance from the coalition partner Komeitô, Abe worked toward a reinterpretation of Article 9 from the mid of 2013.[67] In July 2014, he announced the first reinterpretation of the article since the constitution was established, allowing Japan to take part in collective self-defense with other states. Possible scenarios presented by Abe included military support for the US worldwide or support for states near Japan that were attacked, a scenario developed with the potential outbreak of a military conflict between South and North Korea involving the US.[68] Considering the 2017 confrontation between the US and North Korea, this could be an additional scenario. The reinterpretation of the Japanese constitution in July 2014 also covers Japan using mines in areas where its navigation is affected, defense against "submarines infiltrating Japan's territorial waters" or armed "groups acting against vessels or remote islands."[69] All measures have a clash over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in mind, paving the way for Japan's military response to a potential Chinese attack. Given this reinterpretation of Article 9, the presence of Chinese ships or submarines near the islands could incur military responses.

Despite scandals casting doubts about Abe's September 2018 reelection, he used Chinese assertiveness and the North Korean threat to gain domestic support and respond to American initiatives to increase security ties. Two 2017 scandals involved private school operators known for their nationalist outlooks. One of them, Moritomo Gakuen, had secured land from the state for establishing a primary school in Osaka at 14% of the designated price and made Abe's wife Akie the school's honorary principal. Prosecutors

declared in October 2019 that a prison sentence for the former headmaster and his wife will be pursued.[70]

Scandals and SDF operations in Sudan affected Abe's popularity, with support for his administration dropping to only 30% in July 2017.[71] With North Korean missile tests in July 2017, Abe stated Japan would not tolerate that, reassuring he would to resolve the abduction issue. A Sankei Shinbun and Fuji News Network survey showed approval rates improved to 44% in August and to 50% in September 2017 after more North Korean missile tests and reassuring statements until September 2017. With North Korean missiles flying over Japan in August 2017, Abe won a snap election in October 2017.[72]

More scandals, such as statistical mistakes in a labor reform bill, a sexual harassment case involving a MOF member, followed in 2018. Opinion polls in March conducted by the Asahi and Mainichi Shinbun, Kyôdo News and others showed Abe's public support had dropped by more than 10%, meaning approval rates between 30 and 40%, an all-time low since 2012. To turn public attention away from scandals, abductions to North Korea reappeared on Abe's agenda in November 2017. Abe arranged a meeting of families of abductees with Trump, who raised the issue at the May 2018 US-North Korean summit. Abe emphasized this was a step toward resolving the issue with international cooperation.[73]

New scandals affected Abe's popularity in 2019, such as a bribery case of an LDP member or the use of governmental funds for a cherry blossom viewing party.

With the coronavirus spreading in Japan since January 2020, the government urged the population to stay home with Abe declaring the state of emergency until May 6 in seven prefectures on April 7, extending it to all of Japan on April 12. Akie Abe going to a shrine in Ôita and a cherry blossom viewing party in March may have negatively affected public support. April 2020 surveys by the Mainichi Shinbun revealed most respondents' dissatisfaction with how Abe handled the situation: Abe's approval rate in mid-April fell to 42% as compared to 49% in mid-March. 70% of respondents complained about Abe's late reaction to the virus.[74]

Declining support may explain Abe's emphasis of financial support for businesses and individuals when he announced the extension of the state of emergency on May 4, 2020.[75]

Sino-Japanese Relations Since 2018

Despite an assertive foreign policy and increasing military budgets, Abe and Xi had conversations at the Asian-African Conference in 2015 and the APEC forum in 2017, signaling pragmatism and willingness to cooperate to prevent tensions similar to 2012.[76]

2018 marked a turning point toward rapprochement: Tokyo hosted the Japan-China-South Korea Trilateral Summit in May with Li Keqiang

visiting Japan as first Chinese Premier after eight years. This can be interpreted as sign of improving relations, especially with the October 2018 Abe visit to China after his fall 2018 reelection as Prime Minister.[77]

Despite decreasing support shown in a spring 2018 Kyôdo survey and with a DPJ support rate of 12% and a 36% support rate for no party, Abe was reelected in September 2018, suggesting citizens believed there was no alternative to the LDP.[78]

Abe achieved a 82% parliamentary majority. During his 2018 China visit, he agreed with Xi to defend free trade, discussing US economic pressure on China and North Korea's denuclearization. In addition, the leaders decided to jointly finance infrastructure projects in third countries.[79]

In contrast, a fall 2018 South Korean Supreme Court ruling that Japanese companies should pay reparations for forced labor in World War II led to deteriorated Japan-Korea relations, anti-Japanese boycotts in Korea and a trade dispute from July 2019.[80]

Japan and China advocating free trade and emphasizing Sino-Japanese relations should inaugurate a new era. Relations with Korea remain difficult with Abe announcing a quarantine for travelers from Korea in March 2020. The same applies to Chinese travelers, but relations have remained harmonious. Unlike Trump, Abe has not criticized China regarding the virus or Trump's trade restrictions.[81]

While Abe also increased cooperation with other countries since 2012, the US remains an important partner and Abe concluded two new US-Japan trade agreements in 2019. The US perspective is considered when it comes to decisions involving Japan-China relations. As such, Abe was careful to incorporate the Japan-China infrastructure cooperation into his idea of a "free and open Indo-Pacific" instead of the "One Belt, One Road" initiative or to indicate support of the latter, as the initiative has received critical responses from the US and the Japanese public.[82]

Whether the 2018 agreement on infrastructure cooperation can be a first step to ensure the end of Sino-Japanese competition in third countries remains to be seen. Abe's readiness to meet Xi and visit China after many other countries is also not as decisive a political gesture as compared to 2006 when he made his first state visit to China. The results of his later meetings with Chinese politicians were also less pathbreaking than in 2006 when the Abe-Hu meeting presented a step toward solving long-standing issues.[83] In 2018, Abe raised the issue of human rights; Xi reminded Japan about its wartime history and the Taiwan question. A combination of pragmatism and common global and regional issues discussed at the 2018 Abe-Xi meeting, such as the denuclearization of the North Korean Peninsula, likely contributed to the Chinese decision to seek rapprochement with Japan.[84]

Japan and China agree that they oppose Trump's trade restrictions. Therefore, the 2018 warming of Japan-China relations was not unexpected. The Sino-Japanese consensus about North Korea's denuclearization and against trade protectionism have paved the way for improved relations starting with

Chinese initiatives in April 2018 to resume the High-Level Economic Dialogue after eight years.[85]

US-China tensions since Obama's administration in 2014 and increasing Chinese influence under Xi also partly explain the 2018 positive turn in Sino-Japanese relations. Obama criticized Chinese human rights issues and territorial claims, Trump became involved in a US-China trade dispute. Despite a first trade deal was reached in December 2019, spring 2020 prospects for US-China relations looked rather gloomy with both countries expelling journalists of the respective other country in March 2020 and Trump criticizing the "China virus."[86]

On Japan-China relations, the virus had a rather positive impact despite a sudden wariness toward Chinese visitors, panic about Chinese commodities in Japan and Xi's spring 2020 visit being postponed. Japan's government donated a part of LDP politicians' March 2020 salaries and masks to China, which returned the favor by sending testing kits and masks.[87]

Chinese initiatives to improve Sino-Japanese relations in 2018 as well as harmonious relations in spring 2020 can be explained against the backdrop of difficult US-China relations. Trump's trade protectionism and US-Chinese tensions motivated Chinese efforts to pursue closer economic ties with other allies that benefit from free trade, such as Europe and Japan. For Japan, rapprochement with China presents a way of minimizing the risk of potential future economic protectionist measures by the US. Therefore, improving relations with China since 2018 was a reasonable choice for Abe, raising the abduction issue at times had domestic appeal.[88]

Abe tried to gain support in East Asia with Japanese Official Development Assistance for providing military training and equipment, but Chinese infrastructure projects support several regional governments. With declining US hegemony, no state can demand cooperation from China regarding conflicting issues. Peacekeeping operations or North Korean denuclearization cannot work without Chinese participation. If the Abe government wants Japan to exert international influence, it has to maintain good relations with China, but also increase mutual cooperation with other countries.

Despite conflicting Chinese territorial claims with Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines or Vietnam in the South China Sea, none of them raised the issue at the ASEAN Summit in 2017. Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte was promised Chinese investments, and China is the biggest investor in Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia, as well as Thailand's largest trading partner. Most ASEAN countries profit from Chinese influence and infrastructure and have stopped criticizing China's territorial claims.[89]

Chinese participation in sanctions against North Korea pressured the country to engage in dialogue about its nuclear program. Two China visits by Kim Jong-un in spring 2018 before the 2018 Kim-Trump meeting reveal a strong Chinese influence on North Korea.[90]

China's rise does not only have consequences for Japan, but for other East Asian countries and the rest of the world. How China will exert its global

influence in the future raises important questions for scholars, politicians and businesspeople alike. For example, how China will continue to handle global challenges such as the corona crisis may further strengthen Chinese international influence. China quickly gained domestic control over infections and became the key power giving material assistance to e.g. Africa, Iran, Italy, and Serbia.[91]

Conclusion

Abe's foreign policy strategy during his two cabinets shows notable differences, especially his approach toward China. This chapter has argued that Abe's responses to the international environment prior to the elections in 2006 and 2012 offer an explanation. When Abe was first elected in 2006, political and economic relations with China and Korea had deteriorated, China had gained more importance as Japan's economic partner. Therefore, Abe was constrained in his foreign policy choices, making efforts toward rapprochement. He refrained from visiting Yasukuni Shrine, which would have caused further deterioration of relations.

Statements made during his first administration demonstrate his emphasis on harmonious relations with China, similar expressions are absent after Abe's reelection in 2012 until 2018 when he emphasized that Sino-Japanese relations should enter a new era.

Abe's 2012 election campaign statements and subsequent measures reveal an assertive foreign policy stance combined with domestic measures with foreign policy implications, moving away from 2006 Sino-Japanese rapprochement toward an assertive foreign policy from 2012. This shift can be attributed considerable changes in the international environment between his two cabinets. Developments in US-China relations, on the Korean Peninsula, China overtaking Japan's GDP in 2010, and clashes over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in 2010 and 2012 with economic spillovers called for a new policy response.

Abe responded to the changing international environment and difficult Japan-China relations by increasing international security cooperation since 2012. He strengthened the Japan-US alliance, but unlike his predecessors and his own actions in 2006, he revised the security guidelines and increased security cooperation with other countries.

Responding to international developments after 2012 has also offered a possibility for Abe to legitimize his continuous personal political agendas. Abe's changed foreign political behavior might suggest a changed mindset, but his "value diplomacy," the idea of restoring the great power status of Japan, his views on collective self-defense and the goal to revise the constitution remained unchanged.

From 2012, Chinese and Japanese foreign policy was more assertive, but a combination of pragmatism and mutual economic interdependence has

prevented escalations. Chinese 2018 initiatives and the corona crisis improved relations, but conflicting issues between the two great powers remain, and will surface whenever assertiveness provides legitimization of governments.

Last, but not least, common domestic problems in Japan and China, such as an aging population, as well as challenges in the East Asian region require a more constructive approach to conflicting issues, if both want to sustain their status as major regional powers. Limited resources, population growth, urbanization and environmental problems in East Asia call for regional cooperation, especially, but not exclusively between the two, to tackle these issues successfully.

Notes

1 Amako, *Sino-Japanese Confrontation*, 22–24; Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, 17–19.
2 Jervis, 17.
3 Jervis, 17.
4 Jervis, 17–19.
5 Rosenau, "Pre-Theories and Theories in Foreign Policy," 47–48.
6 Arai, Goto, and Wang, *Clash of National Identities*, 69–70.
7 Beeson, *Regionalism and Globalization in East Asia*, 65–66; Inoguchi and Jain, *Japanese Foreign Policy Today*, 44. Yoshida Shigeru was the first Japanese Prime Minister after World War II. He established American bases, relying on the US for defense.
8 Curtis, *Japan's Foreign Policy After the Cold War*, 274–297.
9 Hoffmann, "Restraints and Choices in American Foreign Policy," 692–694.
10 Jia, "New Developments around the Korean Peninsula and International Relations in East Asia."
11 Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, 17.
12 Wan, *Understanding Japan-China Relations*, 28. A memorial for Japanese soldiers fallen in World War II with class A war criminals among them, making visits by Japanese Prime Ministers controversial in neighboring countries.
13 Schultz, "Abe's China Policy During Political Estrangement and Increasing Economic Interdependence," 59–60.
14 Tokyo Foundation, "40 Years Since Sino-Japanese Normalization."
15 Zang, *Sino-Japanese Trade Structure and Economic Relations*, 33–40, 53.
16 Katz, "Mutual Assured Production," 4.
17 Arai, Goto, and Wang, *Clash of National Identities*, 69.
18 Crescenzi, *Economic Interdependence and Conflict in World Politics*, 246–247.
19 Arai, Goto, and Wang, *Clash of National Identities*, 69–70.
20 Abe, *Towards a Beautiful Country*, 152; Abe, *Towards a New Country*, 156.
21 Heazle and Knight, *China-Japan Relations in the Twenty-first Century*, 5.
22 Abe, "Let Us Move the Gearwheels Towards a Partnership by Discussion and Dialogue," 6–8.
23 Heazle and Knight, *China-Japan Relations in the Twenty-first Century*, 5, 177; Wan, *Understanding Japan-China Relations*, 11.
24 Heazle and Knight, *China-Japan Relations in the Twenty-first Century*, 183.
25 Dobson, "Is Japan Really Back?" 206–208; Inoguchi, *Japanese and Korean Politics*, 11–14.
26 Wan, *Understanding Japan-China Relations*, 13.

27 Zhang, *Sino-Japanese Relations in a Trilateral Context*, 110–111.
28 Abe, "Let us move the gearwheels towards a partnership by discussion and dialogue," 7–8.
29 Amako, *Sino-Japanese Confrontation*, 22–24.
30 Zhang, *Sino-Japanese Relations in a Trilateral Context*, 110–111.
31 Inoguchi, *Japanese and Korean Politics*, 14.
32 Mulgan, *The Abe Administration and the Rise of the Prime Ministerial Executive*, 32–34; Shinoda, *Contemporary Japanese Politics*, 153, 217–222, 230.
33 Lam, *Japan's Relations with China*, 45, 92–98. A group of China specialists within the MOFA promoting harmonious Japan-China relations since the 1970s.
34 Dent, *China, Japan and Regional Leadership in East Asia*, 42–43; Lam, *Japan's Relations with China*, 37–45.
35 Inoguchi, *Japanese and Korean Politics*, 10, 203; Wan, *Understanding Japan-China Relations*, 44.
36 Smith, *Intimate Rivals*, 234.
37 Craig, *The Abe Restoration*, 37, 58–60.
38 Wan, *Understanding Japan-China Relations*, 45–46.
39 Beeson, *Regionalism and Globalization in East Asia*, 82.
40 Raditio, *Understanding China's Behaviour in the South China Sea*, 56–57, 83–84, 115.
41 Beck, *Japan's Territorial Conflicts*, 55-57, 174–177.
42 Beeson, *Regionalism and Globalization in East Asia*, 83.
43 For further discussion, see Tang and Iyengar, *Political Communication in China*.
44 Amako, *Sino-Japanese Confrontation*, 22–24.
45 Wan, *Understanding Japan-China Relations*, 47–48.
46 Craig, *The Abe Restoration*, 66, 132.
47 Inoguchi, *Japanese and Korean Politics*, 4, 11–14.
48 Akimoto, *The Abe Doctrine*, 1–11; Dobson, "Is Japan Really Back?" 199; Hughes, *Japan's Foreign and Security Policy Under the 'Abe Doctrine,'* 1.
49 Barber, *Japan's Relations with Muslim Asia*, 201; Shushô Kantei, "Interview about Middle East Visit."
50 Craig, *The Abe Restoration*, 59–66.
51 MOFA, "Keynote Address by H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan at the 13th IISS Asian Security Summit 'Shangri-La Dialogue.'"
52 MOFA, "Keynote Address by H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan at the 13th IISS Asian Security Summit 'Shangri-La Dialogue.'"
53 Abe, *Towards a Beautiful Country*, 158–160; Abe, *Towards a New Country*, 162–164.
54 Akimoto, *The Abe Doctrine*, 188–200; Dobson, "Is Japan Really Back?" 199; Hughes, *Japan's Foreign and Security Policy Under the 'Abe Doctrine,'* 1.
55 Craig, *The Abe Restoration*, 85–86, 129.
56 Amako, "Japan must carefully evaluate China's strategic intentions."
57 Kakizaki, *Analyzing Abe-ism*, 91–92.
58 Craig, *The Abe Restoration*, 86.
59 Dobson, "Is Japan Really Back?" 215–217.
60 Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, "Press Conference by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe Following His Attendance at the G8 Summit Meeting in Loch Erne"; MOFA, "Press Conference by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Chair of the G7 Ise-Shima Summit."
61 Inoguchi, *Japanese and Korean Politics*, 15, 211.
62 Dobson, "Is Japan Really Back?" 217, 219.
63 Amako, *Sino-Japanese Confrontation*, 22–24.

64 Schultz, "Abe's China Policy During Political Estrangement and Increasing Economic Interdependence," 63.
65 Craig, *The Abe Restoration*, 61.
66 Inoguchi, *Japanese and Korean Politics*, 201.
67 Inoguchi, *Japanese and Korean Politics*, 201. Abe reduced necessary Lower and Upper House votes to revise a constitutional article from two-thirds to one-half of both houses in July 2013.
68 Craig, *The Abe Restoration*, 61–62.
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Part 2

Changing Demographics, Nationhood, and Peoplehood

Migration, Diversity, and Inclusion

4 The Persistence of Monoethnic Ideology in Multiethnic Japan

John Lie

In *Multiethnic Japan*, I argued that modern Japan has always been multiethnic and that monoethnic ideology, far from being a dominant or long-held belief system, gained currency only in the post-World War II period.[1] In recounting the past and the present of the Ainu, Burakumin (descendants of premodern outcastes), Okinawans, Koreans, Chinese, and other non-ethnic-Japanese people in the Japanese archipelago, I sought at once to delineate the constitution of modern Japanese multiethnicity and the construction of modern Japanese national identity and monoethnic ideology.

If the book did not quite fall stillborn from the press, it had very little impact nevertheless. To be sure, it was part and parcel of a larger academic charge to explore the multiethnic constitution of modern Japanese history and society,[2] but it'd be fair to say that the fragmentary academic consensus on contemporary Japan as a multiethnic society has had little purchase in the wider social world, within and without Japan. Certainly, the modal belief in contemporary Japan remains that Japan is *au fond* a monoethnic society or, at least, a remarkably ethnically homogeneous polity. Yet the population of foreign residents has increased steadily in the past two decades, and they total close to 3 million by 2020.[3] In urban life, such as in Tokyo, foreign migrant workers, as well as all manners of long-term non-Japanese residents, are ubiquitous and inescapable. There are, for instance, well-known Chinatowns, especially the venerable one in Yokohama, and Koreatowns, most vibrantly in Shin Ōkubo in Tokyo. Whether one scans print materials or social media, it is impossible to deny the presence of a sizable population of foreigners and ethnic minorities in contemporary Japan.

Why, then, does the ideology of Japanese monoethnicity persist? In this paper, I explain the paradox of the inclining population of non-Japanese people in Japan and the robustness of the monoethnic idea. An inescapable irony is that the rising visibility of recent foreign migrant workers merely accentuates the core belief in the monoethnic constitution of Japanese history and society.

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Multiethnic Japan and Monoethnic Ideology

World history is inevitably a chronicle of movements from humanity's origin in eastern Africa some 200–300,000 years ago to almost every nook and cranny of the earth.[4] The peopling of the Japanese archipelago brought distinct streams of migrants from present-day Russia and Sakhalin, China and the Korean peninsula, and southeastern Asia and the Ryukyus. Contemporary physiognomic diversity in Japan is but one evidence of the multifarious and diverse origins of the contemporary Japanese people.

Premodern Japan experienced continuous influx of people from the west and the south, before, during, and after the emergence of proto-Japanese identity. It'd be a stretch to deny a sense of Japaneseness in the seventh century, though it'd also be a vast exaggeration to assume widespread popular national identity then. After all, the ambit of Japan—loosely defined as Yamato peoplehood—was circumscribed largely to western Honshū. Beyond the narrow scope of unified territory—even at the height of Tokugawa rule, Hokkaido and Okinawa were outside its scope and sovereignty—there was rigid status hierarchy that stunted any inclusionary sense of peoplehood. Put simply, samurai and peasants were distinct kinds of people; differences superseded any notion of common identity. Premodern Japan was devoid of a widespread sense of popular national identity. Given these cultural and status distinctions, there was at best a proto-national Japanese identity in the mid-nineteenth century, which made the promotion of an inclusionary national identity critical, at once to make the country modern—that is, Western, which by then meant being nationalist—and to resist Western imperialist encroachment. Even with the 1868 Meiji Restoration and the putative beginning of modern Japan, however, few Japanese insisted on the monoethnic constitution of Japan. For ideologists of modernity and nationalism, the immediate task after the Meiji Restoration was to create a singular identification qua Japanese people. This is precisely the achievement of the modernizing Meiji regime that instituted universal male education and universal male conscription that inculcated the idea of nationhood and national identity. The growth of the national market and the national mass media also laid the groundwork for an inclusionary identity as Japanese people.

Nevertheless, few Japanese people between 1868 and 1945 promoted monoethnic ideology. The reason is simple: modern Japanese society was also imperialist and the would-be nation-state quickly incorporated Hokkaido and the Ainu people, Ryūkyū Kingdom and the Okinawan people, and thereafter the indisputably non-ethnic Japanese populations of Taiwan, the Korean peninsula, and elsewhere across Asia and the Pacific. In short, imperial Japan was perforce multiethnic; the Japanese empire included distinct peoplehoods. In addition, the prevalence of Burakumin—descendants of premodern outcastes—constituted a large, fairly visible and vocal minority. However, residentially and occupationally segregated different ethnic

groups were, in every walk of Japanese life in the first half of the twentieth century—when patriotic nationalism was strong—no one could have denied the ubiquity of distinct ethnic groups even in the main Japanese islands. Different languages and distinct ethnic neighborhoods provided compelling proofs of Japanese multiethnicity. As much as popular national identity disseminated throughout the Japanese archipelago and beyond, it existed in harmony with the expansive notion of the Japanese empire that was also ethnically diverse. Few would insist on the monoethnic character of Japanese society before the mid-twentieth century.

Postwar Japan had propitious conditions for monoethnic ideology to thrive, however. The empire was dismantled instantaneously, leaving the most culturally assimilated four major islands as the new, "small" Japan. Almost overnight, Japan shrank, and the contraction led to the shedding of many non-Japanese peoples. The Ainu were marginalized in the north and the Okinawans became part of the US empire. Burakumin, hitherto considered a distinct race, were at first residentially segregated but in the course of the post-World War II period became rapidly assimilated into mainstream society, however powerful the remnant forces of prejudice and discrimination. The erstwhile colonial populations, especially ethnic Koreans, were also spatially concentrated and, more importantly, harbored a desire to return to their putative homeland. No group, in other words, asserted its ethnic identity and distinctiveness but claimed to be an indisputable part of Japanese society. That is, they were either Japanese or foreigners who moreover insisted on their non-Japaneseness. At the same time, Japan had become considerably more homogenous and egalitarian, whether in terms of income or status inequality, or cultural and social differentiation. The eclipse of premodern status distinction was a critical condition for the construction of the new Japanese identity. The decline of status or class inequality made possible the widespread sense of Japanese homogeneity, which in turn became the larger ideological backdrop of the notion of Japanese monoethnicity. Put differently, if Japan had remained strikingly inegalitarian and therefore differentiated, then the inclusionary sense of peoplehood would have been stunted, and thereby vitiated the sense of cultural and ethnic homogeneity. What happened, however, was a widespread sense of cultural assimilation and status integration; everyone seemed to become part of the Japanese nation, an idea that had been cultivated in the militarist education during the prewar period.

Nevertheless, what cemented the notion of Japanese monoethnicity was the search for Japanese distinctiveness or identity in the course of the 1960s and beyond. That is, from the unconscious bed of status and cultural homogeneity came the explicit, conscious articulation of monoethnicity. In prewar Japan, there was an irrefutable source of identification as the Emperor's children (ethnic Koreans and Chinese were in this line of thinking said to be siblings, and therefore part of the extended imperial family). After the war, the Emperor ideology collapsed. That is, the chief predicate

of Japanese disappeared and the widely accepted answer as to what makes one Japanese was *absent*. If there is Japan, then there must be something distinctive about being Japanese. The existence of a nation seems to generate a discourse of nationhood, which in turn appears to abhor vacuum. There arose a series of nonsense propositions about Japanese identity, ranging from the uniqueness of the Japanese language (which language is *not* unique?) to its supposed distinction as an island nation (UK? Iceland?). Although adherents of the uniqueness of the Japanese language, its status as an island nation, and other predicates held forth, the most cogent one was that of *Japanese monoethnicity*. This idea was especially convincing because in the post-World War II period all manners of comparison inevitably involved the United States, an indisputably multiethnic country. The superficial understanding of racial distinction—what could be more distinct than the difference between black and white?—made Japan seem homogenous in comparison—all shades of gray (or is it yellow)? It is a form of auto-Orientalism, in which Japanese people regarded themselves as looking essentially alike. What differentiated the United States from Japan? There are in fact many plausible answers, but a powerful candidate became the multiethnic nature of the United States and the monoethnic constitution of Japan. Hence, Prime Minister Nakasone's oft-quoted claim from 1985 that Japan is unique precisely because of its monoethnic nature, and he took the characteristic to account for Japanese superiority (to be sure, it was part of Japan as number one discourse that smacked of national hubris in the 1980s and the early 1990s until the bursting of the property-speculation bubble put an end to the smug discussion). The bursting of the bubble also put an end to the hubristic discussion of Japanese greatness, though that of Japanese uniqueness survived.

Prod any Japanese in the mid-1980s, however, and out came the notion of monoethnic Japan as a prime predicate of Japaneseness. Even hardheaded social scientists refused to include the category of ethnicity in social surveys because, as one of them told me at the time, "there are so few ethnic minorities and foreigners in Japan." The absence of statistical data, either by the punctilious government statistics bureau or the otherwise diligent social scientists, produced the scientifically irrefutable count of zero for those seeking data on the multiethnic character of contemporary Japanese society. Tautology reproduced itself without much empirical scrutiny or social reflection. As noted, as much as the discourse of Japan as number one faded almost completely in the course of the 1990s, the idea of monoethnicity stuck.

Nevertheless, the owl of Minerva does seem to spread its wings at dusk. Precisely when the monoethnic ideology seemed hegemonic, the mid-1980s also witnessed the emergence of vibrant voices and movements to assert ethnic identity and diversity in Japanese life, including those of Ainu, ethnic Koreans, and Okinawans. *Civil society*, in other words, became vibrant and reinvigorated precisely when the ideology of monoethnicity seemed

irrefutable. Multiethnic civil society countered the state that insisted on Japan's monoethnic character. The growing number of foreign migrant workers also made the topic of ethnic diversity an urgent social issue. At the same time, influenced by the latest trends in the western social sciences, including the rise of ethnic and diaspora studies, human scientists began to explore the multiethnic constitution of modern Japanese history and society. As much as most studies were abstract and general, they nevertheless contributed to opening academic and political discussions about minority rights and ethnic diversity in contemporary Japanese society. When I began writing *Multiethnic Japan*, most Japanologists and Japanese social scientists dismissed my effort as quixotic, if not nonsensical. By the time it was published, however, a significant number had come around to the conviction that Japan is multiethnic and they thereby dismissed my book as stating the obvious. Be that as it may, with the collapse of the Japan as number one discourse, the hegemonic belief in monoethnic Japan seems to be on its way out by the turn of the century.

The Decline of Academic and Intellectual Influence

If the emerging opinion of my fellow academics by the turn of the century seemed to take for granted the multiethnic constitution of modern Japan, then why is it that their commonsense did not disseminate throughout the larger society? Why was I wrong to think two decades ago that the ideology of monoethnic Japan would continue to decline in influence and perhaps even disappear altogether over time?

There are at least three major reasons for the persistence of the monoethnic ideology in contemporary Japanese life. First, the extent of the academic consensus on the multiethnic character of contemporary Japanese society remained limited. This stems in part from the extreme intellectual division of labor in Japanese academic life and an academic fragmentation that is also rigid and calcified. That is, unlike in the United States where ethnic and diaspora studies—depending on one's view, either an interdisciplinary endeavor or a new discipline—have become programs or departments in their own right at many colleges and universities, there are no equivalent organizational manifestations in any major Japanese university. Although interdisciplinary and inchoate programs and departments emerge in Japanese academic life, the initiative tends to come from the Ministry of Education, Sports, Culture, Science and Technology (MEXT)—itself something of an interdisciplinary amalgam—and much less from grounds-up, academic-led visions and proposals. Social movements, whether ethnic organizations or minority-rights groups, have almost no discernible input in contemporary Japanese curricular decision-making. The divorce of academic life from social movements—though far from complete—vitiates ideas and voices of civil society, especially from marginal populations, and barely reach the denizens of the ivory tower. The net effect is that there are

few experts on ethnic minorities in Japanese academic life, and they are almost always ensconced in universalistic social science and other programs and departments that perforce focus on more general concerns. Polemically put, someone may write an essay or even a book on multiculturalism or diaspora but she may very well ignore the actually existing minority population in Japan.

Second, and much more significant, the part of the university and academic establishment that has conduits to textbook writing and other means of disseminating ideas and information has *not* been part of the multiethnic consensus. Indeed, there is a powerful nationalist impulse, often rightwing in character, that has profound impact on public opinion and primary and secondary education. Given the secular decline in the influence of progressive intellectuals and the previously powerful and progressive teachers' union, the continuing hold of the conservative and nationalist—at times ultra-nationalist—Liberal Democratic Party has sustained the received wisdom about Japanese monoethnicity that is in turn widely shared by MEXT bureaucrats. Multicultural and multiethnic education common in the United States at all levels of schooling, in other words, is almost absent in Japanese educational life. Here, again, the relative weakness of ethnic-minority movements vitiates the potential countervailing force to the dominant ideology of monoethnicity. Be that as it may, many Japanese finish their schooling without having any sense of the past or the present of multiethnic Japan. Ignorant of actually existing multiethnicity, most Japanese people reflexively presume and embrace the ideology of monoethnic Japan.

Let me stress that it is not the case that there aren't academics and intellectuals who describe and explain the multiethnic character of contemporary Japanese life. Furthermore, there are also politicians, journalists, and others who share, at least in broad outline, the same worldview. It is also the case that, in spite of the persistence of the monoethnic ideology, ethnic minority and foreign populations don't necessary suffer from virulent prejudice and discrimination in contemporary Japanese life. Nevertheless, the declining influence of progressive intellectuals and academics—and that of universities and intellectuals in general—have given greater sway to conservative and nationalist politicians and bureaucrats who promote the old, discredited, but still powerful monoethnic perspective on Japanese history and society. In an otherwise highly educated society, one huge lacuna in people's education about their own history and society is the absence of a multiethnic or multicultural perspective. It is symptomatic that another area of ignorance is modern history, and especially the role of Japanese imperialism and militarism that are intimately intertwined with the multiethnic character of Japan (that is, the impact of colonial rule and the influx of colonial migrants, such as Koreans and Taiwanese). Here the relative quiescence and weakness of progressive forces limit the fragile academic consensus on Japanese imperial wrongs or Japanese multiethnicity.

The Influx of New Foreigners

Beyond the limitations of progressive intellectual outlook and influence lies the sheer plenitude of recent foreign migrant workers in Japan. As noted, there are now about three million of them, mostly recent arrivals and foreign in appearance and outlook. That is, they have superseded the previous dominant populations of linguistically and culturally assimilated minority populations. In so doing, they have accentuated the sense of Japanese difference and even uniqueness among many Japanese people.

The striking fact about the composition of minority populations—however contested the terminology of minority—in the mid-1980s was that, unlike the black-white racial distinction in the United States—they all looked alike, so to speak. Given the uniformity of Western style clothing and, more important, the phenotypical similarity among Burakumin, Okinawans, Koreans, Chinese, and Japanese, there were no easy ways to achieve ethnoracial distinction short of requesting self-identification. Just as significant, the vast majority of them were linguistically and culturally part of the Japanese mainstream. All the usual ways in which ethnoracial differentiation is achieved—by the way people look, talk, and act—was absent in Japan in the mid-1980s. It is in this phenomenological context that the small population of Europeans and Americans, mostly white, provided the self-evident case for Japanese monoethnicity.

Nevertheless, precisely because these seemingly Japanese people were *not* Japanese, they provided a compelling case for the multiethnic constitution of Japanese peoplehood. Beyond the vague historical recollection about the influx of people from the Korean peninsula or Chinese mainland hundreds and thousands of years ago, the actually existing minority populations—once they stopped trying to pass as ordinary Japanese and began to articulate their ethnic differentiation—provided a cogent standpoint from which to *prove* the notion of multiethnic Japan. As I have noted, we cannot understand the multiethnic character of modern Japan without observing Japanese imperial expansion, whether in gobbling up Hokkaido and Okinawa, or colonizing Korea and Taiwan and thereby generating colonial migrants.

By 2020, however, the condition of possibility of that proof has evaporated. It is not that the minority populations of the mid-1980s have disappeared. However, Burakumin and Okinawans are now, at least from the standpoint of the monoethnic outlook, irrefutably Japanese. The very effort to assert ethnic distinction is seen as something akin to racist prejudice and discrimination. It is only the dwindling population of Zainichi—for whom the intermarriage rate is about 90%, largely to the ethnic Japanese population—who has the capacity and the will to articulate the message of multiethnic Japan. Yet they are overwhelmed—in number and volume—by the recent arrival of South Koreans.

South Korean "newcomers" began to come in significant numbers to Japan in the 1980s, often as students and temporary workers, but their size

has only increased over the decades. The widespread enthusiasm for South Korean popular culture, most obviously K-pop in 2020, has rendered them as a visible population, and some areas of Tokyo and other large cities are irrefutably South Korean in look, feel, and smell, such as Shin Ōkubo in Tokyo. The latest food or fashion trends from Seoul can be found in the streets of Tokyo via social and organization networks of South Koreans. Although Zainichi have resided in this and other area, the sale clerks and waitresses that Japanese clients face are fresh arrivals from South Korea who almost always speak Japanese with discernible Korean accent. That is, recent South Korean arrivals have superseded Zainichi as the visible presence in contemporary Japanese life. Indeed, they threaten to erase the memory and the very existence of the Zainichi population but their sheer presence.

The same story could be told about Chinatown in Yokohama where recent Chinese arrivals far outnumber the older population of Taiwanese and some mainland Chinese settlers. Indeed, the number of Chinese people in Japan—students, workers, tourists, and so on—makes them the largest and most visible foreigner population. Whether derided for explosive shopping sprees (*bakugai*) or overwhelming previously Japanese-dominated places, such as expensive sushi restaurants, the Chinese presence in Japan is as unavoidable as it is controversial. No one talks about third- or fourth-generation ethnic Chinese people in Japan; everyone has a thing or two to say about *the* Chinese, meaning the recent arrivals, short- or long-term, from the Chinese mainland. As with the case of ethnic Koreans, for most people both Koreans and Chinese are *all* foreigners and recent arrivals.

The massive influx of foreigners—not only South Koreans and Chinese but also other Asians, Latin Americans, and Africans—has made foreigners an indelible presence in contemporary Japanese life. At the same time, however, they are irrefutably *foreigners*, who as recent arrivals are often unable to navigate effectively in the language or culture of Japan, and therefore ostensibly unassimilable. The simple phenomenology of interethnic interaction is to accentuate the sense of Japanese homogeneity and difference. In terms of everyday life, then, as in the rarefied world of intellectual discourse and debate, the monoethnic outlook continues to dominate. That is, Japanese people seem ethnically and culturally homogeneous in the presence of, —and at the same time completely different from—recent foreign migrants.

Therefore, there was in the 2010s a renewed spate of media and even academic interest on the "problem" of foreign workers in Japanese society. The recent, and relatively large, influx of foreign workers seemed to render Japan as an "immigrant society" from the presumably homogeneous one of the very recent past.[5] In so doing, the past and the previous influx and the "problem" of foreign workers in the 1980s was effaced, as were all the streams of immigration in modern, and even premodern, Japanese history. The rapidly increasing number of foreign migrant workers in the

1980s, attracted as they were by Japanese economic expansion, had generated widespread alarm about the problem of foreign workers as a clear and present danger to the integrity of the Japanese body politic in general and to the view of monoethnic Japan. The economic stagnation in the 1990s, however, led to the dispersal of foreign migrant workers away from Japan, and hence laid the ground for thinking that Japan was returning to its "normal" state of monoethnicity. The reprise in the 2010s was no different, including amnesia about the past of foreign migrant workers who had been coming to the Japanese archipelago before but especially after the Meiji Resotration. In the 2010s, the brouhaha of the new Japan, whether as a society of immigrants or a multiethnic society, effaced the past realities of multiethnicity, and thereby merely reproduced, and possibly even strengthened, the ideology of monoethnic Japan. The threat of foreign encroachment, in other words, merely strengthened the idea of monoethnic Japan.

There is also a more abstract, cognitive dimension. The distinction between inside and outside, however universal across culture and time, is an especially accentuated notion in Japanese life. The inside (*uchi*) is rendered homogeneous and seems radically distinct from the outside (*soto*). The massive influx of foreigners, therefore, make many Japanese realize that their society is not globalized, international, and possibly even multiethnic. However, it also makes them reaffirm the notion of Japanese monoethnicity. They are, to reiterate, homogeneous and different. Therein lies one of the powerful forces that sustain the monoethnic Japan outlook in contemporary Japanese life. Put differently, more foreigners will *not* make Japanese people reconsider the prevailing notion of monoethnic Japan. Indeed, the massive influx may merely reinforce the ideology of monoethnic Japan.

Cultural Involution

Finally, another powerful cultural trend that sustains the notion of monoethnic Japan is cultural involution. The most extreme articulation of this view is that of nascent populists, called *netouyo* or the internet-based right-wing nationalists.

After the end of World War II and the collapse of imperialism and the Emperor ideology, the newfound faith of Japan can be summarized as reconstruction and growth.[6] The indisputable achievements of postwar rapid economic growth generated rumors of "Japan as number one," and the property-speculation bubble of the late 1980s and the early 1990s that was the apotheosis of the faith in economic growth and material pursuits. The spectacular bursting of the bubble ushered in a period of economic stagnation and even decline. Observers, once bullish about the bright future of Japan as the supreme world economy, began to talk about the "lost decade" and then the "lost two decades." As the rise of China superseded the discourse of Japan as number one, few observers by the twenty-first century, whether within or without Japan, could muster much enthusiasm about

Japan's dynamism or future. If postwar rapid economic growth was an economic version of prewar militaristic and imperialistic expansion, then what was to replace the expansionist ambition that underlaid modern Japan in efforts to catch up with the West?

The postwar era of rapid economic growth, capped by the bubble years, unleashed desire and spawned dreams of world travel and conspicuous consumption, and the general orientation of Japan was outward and expansionist. That is, in terms of the economy it stressed export orientation, and in terms of culture and the arts it looked to the West as aspiration and inspiration. The collapse of the property-speculation bubble and the consequent economic stagnation, while not exactly extinguishing the economy's export orientation, ushered in a period of modesty and inward turn. It is an expression of counter-globalization, however, attenuated in intensity and limited in scope. The state of *cultural involution* valorized domestic tourist destinations, local and regional products, and a reappreciation of the safe, secure, and comfortable country that Japan had become. Put differently, rather than wining and dining in Paris, climbing Mount Everest, or sporting a Birkin bag, many Japanese people began to pursue Class B gourmet (inexpensive restaurants), domestic *onsen* (hot spring) travel, and Uniqlo and Muji fashion. That is, the vaunted ambition to conquer the world's best destinations and to acquire their best products turned inward to domestic, and modest, things and places. Japanese people, to put it polemically, ceded the role of global tourists and explosive shopping sprees to the now ascendant Chinese, who in turn could be looked down for their unfashionable explosive shopping.

Needless to say, it is not that Japanese corporations have ceased to export their products and promote international trade or that Japanese people have stopped dreaming of exotic foreign destinations or desiring expensive imported products. However, there is an indisputable diminution of ambition that once characterized Japan, and the newfound stress on small pleasures and modest goals. It is not an accident that the two best known Japanese people outside of Japan are probably Haruki Murakami, the novelist of unambitious protagonists, and Marie Kondo, the triage guru. Neither is set for world domination, much less anything aggressive or expansionist. Cultural involution can also be seen in everything from the secular decline in Japanese students studying abroad to the diminished ambition of Japanese foreign policy and global presence. The trend is most striking for younger generations that came of age after the property-speculation bubble. All the talks of their elders about rapid economic growth or "Japan as number one" are fanciful tales from the past that cannot be recaptured in the twenty-first century. Wary of speculative investment or get-rich quick schemes, young people live, by and large, in a stationary society and expect modest, if any, economic growth and exhibit truncated personal ambition.

Cultural involution is ultimately about valorizing the modest and the domestic. In so doing, it foments *small* nationalism. None of the grandeurs of

the prewar imperialist project that sought to annex much of Asia and the Pacific to the Japanese empire, or the postwar desire to become the premier global economy, can be found in the new small nationalist of contemporary Japanese life. Rather than cultivating pride in the Emperor or the empire or embracing the economy and export, the newfound stress is on the small pleasures of ordinary and everyday Japanese life. Hence, there is the much-repeated rhetoric of "I am glad to have been born Japanese," whether because one has downed a plate of sushi or soaked in a hot spring. Japan may not be number one—who cares?—but it is a good, possibly great, place to have been born in and live. It is also a form of small conservatism that takes pride in the ordinary virtues of contemporary Japanese life, ranging from its high hygienic standards to its undeniable levels of safety and security. The idea of Japan being a lukewarm bath—comfortable enough to stay in for a long time, and making it undesirable to face the cold, cruel world outside—is widely mooted and recognized, and generates at once a propensity toward the inward turn and the hesitancy of ambitious or expansive projects, such as adventurous travel around the world, much less military misadventures of the prewar sort.

There is nothing particularly wrong with the orientation of cultural involution, especially in the current age of environmental limits. Mass tourism or conspicuous consumption can be more of a problem than staycation or ascetic lifestyle. However, there is a permutation of small nationalism that manifests itself, almost always anonymously and on the internet. Called *netouyo*, primarily male online bloggers and trolls promote populist nationalism and target their enemies in the name of the nation that they claim to represent.[7] It has been a noticeable presence in Japanese internet life since around the time of the bursting of the property-speculation bubble.[8] Although widely deemed to be a population of young, disaffected males, the actual age range is wide, with many older men, and includes some women to boot. It has notable ties to postwar Japanese conservative ideologues and movements, including that of the dominant Liberal Democratic Party, but it is probably best to see them as detritus of the post-bubble years.[9] Some may yearn to return to the golden age of rapid economic growth, as was the case of the Shinzo Abe administration that ruled Japan for much of the 2010s, but no major *netouyo* voices yearn for prewar militarism (as much as they may romanticize kamikaze pilots) or even postwar rapid economic growth. Certainly, they rarely articulate any anti-American sentiments and bemoan Japan's role as something of a client state of the United States. Rather, we should regard *netouyo* as the Japanese variant of populist nationalism that is rife in the advanced industrial societies in the twenty-first century. As with other national populist movements, the Japanese variant is at once nostalgic for the past greatness or goodness and seethes with resentment for the decline. It is not so much that they have a clear vision of the future—as I have stressed, few yearn for prewar militarism or postwar rapid economic growth – but they share with their European and North American counterparts a sense

of their withering, possibly disappearing, privilege, usually as men (as with other populist movements, the Japanese variant is strikingly misogynist) and as *Japanese*. As I have noted, a once mighty economic powerhouse has fallen, superseded by their "inferior" neighbors and erstwhile colonies China and South Korea. What distinguishes the Japanese manifestation of populism is that they tend to dwell online and rarely manifest themselves in public or speak out using their own names. Hence, Japan strikes many observers as a country without populists, but this is a misleading view.[10]

Curiously the most popular target of *netouyo* in the twenty-first century has been Zainichi Koreans. Especially in the form of Zaitokukai, the organization devoted to dismantling Zainichi privileges and debunking Zainichi-created myths, the argument runs that ethnic Koreans have received favorable and therefore unfair treatments from government bureaucracies and gained positive media attention from the left-wing-dominated mass media and the academic world. In delineating a series of unfounded and unbelievable privileges proffered to ethnic Koreans, the populist and the nationalist outlook of a minority often becomes the most vocal, and even dominant, discourse on the largest existing minority population in contemporary Japan. Indeed, in the light of what I have argued about the influx of recent South Korean immigrants, it would seem that Zaitokukai and its allies have rendered a paradoxical service of making Zainichi Koreans a visible and discussed population. Certainly, few mainstream commentators say much about the diasporic Korean population in Japan. Nevertheless, the internet-based rightwing, in articulating an extreme form of racial hatred and the unfounded urban legend about minority privileges, not only smear Japan' widely held view of itself as a tolerant society but also contribute to the myth of monoethnic Japan. Japan the monoethnic society must be defended from enemies within and without, whether Zainichi Koreans or Chinese mainlanders. In this regard, they serve as the Japanese version of the often anti-Semitic and almost always anti-immigrant discourses of Western populists in the 2010s.

There is, however, a paradox at the heart of the rightwing, populist nationalist hatred, especially against Zainichi Koreans. On the one hand, as I noted, they keep the population a visible and seemingly important force in Japanese life. They do so by exercising discursive racism, a form of cyberbullying that occasionally manifests itself as real-life discrimination, such as harassing ethnic Korean pupils. On the other hand, they embrace the monoethnic ideology and argue for the ultimate illegitimacy of ethnic Koreans living in Japan. In this regard, they recapitulate the dark decades of Zainichi existence in the 1960s and 1970s when they were simultaneously believed *not* to exist because Japan is a monoethnic society but also remained a discriminated, bullied minority population in school and workplace, in marriage and everyday life. In this regard, then, their outlook is nostalgic to the monoethnic heydays of the post-World War II decades. Thus, the populist-nationalist discourse escalates small nationalism to promote not only a celebration of Japan but also its cardinal belief in its monoethnic constitution.

Given that the relative decline of Japan—no one talks about Japan as number one—cannot be separated from the rise of China—surely one of the few least common denominators in global chatter—it may seem strange that Japanese populists are focused on Zainichi Koreans and not mainland China. In part their myopia is part of cultural involution; almost all the salient issues are domestic in character. It is also in part that China is not only far away, relatively speaking, but also powerful. That is, just as Japanese rightwing nationalists rarely complain about US imperialism, they also tend to downplay their criticism of China: both are powerful whereas Zainichi Koreans patently are *not*. There are, furthermore, elements on the right that clearly benefit from China, such as in business dealings, and excess fulmination against China may be countered by the very rightwing that promotes anti-Chinese sentiments. It is of course not the case that *netouyo* and the Japanese rightwing in general don't inveigh against the Chinese—they do so, and constantly to boot—but cultural involution and the propensity to pick on the weak (what the Japanese call *yowaimono ijime*) render Zainichi Koreans as the prime targets of cyber bullying. There is, then, something like the situational logic of someone who is bullied by superior powers (Americans, Chinese) who in turn stake their place by bullying their weaker counterparts (e.g. Zainichi Koreans, women).

Finally, there is the relative weakness of civil society. Not only are ethnic-based social movements marginal—their small numbers and their disinclination to enter local and national politics fatally compromise their political power and influence—Japanese organizations and movements that protect and promote foreigners and minorities remain few and far in between. Symptomatic in this regard is the curious embrace of abstract ideals and principles on the Japanese Left. When curbs on hate speech were mooted, a surprising number of Japanese progressives remained reluctant to support legislation against hate speech. Why? Because they proclaimed their allegiance to "free speech." At the risk of overgeneralization, contemporary civil society in Japan, reflecting at once the tottering nature of progressive political parties and social movements, is far from being able to counter effectively against rightwing nationalists and populists. This is *not* to say that Japan is somehow irredeemably rightwing or racist – far from it—but Japanese ethnoracial politics remains beholden to the grip of monoethnic ideology.

In summary, cultural involution, and especially its most extreme manifestation as internet-based rightwing nationalism and populism, contributes to the myth of monoethnic Japan.

Conclusion

Given the lack of academic consensus and impotence, the influx of new foreigners is treated as if non-ethnic Japanese have arrived in Japan for the first time, and the trend toward cultural involution, the idea of Japan as a

multiethnic or multicultural society remains a minority view. Rather, these three trends accentuate the vision of monoethnic Japan that is ultimately inimical to multiethnic or multicultural existence.

Let me stress that the ideology of monoethnic Japan does *not* necessarily promote extreme xenophobia or racism in contemporary Japanese life. What I have called small conservatism is not a font of racist hatred. In insisting on the Japanese past and present of monoethnicity, however, not only does it overlook the past of multiethnicity but also renders the present of multiethnic co-existence not only wrong but also illegitimate. Historical and contemporary justice requires a proper understanding of the multiethnic past as well as the multiethnic present.

Notes

1 Lie, *Multiethnic Japan*.
2 Oguma, *Tan'itsu minzoku shinwa no kigen* [The Origin of Ethnic Homogeneity Myth]; Weiner, *Japan's Minorities*.
3 NHK Shuzaihan, *Dēta de yomitoku gaikokujin "izon" Nippon* [Reading Data to Explain Japanese 'Dependence' on Foreigners]; and Nagayoshi, *Imin to Nihon shakai* [Immigrants and Japanese Government]. See these sources for demographic data on foreigners.
4 This section draws on Lie, *Multiethnic Japan;* Lie, *Modern Peoplehood;* and Lie, *Zainichi (Koreans in Japan)*.
5 Murohashi, *Nihon no ikoku* [The Foreign in Japan]; Takaya, *Imin seisaku to wa nanika* [What Is Immigration Policy]; and Nagayoshi, *Imin to Nihon shakai* [Immigrants and Japanese Government].
6 Lie, *Japan, the Sustainable Society*.
7 Yoshida, *Netto to aikoku* [The Internet and Patriotism].
8 Itō, *Netto uha no rekishishakaigaku* [Historical Sociology of the Internet Rightwing].
9 Kurayama, *Hoshu to netouyo no kingendaishi* [Modern and Contemporary History of the Internet Rightwing].
10 Lie, "East Asian Exceptionalism."

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5 Southeast Asian Mobilities and Immobilities in East Asian Space

Globalization, Migration, and the Roles of Civil Society

Khatharya Um

Introduction

Heightened globalization and shifts in global balance of power over the last four decades have engendered new mobilities, immobilities, and relationalities, with profound implications for governance, human and national security, social justice, and civil society mobilization. The globalizing force of technology, particularly the Internet, increased affordability of travel, and strengthened transnational networks and infrastructures have facilitated mobility and the maintenance of transnational social relations that destabilize assumptions about territorialization, borders, boundaries, and spatiality. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as of 2020, 272 million people—that is, almost four out of every one hundred people in the world—live outside their country of birth, including almost 24 million Southeast Asians.[1] These transnational flows often follow the contours of colonial and militarized cartography, but they also map new circulations. As such they reflect not only an increase in mobility but also in the diversity of migrants and the plurality of origins and destinations in the global migration circuits.

While Asia historically has been a source of migration, recent decades have also seen an increase in the scale and complexity of migration from and into the region. In 2019, one in three migrants worldwide comes from the Asia-Pacific region.[2] Emigration for employment from the region grew approximately 6% annually between the late 1980s to late 2000, with about 2.6 million people leaving their homes in search of work each year.[3] From South and Southeast Asia, migration surged by 8% between 2019 and 2020. Also a migrant receiving region, Asia simultaneously hosts 14.2% of the world's 169 million migrant workers.[4] Between 2019 and 2020, immigration into East Asia grew by almost 11%.[5] With some countries being simultaneously migrant sending and receiving and the migration paths at times circuitous, the conceptual lines between core and periphery, source and destination, are blurred.

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Whereas migration studies have long focused on global South-North movement, the emergence of Asia as an important center of rapid growth has shifted attention to intra-regional connections, dynamics, processes, and practices. In 2019, 43% of Asian migrants moved to other countries in Asia[6] including 50% of the estimated 23.6 million Southeast Asian migrant workers, of whom more than 7 million—i.e. two-thirds—moved within Southeast Asia itself.[7] These intra-regional dynamics underscore the increased transnational connections among regional states and heightened sense of interdependence that bode well for greater understanding, shared sense of accountability, cooperation, and stability within the region. In a more sobering light, they also illuminate troubling continuities. Historical animus, unequal power relations, neocolonial practices and extractive policies, inequities, and exploitation—in some instances amounting to modern day slavery—remain disconcerting regional realities.

Asia's political and economic landscape, thus, is marked, simultaneously by robust growth, democratizing reforms, and stability, as well as persisting fault lines of conflict, socio-economic precarity, and "democratic recession."[8] These conditions are mutually constitutive products of a global system in which growth and development are accompanied by a scramble for cheap and disposable labor, resources, and markets to meet the needs of rapidly expanding economies, particularly that of China. This process of resource and access accumulation reifies new imperial formations and expedient power interests and reproduces new systems of unequal relations, inequity, tension, and conflict. The result is an upsurge of migration, shaped by the symbiosis between the labor shortage in East Asia and opportunity shortage in Southeast Asia, that has profound implications for states and societies in Asia.

This paper critically examines the nexus between globalization and migration in the linked spatialities of East and Southeast Asia, and the critical roles—actual and potential—of civil society actors and institutions in strengthening migrant rights regimes. Though cognizant of internal migration as a major concern in Asia, the paper focuses on cross-border migration especially from the relatively lesser-known Southeast Asian source countries, both legal and irregular. Underscoring the links between macro developments such as global capitalism and local impact such as landlessness and rural displacement, it argues for the importance of looking beyond the macroeconomic calculus to the impact on individual migrants, their families, and communities. It also examines the effects of these new im/mobilities on politics, societies, and social mobilization in East Asia, specifically around migrant rights and the limits and limiting forces that undercut their effective application. While the literature often approaches migration as typologies and binaries—political refugees and economic migrants, legal and illegal–migrant experiences are not neatly compartmentalized; labels often don't align with lived experiences, and classifications often bleed into or are superimposed onto each other. Many of the displaced, like the

Rohingyas, are not only stateless refugees, but some may also be undocumented, trafficked, and sold.

Conceptualizing Space

Within the analytic frame of this paper, the concept of "space" is deployed in its different manifestations—as interconnected geographies, entangled social and political processes, discourses and practices, landscapes of dominance and subjugation, and moments of possibilities and entrenchment. These spaces necessarily involve power relations and negotiations, and as such are not territorially bounded. The socially and politically constructed "East Asian space," as integrally tied to the concept of power, is therefore not geographically confined to East Asia. Rather, it traces the wider projection of East Asian political and economic power as reflected in asymmetrical relations and dependencies, in foreign-owned concessions complicit in the displacement of communities, and in neocolonial practices that exploit and disenfranchise.

In those critical aspects, the geopolitical and economic spaces of East and Southeast Asia are interconnected. The forces that create both opportunities and disenfranchisement emanate from the same source, are overlapping and reinforcing. The voracious appetite of industrialized and industrializing Asian economies for markets, raw materials, land, and cheap labor contributes to the dislocation of peoples and communities, transforming them from self-sufficient landowner—cultivators to landless wage laborers. Migrants, in essence, embody the power asymmetry and hierarchies of nation-states that travel with them through different places and spaces of encounter. Negotiations of different spatialities extend from the political, economic, and social conditions both at home and in the receiving contexts that marginalize and persecute, to the juridical-legislative and bureaucratic realms of residency, asylum and employment application, and the intimate sphere of marriage and family. As such, these spaces are also contested, appropriated, negated, re/claimed, and reconfigured, for the space of subjugation is also that of resistance.

Gender, Race, and Migration

Migration is a process and an experience that are mediated by a host of factors. Labor migration is not only shaped by the needs, policies, and priorities of receiving countries but also those of source countries. Who leaves, can or is allowed to leave, to where, and under what terms are informed by conditions in both sending and receiving contexts. For instance, some source countries responded to rising concerns over the abuse of female domestic workers with more stringent emigration policies; in other instances, it is the host country that regulates admission conditions.

Factors such as gender, class, and race inform not only the policy but also the migration experience. The labor market is gendered and racialized, with South and Southeast Asian male migrants recruited or trafficked particularly for work in fishing, agriculture, and construction sectors, and female migrants for domestic and factory work, care giving, and the entertainment industry. Though women have always been an integral, albeit often invisible feature of cross-border migration, the nature of the globalized economy enhances their participation in the new transnational mobilities. Asian women now constitute the fastest growing category of the world's migrant workers. Women account for almost 50% of the Southeast Asian migrant workforce.[9] Among Cambodian cross-border migrants, about a third are women.[10] The nature of work and perceived comparative advantage of women in growth sectors, socio-economic changes in developed countries, and increased casualization of labor all contribute to rising demand for feminized labor. In Southeast Asia, the growth of the garment industry drew women from rural villages to the cities and cross-border factories such as those near the Thai-Myanmar border that largely employed migrant women from Myanmar. With increased participation of East Asian women in the professional workforce, domestic work is left to be performed by migrants. At almost 80% of the migrant workforce in Asia,[11] domestic workers have become an important feature of the global socio-economic landscape, and one of the least protected; of the estimated 38.3 million domestic workers in Asia, of whom over 78% are women, 71% have no legal limit to their working hours.[12]

Women are not only migrating for work at a greater rate, but also for marriage and family reunification. While existing literature tends to look at female migrants as either labor migrants or marriage partners—i.e., as workers or wives—the growing practice of what I refer to as "organized transnational marriage" that has emerged as an important facet of Asian intra-regional migration, especially from Southeast to East Asia, destabilizes this false binary between economics and intimacy. To be distinguished from the more conventional transnational family formation, it is shaped by the imperatives of the new globalities and inherent racial, gender, and class stratifications. In Korea, a man working in the agricultural sector is much more likely to have a Vietnamese than a Chinese wife even though Chinese constitutes a higher percentage of foreign brides.[13] Racialized hierarchy not only informs who marries whom but also how the brokered brides are regarded and treated, whether simply as indentured servants or as wives and mothers. Racism also undergirds other practices, attitudes and policies in East Asia including the resistance to immigration reform. The rapid increase of foreign workers notwithstanding, only 2.5% of people currently employed in Japan are non-Japanese.[14] Former Prime Minister Abe's statement that Japan should push for greater participation of women and the elderly in the workforce before entertaining a change in labor admission policy is indicative of this resistance to diversifying the workforce.[15]

Historicizing Southeast Asian Migration in Asia-Pacific

While Southeast Asia has long been a site and source of migration, the movement of Southeast Asians throughout the world in recent decades has grown massively in scale and complexity. Reflecting different circumstances and catalysts, Southeast Asian migrants embody layered and complex histories and experiences, and include political refugees, labor migrants, brides, and individuals and communities of mixed and evolving status. The end of the "Vietnam War" in 1975 and ensuing refugee exodus from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia marked the emergence of the historically unprecedented Southeast Asian diaspora, and one of the early mass movements of Southeast Asians within the Asia-Pacific region. Though most were resettled in the West, a smaller number of refugees resettled in East Asia. The Southeast Asian community in Japan began with a small handful of some 6,000 Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian post-war refugees. A larger group of some 260,000 Vietnamese, 98% of whom were of Chinese ancestry, fled to China between 1979 and 1982 when conflict erupted between the two countries in what is also known as the Third Indochina War.[16]

While post-war refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia commanded much international attention, the protracted conflict in Myanmar was less visible. Relatively little is known of the over 100,000 refugees who have lived in Thailand with unregularized status since the mid-1980s, many in the northeast where the manufacturing industries were relocated. Many of the men also work in Thailand's thriving fishing and shrimping industry. A small handful made their way, legally or illegally, to other countries, including Japan. With renewed conflicts in Myanmar, cross-border movement has resumed particularly since the military coup in 2021.

Development, Dislocations, and Migration

While political conflict had catalyzed and continues to catalyze displacement within and across borders in Southeast Asia, the effects of globalization and development have also contributed to migration from and within the subregion. The transition of the socialist countries in Southeast Asia out of their previous isolation and toward greater integration into the global economy in the 1980s spurred rapid modernization and growth over the last four decades, though not without social costs. Global tourism, foreign investment, and capitalist ventures have created both new structures of opportunities and of inequities and disenfranchisement that contribute to increased emigration. Among the growing number of Vietnamese migrants are the returning workers from Eastern Europe, seeking alternate destinations. In Cambodia, the economic and political transitions of the late 1980s-early 1990s catapulted the country from virtual autarky to heady economic liberalism. As in Myanmar, the dislocations engendered by years of political turmoil are exacerbated by elusive transparency, accountability, and the

rule of law, and insufficient policy attention to the adverse consequences of development. Export-oriented economic strategy, aid, and investment of the last three decades have yielded impressive growth but also disenfranchisement of many of the nation's population. While the country has achieved a lower middle-income status as of 2015 with a per capita gross national income of $1,214, almost 35% of the population continue to live in economic precarity, and 12% in severe poverty.[17] With high dropout rates at secondary levels, especially in the rural areas,[18] many young Cambodians are unable to break the cycle of poverty through educational advancement.

The reintroduction of private property in the late 1980s has also fueled skyrocketing real estate price. With unbridled development, land has become a prime commodity, spurring speculation, land grab, and forced evictions that progressively push the urban poor into squatter enclaves or to remote areas without sufficient infrastructure, and limited or no economic prospect. As a result, land has emerged as one of the most pressing and implosive issues in Cambodia. The landfilling of the 90 hectares Boeung Kak lake in Phnom Penh for private development[19] had forcibly displaced an estimated 3,500 families who lived around the lake and depended on its resources to supplement their livelihood. Families who were similarly displaced by the controversial Borei Keila development were still awaiting fair compensation years after the demolition of their homes. Phork Sophin, a Borei Keila resident who was summoned by authorities for protesting in front of the developer's home reflected:

> She cleared the houses and grabbed our land without providing solutions, but when I protest, they accuse us of ruining her reputation… Where is the justice? The poor like us cannot get justice. Who offers justice to us?[20]

Urban development has also seen to the recent demolition of one of Phnom-Penh's historic landmarks, popularly known as the "White Building," to make way for an $80-million, high-rise complex. Constructed in the 1960s as an affordable housing project, it was home, in its derelict state, to 493 families, some 25 of whom had refused to be relocated until recently.

Dislocations in the rural areas where 80% of the population live are even more acute. Global demands for commodities such as cassava, cashews, sugar, timber, and rubber have resulted in the proliferation of land, logging, and other resource extractive concessions. An estimated 12% of the country's total land area—amounting to over 5.2 million acres of land concessions—have been granted to private companies,[21] with Chinese interests controlling the largest area, totaling almost 1 million acres.[22]

The adverse ramifications of these large development concessions are multifold. Land grab and forced evictions have displaced once self-subsistent farmers, rendering many of them landless or land-poor, and exacerbated rural immiseration and social conflict. According to a 2020 World Bank

report, more than 10% of rural Cambodians are landless and a large number cultivate less than 0.5 hectare yielding less than 50% of the nutritional needs of an average rural family[23] Many of the concessions also encroach upon water bodies, and communal and forest land that are the sources of livelihood and lifeways for many communities. Of the concessions made in 2012 alone, more than 270,000 hectares were of protected forest areas.[24] Fueled by rising price of rubber on the international market, rubber plantations have proliferated in those once forested areas, especially since 2010,[25] while illegal logging threatens the few remaining forest reserves such the Preah Roka Wildlife Sanctuary, a 223,287-acre national park that has been designated as a wildlife refuge. Between 2001 and 2020, Cambodia lost 28% of its forest cover, with 30% increase in loss between 2015 and 2016 alone; 92% of the loss was from deforestation.[26] NASA imaging reveals that only 3% of the county is currently covered in primary forest, and only one intact forest landscape remains in the country.[27] For the Bunong and many other ethnic minority communities that are dependent on forest products for their livelihood, the loss of access to resin trees has deprived them of their principal source of cash income, and heightened their economic insecurity. Flooding, altered wildlife habitat, and other environmental consequences of deforestation further meant the loss of vital hunting and foraging grounds, and grazing land that have compelled some families to sell their domestic animals.

As with land, timber, and mining concessions, the construction of hydropower dams, most financed by China,[28] has been a source of contention and conflict in Southeast Asia. Though important to the countries' development, the adverse impact on local communities is also significant. Floodwaters from the dams have destroyed livelihoods and villages, forcing the relocation of thousands of villagers, many of them ethnic minorities.[29] In Cambodia, the Lower Sesan II project alone affected at least 860 families who were forced to abandon their ancestral villages or to live without legal rights in nearby forests to protect their land and ancestral graves. As with deforestation, the dams are also projected to have adverse ecosystem impact, particularly on fish migratory routes. With fish consumption accounting for 37% of the total protein intake and 76% of the animal protein intake of rural Cambodians,[30] dwindling fish supplies contribute to rural food insecurity.

Forced evictions have not only dislocated villagers physically and economically, but also culturally.

> I used to pray to this mountain, to this forest, but now this forest is gone. They killed the trees, and the spirits were there…Should I still pray to this forest? Where are the spirits now?[31]

The once thriving community in Srekor has become "a silent water world, its residential, historical, and spiritual sites vanished from view."[32]

Widespread protests by villagers and forest activists that continue to erupt despite violent reprisals underscore the desperate situations in many rural communities.

What we are witnessing in many parts of Southeast Asia is the emergence of new imperial formations with extractive ideologies, systems and structures of exploitation, and multifaceted dislocations that reproduce features of the earlier colonialism. Combined, land concessions, dam constructions and deforestation have dislocated communities, transformed formerly self-sufficient farmers and villagers into underpaid and often seasonal wage laborers, and worsened human insecurity. While trade, export cropping, and infrastructural development projects may create jobs, they are, for the most part, short-term and insufficient to offset the protracted social and economic dislocations. Rural indebtedness has escalated, with an estimated two-thirds of Cambodian households being in debt, many at usurious rates. With hundreds of thousands of the country's poor forced off their land, landlessness and disputes have become a source of socio-economic and political tension, and a catalyst of outmigration. Ironically, many countries, like Cambodia, are both migrant originating and migrant receiving. As rural Cambodians are displaced from their villages, many Vietnamese and Chinese have migrated to Cambodia in search of new opportunities.[33]

Whether the result of conflict or the adverse consequences of development, rural dislocations and increased immiseration leave many vulnerable Southeast Asians with little choice but to migrate; in some rural areas, entire villages have migrated, leaving only children and the elderly. With opportunities in the cities equally limited, cross-border migration remains the only viable recourse for many. Southeast Asia has thus become the source of some of the largest migrant flows within and beyond the region over the last four decades. An estimated 2.2 million Filipinos, over 2 million Malaysians and an equal number of Indonesians worked overseas in 2016, most on short-term contract. In 2016, some 126,296 Vietnamese were already working abroad in over 28 countries and territories, with Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia as top destinations,[34] though unofficial estimates place the total number of Vietnamese migrants at 1,120,000.[35] From Cambodia, an estimated 1/2–1 million are currently working overseas, with some 116,000 having migrated to Thailand through official channels over the last decade; other estimates place Cambodian migrants currently working in Thailand at closer to one million, of which an estimated 500,000 are undocumented.[36] Burmese migrant community in Thailand is also sizeable, the majority with irregular status despite their protracted stay and importance to Thai economy.[37]

From all Southeast Asian countries, migration occurs through both legal and illegal channels, is both intra-regional and global, with destinations dictated by cost, immigration policies, workers' skills and networks, among other factors. The option to migrate is not afforded to those who are in the direst circumstances; "to be able to afford to be sent to Malaysia requires

money; you need to pay recruiters."[38] Those less resourced remain closer to home, while others embark on a longer journey, many through unauthorized channels because of the prohibitive cost of legal migration.

Migrant exploitation and abuse are rampant. Many workers, already straddled with debts to employment brokers and traffickers, are imprisoned by their conditions and, in many instances, by their illegal status. Nhes, a Cambodian irregular migrant in Thailand, spoke of her situation: "None of my three kids ever went to school… I can't afford to pay for their study, and in Thailand I can't send them to school as we're undocumented."[39] Government efforts to regularize migration through worker registration, such as those undertaken by Thailand, are undercut by cost, fear of increased vulnerabilities short period allotted for the registration process, program inaccessibility to workers in some sectors such as fishermen who are largely away at sea, lack of personal documents, and corruption.

The "Pull" of East Asia

Historically, Asia-Pacific has always been a region of vibrant crisscrossing of refugees, exiles, students, revolutionaries, traders, and sojourners. Chinese and Indian migration to Southeast Asia predated and grew under European colonial rule. Movement from Southeast to East Asia also occurred, albeit at a smaller scale. In the 1920s–1940s, students, revolutionaries, and political exiles made their way to China and Japan. This trend continued after independence, sustained in the 1960s and 1970s through sponsored educational and professional training programs for students, administrators, and the military.

Southeast Asian migration to East Asia increased in the post-1970s as a result of economic and political developments in both sub-regions. Conflict in the region, elevated roles of East Asian countries such as Japan in international diplomacy, and East Asian investment in Southeast Asia strengthened bilateral ties, paving the way for intra-regional flows of people, capital, technology, and ideas. As a result, Southeast Asian migration to East Asia grew not only in scale and scope but also in complexity, ranging from war-displaced refugees, to semi-skilled and unskilled workers and transnational marriages, and occurring through both regular and irregular channels.

A pivotal moment in Southeast Asian migration was the communist seizure of power in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia in 1975 that triggered the initial refugee exodus; nearly 1000 South Vietnamese refugees landed in Pusan just days after the collapse of Saigon,[40] with about 200 opting to resettle permanently in South Korea. Between 1977 and 1979, some 260,000 Vietnamese, 98% of whom were ethnic Chinese, also fled to and resettled in mainland China in what has been called "one of the most successful integration programs in the world."[41] The condition in Hong Kong, where almost 200,000 "boat people" had sought refuge, was less favorable with thousands

languishing in the camps for years, or were repatriated. Some 12,000 Sino-Vietnamese refugees also made their way to Taiwan. Taiwan's role as a first asylum country, however, was largely obscured, because the number of refugees who transited through or resettled permanently in the country were omitted from UN records due to the country's non-membership in the United Nations.

For Japan, the resettlement of over 8,000 Southeast Asian refugees, mostly Vietnamese, between 1975 and 1995 and the 1979 ratification of the international human rights conventions marked important points of departure, but they did not fundamentally alter the country's refugee policy that remains restrictive despite international and domestic push for liberalization. At 1.2%, Japan's refugee acceptance rate is one of the lowest in the world;[42] in 2017, a total of three refugees were admitted for permanent resettlement. As the fourth leading donor to the UN refugee efforts, Japan has consistently argued that it has contributed to the refugee cause in ways more impactful than resettlement: "You can save the lives of 30 or 40 people at a refugee camp overseas by using the same amount of money as accepting one refugee in Japan.[43] Notwithstanding the limited opportunity provided by the recent one-year humanitarian visa system, most asylum seekers in Japan are left with little recourse than to engage the "grey economy" where their labor sustains the growth of key sectors such as automotive plants and government-funded infrastructural projects.[44]

With a 0.4% acceptance rate of asylum seekers in 2020, Korea's record of refugee admission is equally problematic. In 2013, South Korea adopted a policy of allowing asylum petitioners to remain in-country on a renewable six-month visa while their petitions were being reviewed. While more humane, this measure was also fraught as it provided limited or no access to long-term employment, housing, healthcare, or public assistance.

Labor Migrants in East Asia

While Japan may compensate its restrictive refugee policy with financial contributions, addressing the nation's labor shortage is more challenging. As with South Korea and Taiwan, industrialization has fueled labor demand in Japan, while low birth rate and an aging population have shrunk the workforce. At the current trend, it is estimated that by 2060 Japanese workforce will decline by 42%.[45] With rising living standards, the need is particularly acute in low-skill, low-paying sectors of the economy, often referred to as "the 3Ds"—dirty, dangerous and demeaning—that locals do not wish to engage, such as agricultural production where the workforce has declined by 40% since 1990, fishing, construction, small manufacturing, and care giving. Labor shortage also affects other East Asian countries. It is similarly projected that South Korea would need 15 million immigrants to sustain growth,[46] and that starting in 2016 Taiwan's workforce would shrink by180,000 annually.[47] It is forecasted that by 2030 East Asia will have to

import 275 million people between the ages of 15 and 64 to compensate for the decline of their working age population.[48]

With this complementarity of needs for labor and for jobs, East Asia has become an attractive destination for Southeast Asian migrants. Numbering over 220,000 in 2019, Vietnamese constitute the fastest growing and largest trainee group in Japan, accounting for over half of the "trainees." Together with refugees resettled in the 1970s–1980s, they now constitute the third largest foreign resident community in Japan. Despite the more stringent selection standards, Korea has emerged as the second most popular destination for Cambodian migrant workers.

Despite the acute need for imported labor, Japanese and Korean immigration policies remain restrictive, particularly with regards to permanent resettlement and naturalization opportunities. Given the strong resistance to ethnic and cultural pluralism, the challenge for both societies is not simply economic but also social and political. To balance both mounting needs and national anxieties, Japan introduced measures in 1989 to facilitate admission of foreign nationals of Japanese descent, *Nikkeijin,* while restricting admission of other migrants. In Korea, the Overseas Korean Act passed in 1999 provided similar preferential access to co-ethnic immigrants.

Rather than liberalizing their immigration policies, both Japan and Korea also created, through state and private sector collaboration, what has been referred to as temporary "back door" channels for importing cheap labor. Through bilateral agreements with Southeast Asian countries, "industrial trainee" and "technical internship" programs were established to facilitate, under the guise of "training," the importation of foreign workers on short-term contracts, initially set at three years. Though framed as "technical training in industrial fields," the programs in effect brought in mostly low-skill workers *for* low skill work. Despite their purported commitment to skills transfer and capacity building, the programs did little more than provide temporary employment for workers from the lesser developed Asian economies. According to government reports, "interns" constitute 20% of Japan's foreign workers in 2016,[49] with the top four trainee-sending countries being in Southeast Asia; Vietnam has now surpassed China as the largest sending country. Numbering 410,000 in 2019, these foreign "trainees" shore up labor-intensive sectors of Japanese economy, namely agriculture, fishery, construction, machinery, and food and textile manufacturing. As Professor Kiyoto Tanno points out "practically every vegetable in the supermarkets of Tokyo was picked by a trainee."[50]

South Korean and Taiwanese reliance on foreign workers is equally if not even more significant given the large presence of foreign workers relative to the populations. Under a special employment visa status provided through bilateral agreements, approximately 234,000, and as high as 400,000, "non-professional" foreign workers, including many Southeast Asians, are currently employed in temporary work programs in South Korea in fishing, restaurants, manufacturing, construction, and agricultural industries.[51]

With more than 32,500 Cambodians currently working in Korea, Cambodia has emerged as the second-largest sending country, after China.[52] Similarly, according to the Ministry of Labor, there are 680,517 Southeast Asians working in Taiwan in 2021,[53] including over 20,000 in the country's $2 billion fishing industry.[54]

Contingent Reforms and Persisting Challenges

To accommodate rising labor needs, Korea is expanding the temporary guest worker program by increasing the number of nonprofessional work visas to 59,000 per year beginning in 2022. It is also increasing the number of foreign workers that employers in certain sectors such as coastal fishery and agricultural and dairy farming can hire, and extends the visa category normally reserved for overseas ethnic Koreans to foreign workers in certain job sectors. Taiwan's recently unveiled "New Southbound Plan" is also aimed at promoting labor mobility between Taiwan and other Asian countries.

Similarly, Japan is modifying its trainee program to allow for extended stay; after the initial three years as "technical interns," workers could stay for an additional two years under a visa for "designated activities." Alternatively, workers could return home after three years and return for another three years under the same visa category. Japan also undertook a significant policy shift in proposing to allow migrants in fourteen blue-collar sectors such as farming, construction and sanitation to renew their visas indefinitely and bring their families with them starting as early as 2022.[55] It has also reached bilateral Economic Partnership Agreements with the Philippines, Indonesia, and Vietnam to make it possible for care professionals to come and work as "assistants" in Japan for an initial four years, with possible extension for another four years after completing a national qualification exam.

To further entice workers, particularly in anticipation of the labor needs for the 2020 Olympics construction projects, Japan introduced new protective and oversight measures against worker abuse in 2017 that include an accreditation process for companies seeking to employ foreign workers, a newly established oversight body known as the Organization for Technical Intern Training (OTIT), and harsher penalties for employer transgressions. These policy changes came in the face of growing criticism of the intern training program and rampant abuse associated with it. Until 2010, migrants who came through the training programs were considered "interns" rather than workers, hence not entitled to minimum wage or protection under standard labor laws. Japanese government data reveals that due to language barriers, insufficient training, and poor working conditions, trainees are more likely to be injured on the job than Japanese workers. The ratio of trainees who died of *karoshi* (overwork) is high compared to the general population, disconcerting given that all trainees have to pass a health screening as part of the application process.[56] Following the policy change,

workers are classified as "practical trainee" or "on the job trainee," and placed in a two-month language and training program, after which they are considered "workers" and afforded the protection of the Labor Standard Acts, the Minimum Wage Act, and other labor related laws.

Despite these amendments, migrant abuse persists because of program loopholes and weak enforcement. Reports of wages being withheld, lesser pay for the same tasks performed by Japanese workers, illegal overtime, workers being assigned to do work for which they were not contracted to do, and other "malicious acts of infringement of human rights" were pervasive.[57] In 2016, over 4,000 firms employing foreign workers were found to be in violation of labor laws.[58]

Compared to other East Asian countries, Korea has a more robust legal framework for handling immigration, but challenges remain. Despite the lauded replacement of the problematic trainee program with a state-managed guest worker program, worker exploitation and mistreatment persist. Approximately 12% of migrant workers reported having been physically or verbally abused.[59] With the farming sector excluded from key labor protections, agricultural workers are especially vulnerable to employer abuse. Nearly 70% of migrant workers surveyed were housed in makeshift structures.[60] The case of a Cambodian worker found dead in a plastic greenhouse in Pocheon during a bitter winter is a tragic reminder of the abhorrent conditions to which many are subjected. Between 2017 and 2019, some 90–114 deaths from adject working and housing conditions were reported per year.[61] In Miryang, Cambodian workers protested their treatment as "village slaves."[62] Similarly, in Hong Kong, a 2013 study conducted by Mission for Migrant Workers found that 58% of the more than 3,000 workers surveyed have experienced verbal abuse, 18% physical abuse, and 6% sexual abuse during their employment.[63] Disregard for migrant workers' wellbeing was also at the heart of the recent outcry in Taiwan over the decision of ASE, a major semiconductor manufacturer, to force migrant workers out of private homes and back into shared accommodations in the face of COVID resurgence, a mandate that did not apply to the rest of the population.[64]

Despite the prevalence of abuse, high agency fees that keep workers in debt, harsh penalties for contractual breach, and fear of deportation and reprisals continue to keep workers shackled to their employers; among other costs, Vietnamese workers in Taiwan who breach their work contract have to pay a fine of approximately $3,300 to the Vietnamese government.[65] Some workers opt to leave their abusive employers and become undocumented, with attendant risks. Most simply endure.

Exploitation and worker abuse are especially acute in the fishing industry where the nature of work, involving long period of isolation on the high seas, and the ability of employers to circumvent existing labor laws further undermine the system of accountability. It takes tragedies such as the sinking of the Korean trawler, Oyang 70, resulting in the loss of six lives, to force

public attention onto the abysmal working conditions and exploitation of the fishermen who were essentially enslaved on these vessels, in this case paid only $250 per month—almost half of the mandated wage—and for virtually round-the clock work. The brutal death of an Indonesian worker, Supriyanto, on a Taiwanese fishing vessel exposed the unchecked system of migrant exploitation facilitated by systemic complicity that implicates recruiters, employers, state agencies, and corrupt authorities reluctant to investigate or prosecute those responsible. The case involving Taiwanese agency, Giant Ocean, that recruited some 1,000 Cambodian workers for fishing vessels shed light on the gaping loopholes in the system. Though Taiwanese labor and minimum wage laws apply to fishing boats, which is not always the case in other countries, they apply only to those employed on Taiwanese territory, and do not extend to deep sea fishing vessels. Though the latter is covered under the 2017 Distant Water Fisheries Act, enforcement is, at best, weak. Moreover, some companies and vessels are registered overseas and/or manned by workers hired overseas who never entered the East Asian countries, thus making monitoring and enforcement that much harder. In the case of Giant Ocean where workers were paid only half of the $150 per month they were promised, which was already below the minimum wage, the boat from which some of the men were rescued only entered port once, in Senegal, in two years.[66]

Like the fishing and entertainment industry, domestic work in which many Southeast Asian women are engaged in East Asia is largely an unregulated sector, not governed by the labor laws of most countries, and conducted in the private realm that keeps workers isolated, and under constant employer surveillance. Whereas previously the Philippines and Indonesia were the principal sending countries, more women from Cambodia, Vietnam and Myanmar are leaving home for domestic work. In Hong Kong, a key destination for foreign domestic workers, the over 375,000 workers—amounting to one helper for every seven households—are not covered by the minimum wage law and, until the 2017 increase, paid less than half the minimum wage. The absence of a legal cap on maximum working hours, mandatory live-in policy, and space constraints that compel workers to share a room with a child or elderly member under their care or sleep in the common areas means that domestic workers essentially have no "down time." A recent study shows that about 76% work more than 12 hours a day, of whom 17% put in more than 16 hours a day.[67] They are also particularly vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse. In a 2013 survey of domestic workers, almost half feel vulnerable, and a quarter feel outrightly unsafe living with their employers.[68] The limited reach and gaps in Hong Kong labor laws and the mediating roles of unscrupulous profit-driven employment agencies undermine the few regulatory measures that exist. Workers are often caught in the triangulated system of discipline exercised by the recruitment agency, the sending, and the receiving governments. As with other contractual arrangements that essentially bind workers to their employers, the policy requiring

migrants who have completed or terminated their contracts to return home within two weeks deters the reporting of employer transgressions.

Transnational Marriages

Demographic and socio-economic changes in East Asia have spurred another migration trend, that of organized transnational marriages. An increasingly prominent feature of Asia's intra-regional migration, they constitute a significant proportion of migration to Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore. They account for one-quarter of permanent migration to Japan in the mid-2010s where more than 6% of Japanese marriages are between Japanese men and Chinese and Filipino women.[69] In Taiwan, one in eight marriages involves a Taiwanese man and a woman from a less developed country, namely China, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam;[70] of the 520,000 foreign spouses registered,[71] about 140,000 are from Southeast Asia.[72] Similarly, in Korea where one in twelve Korean grooms marries a woman from a less developed country, some 238,000 transnational marriages were recorded between 2006 and 2012. Marriage migration accounts for about 50% of permanent migration to Korea,[73] with the largest group of marriage migrants being Vietnamese women, numbering 40,000 in 2015.[74] With the gender imbalance stemming from the one-child policy, China is another destination for organized marriage migration. Because of shared cultural traditions, lineage, and even languages, Southeast Asian women, particularly those of Chinese ancestry and ethnic minorities, are targeted by both legitimate brokers and traffickers for marriage to Chinese men who are unable to find partners or to pay the high Chinese bride price. The porosity of the border between Vietnam and China also facilitates transnational human trafficking.

In many aspects, neither the practice of arranged marriage, which is an established tradition in Asia, nor its transnational feature, is a new phenomenon. At the turn of the twentieth century, "picture brides" from Asia was a way of circumventing restricted immigration and marriage laws in the US, while "war brides" and biracial families were the human legacies of France and US military engagements in Vietnam, Korea, and Japan. Transnational marriage migration that has since emerged, however, is not only inter-ethnic but also intra-regional. Unlike the earlier picture brides, they do not involve co-ethnic partners, and unlike the "war brides" of the mid-twentieth century, they are compelled by different imperatives. In Japan, the initial impetus was the population decline that pushed rural municipalities to organize subsidized *konkatsu* or "spouse-hunting" trips to the Philippines for bachelors from Yamagata and other localities. When official sponsorship was withdrawn in mid-2000s because of public criticism, private agencies stepped in to continue the practice. Similarly, in China, the demographic impact of the one-child policy spurs the growth of transnational marriages in recent decades.

The focus on the politics of intimacy, while important to foreground as a re/emerging feature of the new Asian mobility, should not reify the binary

between labor and family migration. These transnational marital arrangements, at least in the form and context of this discussion, are governed largely by the economic logic of new intensified Asian regionalism. With many women in these relationships regarded as little more than a source of labor and reproduction to be traded and sold, organized transnational marriage is a sanctioned institution for exploitative labor migration (including reproductive labor). Reports of spousal abuse are widespread; in Japan, foreign women in organized transnational marriages are six times more likely to be abused than Japanese women.[75] Trafficking for forced marriage was such a concern that the Cambodian government imposed a temporary ban on marriages between Cambodian women and South Korean men in 2008.

Undocumented and Trafficked Migrants in Asia

While legal channels for migration exist and are promoted by both sending and receiving governments, cost, stringent requirements, and lengthy and complex process make it difficult for many migrants to access these programs. As research has shown, legal migration is an option largely available only to the better resourced migrants. Many, particularly women who have fewer opportunities to migrate through regular channels,[76] resort to illegal means; many find themselves trafficked for labor or sexual exploitation, and forced to work in inhumane conditions. In Asia, which has the second highest prevalence of modern slavery in the world, almost 25 million men, women, and children are living in enslaved conditions.[77] Reports of individuals having been deceived with promises of wealth, jobs, and urban living that never materialize, coerced, and abused are well documented, with women constituting the largest number of victims.[78] The case of five trafficked Cambodian women who sought help through Facebook and were rescued is but an example; the women in Japan were paid only 300 yen per hour, about one-third of the minimum wage.

Trafficking also occurred under the pretext or in the context of marriage. In some instances, women were promised jobs but instead were trafficked into forced and often non-legal marriages or other forms of sexual enslavement; only 100 of the 7,000 Cambodian women registered as having Chinese spouses are in fact legally married. In 2015, 679 Cambodian migrant women who were promised jobs in China but were instead forced into marriages were rescued.[79] In other instances, women may have willingly consented to marriage only to find themselves in an exploitative and violent household. Many have their passports confiscated by their spouses or find themselves in remote villages, cut off from any source of help. A Cambodian woman who was trafficked into marriage, then sold by her in-laws to a brothel spoke of her experience:

> Everyday a group of men came to see us. Some were crippled or strange, like having mental illness. We have to take a husband by a certain time,

> if not we will be sold to brothels or something…They treated me like a commodity and set different prices for me… My in-laws told me to work in the field. Normally, they would use a cow to plow the rice field, but when they put me to work, they used me instead. Then, my husband sold me to a brothel. I was chained.[80]

Threats directed at them and their families, physical imprisonment, social isolation, and fear of deportation are among the reasons for marriage migrants to remain in an abusive situation. In Japan, a divorced immigrant may have her spousal visa revoked after six months unless she has a child with her Japanese spouse.

The few who are rescued may find themselves saddled with additional debts that the family has to accrue in order to purchase their return passage. Some returned ill or pregnant, others were compelled to leave their children behind when they fled their abusive marriage. Others fear shame if they were to return, as women are often blamed for the failed "marriage." As one severely abused Cambodian marriage migrant to China remarks: *"*[people] looked down on me. They said it happened because my character is wicked. Going to China bringing home nothing but problems."[81] In countries that put a premium on virginity, those forced into marriage or prostitution carry a social stigma that makes reintegration into family and community difficult. The scars of their traumatic experiences are deep and enduring, and the resources to assist them, limited.

In fundamental ways, partner violence in multiethnic households reflects the racism that undergirds anti-immigrant sentiment in East Asia. A 2012 survey conducted by Hong Kong Unison of Chinese acceptance of minorities in their neighborhood revealed that Southeast Asians were among the least desired. Similarly, according to the 2013 World Values Survey, over one-third of South Korean respondents indicated that they did not want someone of a different race as a neighbor.[82] Despite the undeniable need for imported labor, only 19% of Koreans supported an increase in immigration.[83] Discriminatory displays such as "Koreans only" or similar signs denying entry or service to foreigners or foreign-looking individuals are not uncommon, a fact that prompted U.N. human rights expert Mutuma Ruteere to appeal to the Korean government to take concrete actions against racism. Though Japan is a signatory to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and has enacted an anti-hate speech measure in 2016, it refrains from ratifying the criminalization clause, claiming that "actions to spread or promote the idea of racial discrimination have not been taken in Japan to such an extent that legal action is necessary."[84]

Migrant Rights, Civil Society, and Social Justice

While issues of worker exploitation and human trafficking have long persisted, governments have been slow to respond to the concerns. That major

East Asian countries have been reluctant to endorse important international conventions or take effective measures to protect labor migrants suggests that these conditions are not unbeneficial to those economies, and that perception of migrant workers as transitory and disposable, hence outside of any system of accountability, is entrenched. In the absence of effective state intervention, civil society has had to step up in defense of vulnerable populations. Local, national, and transnational rights groups, institutions, and networks have been instrumental not only in rights advocacy but also in the delivery of essential services and resources to vulnerable populations. In Cambodia where globalization, heady capitalism, and unbridled corruption have exacerbated inequities and immiseration, non-government organizations (NGOs) have been an indispensable force in advancing land and labor rights, and environmental protection. Where authorities and the well-connected are implicated in human trafficking and labor abuse, NGO assistance during and after rescue is often the only recourse for trafficked individuals and their families. This is particularly true for female migrants who are known to seek assistance of NGOs at a much higher rate than of other entities such as government agencies or trade unions.[85]

In migrant receiving countries, NGOs operating at different levels and in different contexts have also been instrumental in bringing about fundamental changes. In Japan, rights movements mobilized by and around concerns of ethnic Koreans in the 1960s–1970s effectively paved the way for new immigrant advocacy. The resettlement of Southeast Asian refugees in the 1970s in cities such as Hamamatsu and Toyota with limited support provided by the national government for dealing with the administrative and social impact presented an opportunity for non-state actors and organizations to play an important role. In working closely with local governments, they helped strengthen both the state institutions, and the relationship between state and civil society. Subsequently, an initial group of 13 mayors of cities with large newcomer populations came together to form a council, that was later expanded to 22 municipalities, to pressure for national support of immigrant incorporation efforts.

Reinforced by the exigencies of the post-Kobe earthquake in 1995, and facilitated by the passing of the Special Non-profit Activities Act in 1998, the importance of Japanese civil society grew, though it remains more instrumental in the provision of immigrant services that the state has not effectively delivered, than in advocacy. Non-profit organizations such as the Centers for Multicultural Information and Assistance have been established in cities across Japan to assist with migrant integration. Organizations such as the Japan Association for Refugees and networks such as the Forum for Refugees in Japan (FRJ), comprised of 18 NGOs and agencies, provide both direct services to refugees and asylum seekers, including employment assistance and legal counsel, as well as advocate for them through government bodies. Though not a strong political force in and of themselves, civil society groups in Japan have been credited for forcing public attention on migrants,

and effectively leveraging their local, national and transnational influence to enhance state responsibility for foreign residents, such as in creating the "special residence permission" for visa overstayers.[86]

Unlike in Japan where civil society has often been described as "weak" and comprised only of "members without advocates,"[87] migrant advocacy in Korea grew out of the longer history of political mobilization that brought down authoritarian regimes in Seoul. Currently, there are at least 77 NGOs working with migrants in South Korea.[88] Along with religious organizations, labor activists that had provided moral and organizational leadership in earlier mobilization continue to play important and effective roles in advocating for the extension of standard labor laws and other protections to unauthorized workers, including severance pay and occupational hazard coverage. Civil society groups have also successfully launched other initiatives such as the establishment of over 200 Multicultural Family Support Centers to assist marriage immigrants and their families, and pushing for the removal of discriminatory signs in public spaces.

Largely the result of advocacy pressure from civil society, Taiwan has also become more attentive to labor rights concerns in the last decade. NGO networks such as The Migrants Empowerment Network in Taiwan (MENT) have actively campaigned in support of labor migrants, especially domestic workers, on issues such as minimum wage. In addition to advocating for policy reforms, activist groups have provided targeted services to the more vulnerable populations such as women migrants in general and marriage migrants in particular. Given that language barrier and resulting social isolation facilitate abuse, the "Foreign Brides Literacy Program" launched in Kaohsiungs Meinong District, for instance, aims to empower women, mostly from Southeast Asia, through the development of Chinese language literacy. Similarly, in Hong Kong, NGO provision of critical support and services to migrants reinforces the advocacy work, much of which led by migrants themselves. To combat excessive agency fees that essentially enslave workers, Fair Employment Agency, a social enterprise in Hong Kong, was founded in 2014 to provide free placement service for domestic workers.

Transnational Civil Society

The transnational nature of emerging issues and recognition of the importance of transnational connections have seen to increased transnational collaboration in Asia. In addition to their in-country work, civil society organizations have also established multi and transnational networks aimed at amplifying their mission through a "boomerang effect." Multi-level and multi-pronged coordination on critical issues such as abuse on fishing vessels—from documentation to exerting pressure on governments and multinational corporations—has produced significant reforms. In Japan, alliances such as the Solidarity Network with Migrants, and JEN a federation of NGOs working on humanitarian issues, not only advocate for the rights

and dignity of migrants and vulnerable communities in Japan, but also transnationally. In Korea, organizations such as South Korea's Migrants' Trade Union have established multilateral linkages between migrants, migrant support organizations in Korea and in migrant sending countries to enhance worker protection in multiple nodes of the migration circuit. Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), initially formed in 1994 as a regional network of NGOs, associations, migrant workers, trade unions, and individual advocates in Asia, now includes migrant associations and allied organizations as well as officials from key sending and receiving countries, all working in concert to promote migrant rights and wellbeing. The groups also advocate for the development of regional mechanisms and national adoption of international conventions on migrant related concerns. In Southeast Asia, the sub-regional Mekong Migration Network brings together migrant groups, advocates and researchers to actively promote the rights and social inclusion of migrants, mostly from Cambodia and Myanmar, through information dissemination, joint research and advocacy. Others are collaborating on trans-border concerns such as sexual exploitation of children which is the mission of ECPAT, a network of over 110 civil society organizations in over 100 countries. Beyond migration specific issues, transnational civil society groups have also actively engaged environmental and other justice concerns, many of which are the root causes of displacement.

Migrants themselves have emerged as strong advocates of their own issues. Mobilization in Korea was spurred by the public demonstration of 13 Nepalese migrants who chained themselves in protest of their precarious conditions in the winter of 1995. In Japan, mutual aid organizations such as the Nepalese Welfare Society, founded in 1995, provide much needed support for Nepalese immigrants, many of whom are undocumented. Other affinity associations serving different ethnic communities also exist. In Taiwan, the Chinese literacy program paved the way for immigrant women grassroots mobilization and the creation of TransAsia Sisters Association in 2003. In response to their criminalized and objectified representation in mainstream media, migrants in Taiwan have utilized social media to present their counter narratives.[89]

In Hong Kong where, unlike many other places, migrants do have the right to unionize, migrant organizing has been particularly robust. Workers have set up self-help organizations, some of which—like the Indonesian Migrant Workers Union—have evolved from providing mutual aid to labor organizing and advocacy. Organizations such as the Asian Migrant Center established by Filipina migrants in 1989 to change their working conditions in Hong Kong have since expanded to include other migrant groups, and are at the forefront of the campaign to secure a living wage for migrant workers in Hong Kong. In 2005, domestic workers-mostly Filipinas, Indonesians, Thais and Nepalese—organized the Consulate Hopping Protest and the Hall of Shame Awards as part of the anti-World Trade Organization grassroots mobilization, calling for accountability not only from employers

and migrant receiving countries but also from their own governments. In the context of the pandemic, migrant support and advocacy in national and transnational contexts have centered on ensuring migrant health and economic security and wellbeing.

Civil Society: A Constrained and Contested Space

While they have been instrumental in raising awareness of the plight of migrants and asylum seekers and compelling critical reforms in policies and practices, civil society organizations are also constrained by the legal, political, and social structures in which they operate. In migrant originating countries such as Cambodia and Myanmar, with weak institutions, laws, policies, and enforcement, and where transgressions often implicate the country's economic, political, and military elites, local rights activists and organizations are extremely vulnerable. International NGOs, in turn, are subjected to local laws that, when politicized, can be used to expel them or curtail their mission as has happened in Cambodia and elsewhere. Under these conditions, the work of civil society has to be reinforced by external linkages, hence transnationalized. Multinational alliances such as the Asia Democracy Network and the East Asia Democracy Forum are important regional initiatives that help sustain local civil societies.[90]

In destination countries, civil society faces different challenges. In Japan, many NGOs are constrained by limited funding, and for those that opt to register legally, by their inability to function autonomously. The majority of the 80,000-some volunteer groups thus choose to remain without official status, hence small, without national reach, and confined to working on local issues. In many instances, migrant labor concerns are lumped with the general push for multiculturalism, or reduced to incorporation issues and divested of their social justice agendas. As a result, while Japanese civil society has been highly active in providing support and services to migrants, and in micro-level activism, it is notably passive in political advocacy at national and transnational levels, particularly in pushing for policy reforms.

Rise of the Ultra-Right

One of the biggest challenges facing migrant rights movements is the rise of the ultra-right counter-movement that has swept through many countries, including in East Asia. While ultranationalist groups have long existed in Japan, the tone and nature of their activities have intensified in recent years, emboldened in large part by resurgent nativist ideologies and reactionary forces in national and global politics. In 2013, *Zaitokukai*, a 16,000-member group that has campaigned against the granting of permanent residency to descendants of Koreans who were subjects of colonial Japan, organized a march in the Shin-Okubo area of Tokyo where Korean businesses are concentrated. Similar demonstrations against Korean communities and

schools were held elsewhere in Tokyo and Osaka where xenophobic attacks had extended to other ethnic groups, including elderly Chinese who committed the "illegal act" of collecting cans slated for city recycling.[91] Many of these demonstrations have resulted in violent and widely publicized clashes with anti-racist groups. Pressured by anti-racist campaigns that emerged in response to these disturbing trends, and in no small part by the need for positive image-making in anticipation of the Olympics, the Japanese Diet passed a hate speech law in 2016, albeit one that carries no penalty for transgression.

Where national legislation has been anemic, the courts have stepped up to undercut hate speech. A Kyoto court rendered a $100,000 judgment against members of a hate group for their harassment of a Korean elementary school, a decision that was upheld by the Supreme Court. In April 2018, a former senior member of *Zaitokukai* was indicted on libel charges for hate speech directed at ethnic Korean residents. Some cities such as Kawasaki and Nagoya have also erected guidelines and ordinances to regulate racist rallies. These initiatives have shored up the push for a more inclusive Japanese society. As a counter strategy, xenophobic national-populist groups have shifted their strategy to online mobilization, in part because the hate speech law does not extend to cyberspace but also because they can capitalize on the anonymity of the virtual space for recruitment.

The civil society sphere in other East Asian countries is equally a space of solidarity and contention, with counter-movements gaining momentum alongside progressive forces, and becoming increasingly empowered and active in national political arenas. The legalization of same sex marriage in Taiwan, for instance, has spurred reactionary mobilization, largely by conservative religious groups, to defend against perceived assault against the nation's morality that extends to issues of gender equity in education. In Korea, organized protests against sexual violence and gender biases were met with counter rallies, and online anti-feminist outcry, equating feminism with mental illness, and feminists with "social evil."[92] Underscoring their growing influence on national policy, ultra-conservative agendas are echoed in the campaign promise of presidential candidates to reform the country's 20-year-old Ministry of Gender Equality and Family. Nostalgic nationalist groups such as the "flag-carriers" that seek the return of politics and cultural norms of the past, placing a premium on high economic growth and national security (read as anti-communist), have engaged younger and more diverse members, while young, mostly male, Korean electorates are increasingly shifting their support to conservative candidates.

Conclusion

As discussed, while progress has been made in the strengthening of rights regimes, particularly pertaining to migrants, critical challenges persist in Asia. Many regional states have yet to

adopt laws and conventions against discriminatory practices. While protective measures do exist for migrants and minorities, enforcement is often weak, inconsistent, and non-transparent. Migrant protection continues to be impeded by employer-tied visas and work permits, language barriers, corruption, and a system that makes the lodging of complaints costly for migrants. Sanctions of employers and recruitment agencies are rare or involve minimal penalties. Women migrants, in particular, have a lower rate of accessing existing protection measures, because of the nature of their work, the fact that many are undocumented, and the prevailing gender biases in male dominated systems in both source and destination countries.

While local and transnational civil society has done much to advance migrant rights, enhancing legal protection for migrants requires a more holistic approach and the commitment of governments to address the problems in both originating and receiving contexts. Civil society can do much to advance social justice but it cannot substitute for equitable, inclusive, accountable, and transparent governance. Within the constricted social, political and legal spaces, however, migrants are inserting themselves and their humanity not only through advocacy, but also in other imaginative ways. Often isolated and denied of their privacy, domestic workers have transformed public spaces such as shopping mall plazas in Singapore and subway stations and overpasses in Hong Kong to create and maintain community, imbuing these spaces with new socialities. Where possible, they have utilized technology to sustain transnational family ties, to transcend the imposed confine of their social world, and to mobilize. Social media is also their lifeline to emotional and physical security. Despite the cooptation of the cyberspace by the ultra-right, migrants are able to leverage the globalizing power of social media to amplify their voices to countervail the erasures of neoliberal greed and systemic racism.

As in many parts of the world, increased diversity and globalizing norms have engendered new political realities in Asia. Marked by both reformist and illiberal trends, East Asia is at a social and ideological crossroad of regressive nativism and progressive change. How the societies and the political systems negotiate those competing forces is a litmus test of the future stability of established liberal democracies in East Asia, with rippling consequences for the wider East Asian space, the region, and the world.

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3 Castles and Miller, "Migration in the Asia-Pacific Region."
4 Migration Data Portal, "Labour Migration."
5 IOM, "Asia-Pacific Migration Data Report."
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46 Jun, "Korea…"
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48 Édes, "Migration in Asia."
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6 Diasporic Development and Socioeconomic Integration

New Chinese Migrants in a Globalized World[1]

Min Zhou and Hong Liu

The Chinese diaspora is vast and centuries old. Unlike the monolithic notion of Chinese overseas as the descendants of the Yellow Emperor (the ancestor of the Han Chinese and founder of Chinese civilization), people of Chinese descent and their communities who are spread across the globe are highly diverse, and their patterns of socioeconomic integration and identity formation are contingent upon the history and structural circumstances of their countries of origin and resettlement.[2] Prior to World War II, the Chinese diaspora was anchored in Southeast Asia, where more than three-quarters of the Chinese overseas lived. Between 1949 when the People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded and 1978 when the PRC government launched its economic reform, there was very little emigration from mainland China. The three-decade emigration hiatus and nation-state building in Southeast Asia and around the world transformed diasporic communities oriented toward the ancestral homeland into ethnonational communities being increasingly nationalized or localized. Since China's open-door in the late 1970s, there has been a new surge of emigration, perpetuated by China's fast-growing economic development, revived diasporic networks, liberalized migration policies in both sending and receiving countries, and forces of globalization. At present, the total number of emigrants from mainland China has surpassed the 10 million mark.[3] New Chinese migrants, commonly referred to as *xinyimin*, are now spreading to every corner of the globe and developing diasporic communities wherever they set foot. The children of *xinyimin* are also coming of age in large numbers in the new millennium. While most of the people of Chinese descent outside Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, and mainland China have struck roots in the land of sojourning, resettlement, or birth, a sizeable proportion of them is still in a state of flux, as the phenomenon of *xinyimin* suggests.

The development and transformation of these new diasporas and have profound impacts on individual migrants' modes of economic incorporation and their diasporic, national, and transnational identities, and these impacts vastly differ across time and space. This chapter is about *xinyimin* and their varied patterns of diasporic development, economic incorporation, and identity formation in the context of accelerating Chinese

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immigration. The key question to be addressed is: how do new diasporas, formed and transformed in the globalized world, affect migrants' socioeconomic integration? Based on our recent work on *xinyimin* in Singapore and the United States and existing research from other contexts of immigrant reception,[4] we first advance an analytical framework for understanding diasporic formation and socioeconomic integration. We then examine the relationship between diasporic development and modes of economic incorporation among new Chinese migrants in different contexts of reception, with a focus on the experiences of *xinyimin* in the United States and Singapore, which represent two vastly different contexts of exit and reception with regard to contemporary Chinese immigration. Lastly, we discuss the identity issue among new Chinese migrants in a host society in which they are a part of, but to which they have not yet fully belonged, and draw some broad lessons for understanding Chinese identify formation in a globalized world. We argue that macro forces of globalization and international migration interact with meso-institutional and micro-individual factors to shape diasporic formation and transformation, producing divergent patterns of economic incorporation and identity formation.

Immigration, Diasporic Development, and Socioeconomic Integration

Diasporas refer to extra-territorial populations, including temporary, permanent, or circular migrants, as well as their native born descendants. As a distinct ethnic community vis-à-vis a host society, a diaspora often has a shared collective identity constructed on bounded solidarity and an orientation toward a real or imagined ancestral homeland.[5] However, diasporas are not fixed as the contexts on which they are formed and change over time. While diasporas can evolve into multi-generational ethnic communities, they may also dissolve into merely symbolic existence or even disappear over generations.[6] Chinese diasporas around the world have been continually shaped and reshaped by waves of new immigrants from the ancestral homeland China, which in turn, affects immigrant life in host societies.

We advance an analytical framework to highlight the linkages between migration dynamics, diasporic development, and socioeconomic integration, as shown in Figure 6.1. The framework consists of three interrelated parts: (1) multi-layered factors associated with both contexts of exit and reception; (2) the organizational structure and orientation of the immigrant community in the host society; and (3) patterns and outcomes of socioeconomic integration.

First, like their earlier counterparts, contemporary emigrants from China are not randomly selected, nor are they evenly distributed across the globe. Thus, migration dynamics may be understood through context of exit and context of reception—contextual factors in both sending and receiving countries beyond the individual.[7] From the perspective of the home country, pre-migration socioeconomic characteristics of the emigrant group from a

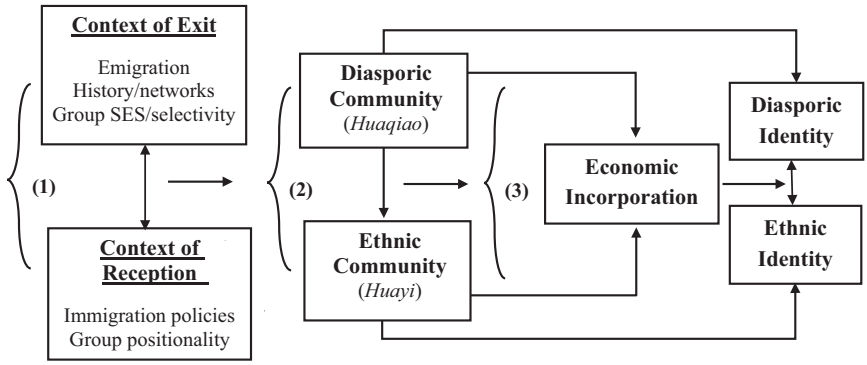

Figure 6.1 Diasporic development and socioeonomic integration: an analytical framework.
Source: Created by the Author.

particular place of origin are related to immigrant selectivity by educational and skilled levels. Emigration histories, which are also place-specific, and migration networks, historically formed and transnationally maintained, are interrelated to serve as sources of ethnic capital influencing immigrant adaptation and subsequent emigration. From the perspective of the receiving country, the contexts of reception can be analyzed in terms of group position in society's ethno-racial hierarchy and immigration policy.

Second, these contextual factors do not operate in isolation, but interact across national borders to affect diasporic development in the receiving country. Initially established by immigrants as a site for economic survival and self-help, diasporas organize economic activities and erect social structures recognizable to both in-group and out-group members. Long-standing Chinatowns across major immigrant gateway cities around the world are prime examples of the Chinese diaspora. Notable characteristics of Chinese diasporic communities across the global include a distinct ethnic economy, mutual aid societies, such as family/clan and district associations and merchant guilds, and Chinese schools.[8] Analytically, there is a distinction between a diasporic community and an ethnic community. Diasporic communities maintain strong ties, emotional and/or physical, to the home country. As they grow roots in the receiving society, diasporic communities may evolve into ethnic communities, with partial or complete integration in the host society and with minimal engagement with the ancestral homeland.

Third, diaspora integration can be viewed differently. It involves extending rights of the home country, often via dual citizenship, to emigrants while extracting obligations. Empirical studies on China, Mexico, Morocco, India, Vietnam, and other countries have shown ample evidence about the proactive engagement of home countries with their diasporas.[9] However, diaspora integration may also be viewed from the perspective of the receiving

country. The extent to which immigrants and their communities are assimilated into the receiving country's nation-building project, by choice or force, would affect their patterns of socioeconomic integration and identity formation. We thus perceive integration as encompassing two analytically distinct processes—adaptation and assimilation, where the former refers to the adjustment to life in a receiving country irrespective of belonging to the nation or not, and the latter refers to the incorporation into a host society as full members. We also distinguish between diasporic and ethnic identity. Both identities are in constant flux, susceptible to structural and cultural changes both internally and externally.

Emigration from China

The history of Chinese emigration can be traced back to the Qin and Han dynasties (221 BC–220 AD). Until the mid-nineteenth century, movements in and out of the Chinese empire largely centered on tribute missions to China as well as the trading of manufactured goods from China and of tropical goods to China. Earlier Chinese emigration was dominated by traders and merchants, mostly to Southeast Asia and rarely beyond Asia.[10] Despite fluctuating emigration restrictions by the Chinese imperial court, more than one million of Chinese had settled in Southeast Asia by the mid-nineteenth century, most of them originated from Fujian (Hokkien) and Guangdong (Kwangtung) provinces in South China, and the Chinese trade diaspora had been firmly established in where the Chinese merchant elite dominated not only its own ethnic economies but also local economies.[11]

European colonial expansion into Southeast Asia in the early nineteenth century changed the geopolitical order and marginalized the existing Chinese trade diaspora in the region. However, Chinese traders and merchants proactively responded to marginalization by carving out new occupational niches, expanding beyond maritime trade into cash-crop farming that yielded such products as sugar, pepper, gambier, and rubber, and other land-based industries such as tin and gold mining.[12] They also served as agents for, or partners of, European colonists and other Westerns who traded in Southeast Asia. Later, they turned labor brokers to facilitate large-scale labor migration from China to plantations, mines, and other work sites (railroads) in Southeast Asia and to non-Asia destinations dominated by Europeans colonists or settlers, such as the South Pacific, Hawaii, and the Americas.[13]

Large-scale Chinese labor migration started in the mid-nineteenth century. Between 1851 and 1875, nearly 1.3 million emigrants (including smaller numbers of artisans and merchants) left China, about 27% (350,000) went to the Malay Peninsula, and 12% (160,000) to the United States.[14] Labor migration was transient and short-lived. By the late 1920s (and the early 1880s, for those bound for the US and South Pacific destinations because of Chinese exclusion), large-scale labor emigration from China ended.[15] Because

of the influence of diasporic networks established by Chinese traders and merchants and traders, labor migrants of the time hailed from the same origins as the traders and merchants. They were predominantly poor and uneducated peasants migrated with a sojourning goal—to earn and save money abroad in the hope of returning home with gold and glory in a short period of time.

Subsequent emigration waves were severely disrupted during the Sino-Japanese War, World War II, and the Chinese civil war in the 1930s and 1940s and further constrained by post-war geopolitical developments. For example, post-war decolonization and nation-state building in Southeast Asia created new legal entry/exit barriers for cross-border flows. The PRC, founded in 1949, became the target of international sanctions as the West joined force to cut China off from the outside world in order contain communism. China itself was caught in incessant political strife. Migration to and from China was strictly prohibited by the Chinese state. Overseas Chinese and their relatives left behind in China were treated with disdain and distrust. Communications among family members across national borders were mainly through letters and mailed packages (containing food and goods for daily necessities) or monetary remittances, which were regulated by the government.

China has revived itself to be a major sending country since it implemented its open-door policy and launched its economic reform in the late 1970s. It has relaxed its policy on emigration, which, interacted with changing immigration policies in receiving states, has set off continuously high tides of massive emigration over the past three decades. China's centuries-old diasporic networks have been responsible for much of contemporary emigration as the majority of new Chinese immigrants obtain immigration visas from family sponsorship. However, contemporary student migration has become a growing trend since the late 1980s. China is one of the largest source countries of foreign students. For example, about 2.25 million students were sent abroad between 1978 and 2011, and more than half obtained employment and immigrant visas upon completion of their studies.[16] Once they secure their residency or citizenship status, they have developed an important link in family-chain to perpetuate subsequent migration. As they are resettled in their new homelands, new Chinese immigrants have actively sought out various social mobility strategies for their betterment, with transnationalism being one of them.

Contemporary Chinese immigration is remarkably diverse in nature and composition. Regardless of places of origin, job skills, and levels of education, *xinyimin* include family migrants, labor or professional migrants, investor or entrepreneur migrants, and student migrants. They also comprise of circular, temporary, and undocumented migrants. Differences in places of origin, socioeconomic backgrounds, and contexts of reception directly affect not only individual migrants' integration patterns and outcomes, but also diasporas' formation and development.[17]

Variations on Diasporic Development: A Tale of Two Diasporas

Contrasting Contexts of Reception

While historical patterns of Chinese emigration influence the composition of subsequent migrant flows, contexts of reception institutionalize different diasporic formation and development. Singapore and the United States, both nations of immigrants and former British colonies, offer two contrasting contexts of reception for Chinese immigrants, which can be seen in two main aspects: One, the host society's "mainstream," to which immigrant groups are expected to assimilate and the diaspora's position in it; and two, historical and contemporary immigration policies which influence immigrant selectivity and diaspora building.

The Host Society's Mainstream and Diaspora Positionality

Singapore is the only country in the world that is both a Chinese-majority society and a multiethnic society, currently comprised of 74.1% Chinese, 13.4% Malays, 9.2% Indians, and 3.3% other.[18] The constitution stipulates four official languages—Malay, Mandarin Chinese, Tamil, and English,[19] but English has been used as the main official language in administration, international commerce and business, education, technology and science, in order to promote Singapore's integration into the global economy and bridging the gap between the diverse ethnic groups within the nation.

Located at the southern tip of the Malay Archipelago in Southeast Asia, Singapore is geopolitically East Asia.[20] It was a part of the British Straits Settlements between 1826 and 1963 and gained independence from the British in 1963 as a part of the Federation of Malaysia. But it was separated from Malaysia in 1965 to establish an independent nation-state—the Republic of Singapore, arguably due to ideological differences in party politics and racial tension between Malays and Chinese. Nation-building in Singapore is deeply influenced by the British colonial past and immigration history, where West meets East in a multiracial, multicultural setting. Singapore's governing structure is patterned on the British parliamentary democracy, but it is not so much administered by elected politicians as by bureaucrats who gain positions of authority and power through a system of meritocracy. The society's mainstream is arguably a melting pot, where a unified national identity is prioritized over other ethnic identities and meritocracy is the guiding principle for ensuring fair treatment to all races. Even though Chinese culture does not define Singaporean culture, Chinese Singaporeans occupy positions of power in society. They are not only well integrated into the society's mainstream, but constitute the core of the mainstream.

The United States is home to the largest concentration of people of Chinese descent outside Southeast Asia. It is also a racially diverse country. As of 2010, non-Hispanic whites maintained its numeric majority, comprised of

65% of the total population (308.7 million in 2010); African Americans, 13%; Hispanics, 16%; Asians, 6%; and native Americans, less than 1%. Until 2010, ethnic Chinese have comprised less than 1% of the total American population. The American society has a highly stratified racial hierarchy with the non-Hispanic white race on top, black at the bottom, and others (including Chinese) in between.

The American nation is founded on the moral and philosophical wisdom of Christianity. From the outset, White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASP) and their language and culture defined the national identity and the mainstream. For a long time in American history, racial minorities of non-European origins were excluded from the American nation. Despite major structural changes, such as civil rights movements, immigration reform, and multiculturalism, the American mainstream continues to be defined by the white middle class. Even though this mainstream is segmented by race and class, successful integration often entails economic incorporation into the white middleclass core, not the segments occupied by non-white working or lower classes.

Unlike their counterparts in Singapore, the Chinese encountered a hostile host society in which they became the only immigrant group in American history that was singled out for legal exclusion based on race (Chinese) and class (labor). Even though merchants were not barred from immigration, they too were segregated in ethnic enclaves along with their working-class co-ethnics and were blocked from participating in the American mainstream and integrating into the American economy. At present, Chinese Americans have continued to be marginalized in the society's racial hierarchy even as they have made tremendous progress in observable measures of socioeconomic status (SES)—education, occupation, and income.[21] But they are still subject to the dual stereotypes of the model minority and the forever foreign.

Immigration Policies and Diaspora Formation

Historically, Singapore's immigrant policy was particularly receptive to Chinese immigration. Earlier waves of Chinese immigration to Singapore were an integral part of the earlier Chinese trader/merchant migration to Southeast Asia, which predated the British arrival in 1819. British colonization in the early nineteenth century allowed Singapore to grow into an entrepôt city with a free port and an unrestricted immigration policy.[22] As it emerged as a global port city after 1870, Singapore became a key destination for Chinese immigrants. The flows from the existing Chinese diasporic communities in Southeast Asia into Singapore were predominantly traders and merchants, while those directly from China constituted a disproportionate larger number of laborers of rural and low socioeconomic backgrounds. Thanks to immigration, the Chinese population grew exponentially, from 28,000 in 1849, making up 52% of the population, to 730,000 in 1947, making

up the absolute majority (78%).[23] Due to its unique immigration history, a significant Chinese merchant/trader elite became well integrated into the colonial society and dominated the local economy even before independence.

Beginning in the late 1980s, Singapore confronted two urgent challenges: the need for talent to keep its global economy competitive, and the need to deal with problems associated with its below-replenishment fertility.[24] The nation-state constituted a multi-fold immigration policy to meet these challenges. First, the government encourages and works with companies, educational and research institutions, and recruitment agencies, to recruit foreign talents, paying special attention to Chinese students who have obtained advanced training and degrees from universities in the West. Second, the government would acquire foreign talent via its own educational system by offering full scholarships to Chinese students and easy routes for permanent immigration after graduation. Third, the Singaporean state has provided financial assistance for new immigrant entrepreneurs to invest in China and encouraged mainland Chinese firms to invest in Singapore.[25]

As a result of the liberal immigration policy, the foreign permanent resident population represents the fastest-growing segment of Singaporean population. As of mid-2019, Singapore's total population was 5.7 million, including 4.03 million residents (composed of 3.5 million citizens and 525,000 permanent residents), and 29% (1.67 million) "non-resident" foreigners who were on various work permits or long-term visas.[26] Although Singapore's foreign talents initiative was aimed at no particular ethnic group, China has become a main source since the early 1990s. Most of the new Chinese immigrants are highly educated and highly skilled, and such immigrant selectivity has changed the dynamics of the existing diasporic community.

Immigration to the United States was free prior to Chinese Exclusion in the early 1880s. The Chinese immigrants arrived in the United States in the late 1840s in response to labor demand in the American West, working first in gold mines, then in railroad construction, and later in manufacturing industries. When economic recession hit in the late 1870s, they became easy scapegoats. Even though they comprised less than 4% of the total immigrant influx between 1860 and 1879, Chinese immigrants were targets of a well-organized anti-Chinese movement, which contributed to Congress passing the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882. The act prohibited importation of Chinese labor for ten years and was subsequently extended indefinitely until it was repealed in 1943.

Immigration policymaking was part of the nation-building project to determine who should be included into, or excluded from, the American nation. The passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act was a prelude to constructing a gatekeeping ideology and establishing state apparatus and bureaucracy to exercise control over its geographic borders and national boundaries.[27] In 1924, Congress passed the Immigration Act (also referred to as the Johnson–Reed Act), setting up a national origins quota system for immigrant admission. Closing the door to keep away undesirable and

unwanted immigrants was for the purpose of preserving the ideal of American racial homogeneity and reaffirming a distinct American identity based of the WASP character.

In 1965, the United States implemented the immigration policy reform, passing of the Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments of 1965 (also called the Hart-Celler Act). The act abolished the national origins quota system that had structured American immigration policy since 1924, favoring family reunification and encouraging employer-sponsor migration of immigrants with needed skills. However, new waves of Chinese immigration to the United States had not occurred after China's open-door in 1978. Nonetheless, new Chinese immigrants in the United States are commonly referred to as "post-1965" immigrants. As a result, Chinese American population grew exponentially, from 237,000 in 1960 to 3.8 million in 2010 by official census count. As of 2010, foreign-born Chinese accounted for 61% of the ethnic Chinese population, 59% of the foreign-born arriving after 1990, and 61% of the foreign-born who were naturalized US citizens. Due to past discriminatory immigration policies and present policy relaxation prioritizing family reunification, new Chinese immigrants in the United States become much more diverse socioeconomically than those in Singapore. Chinese America is relatively bifurcated in which both the middle class and working-class components are both highly visible.

Diasporic Development

Diasporic communities are products of immigrant resettlement. Because of different emigration histories and host-society receptions, Chinese diasporic communities in Singapore and the United States experienced different patterns of development impacted by changes in the socioeconomic characteristics of members and organizational structures of diasporas.

Changing Socioeconomic Characteristics and Modes of Economic Incorporation

Historically, Chinese immigrants to Singapore were from Fujian and Guangdong provinces, with the Fujianese being the largest group. In contrast, those to the United States were predominantly from the Si Yi and Pearl River Delta regions of southern Guangdong, with the Taishanese being the largest dialect group. In the earlier days of community formation, both diasporas were populated by male sojourners, who left their families behind to work abroad with the intention to return and a strong sojourning (or *qiao-ju* in Chinese) mentality. However, the sex ratio of the community in Singapore became less and less skewed, and the community evolved gradually into a family community because of increasing female migration and intermarriages.[28] In contrast, the community in the United States had remained a bachelors' society until after World War II. Chinese (men and women)

were excluded from immigrating into the United States, intermarriages with whites were legally forbidden, and with blacks, internally sanctioned.[29]

From the very beginning of diaspora formation, two classes of Chinese immigrants, bounded by kinship and place of origin, coexisted in both communities. The laboring class was made up of uneducated, unskilled peasants while the trader/merchant class dominated economic and ethnic life. However, the trader/merchant class in Singapore was distinct in several respects. First, it had a much longer migration history and formed a trade diaspora long before labor migration. Second, it was not simply confined geographically to run retail trade in local communities, but operated and dominated transnational or overseas trade and commerce. Third, it served a middleman role, both in trade and local affairs, between Western colonists and Chinese and between Chinese immigrants and indigenous people.[30] Fourth, and perhaps most significantly, some of the businesses later evolved into international banking, shipping, and import/export industries and became the backbone of Singapore's national economy. The merchant class and the laboring class were divided, much unlike the situation in the United States, where the two classes were both isolated from the host society, had to be bonded into interdependence in Chinatowns, and developed an ethnic enclave economy for survival.

After a long hiatus of Chinese emigration between the 1930s to the 1970s, waves of new Chinese immigrants have started to pour into Singapore and the United States in high numbers with little signs of slowing down. The *xinyimin* hailed from all over China rather than from the traditional sending places in South China and were more diverse in terms of SES. The *xinyimin* in Singapore are disproportionately well-educated with the many holding post-graduate degrees from the United States, United Kingdom, Japan, Australia, and other Western countries, have "portable" or "transferable" jobs skills and work experience, and generally hold high-paying professional occupations, as the government applies stringent criteria in terms of applicants' educational credentials and salary levels when granting permanent residency.[31] The dominant mode of economic incorporation in Singapore is through occupational achievement via education rather than through the entrepreneurial route as earlier Chinese immigrants. Some *xinyimin* in Singapore do pursue entrepreneurship in Singapore. But the new Chinese entrepreneurs have displayed two distinctive characteristics in comparison with their predecessors and local counterparts: many are "technopreneurs" who have the capacity to mix their scientific know-how with business acumen tend to concentrate in high-tech sector; and their business has characterized by a high degree of transnationality in terms of its operation, corporate management, and mindset. They also tend to develop and maintain strong personal and institutional ties with the state in both Singapore and China.[32]

The *xinyimin* in the United States are of much more diverse SES, including the well-educated who have earned advanced degrees from the United States and secured professional employment and those low-skilled and less educated from traditional sending regions whose migration was sponsored

via family ties, as well as sizeable groups of undocumented immigrants from rural areas of Fujian and Zhejiang provinces and urban areas in China Northeast where widespread unemployment ran rampant due to privatization of state-owned enterprises. The modes of integration are more varied, including the time-honored path of toiling in low-wage jobs in the ethnic enclave economy, professional jobs via educational achievement, and ethnic entrepreneurship via small businesses and technopreneurship.[33]

Changing Organizational Structures and Mentality

The Chinese diasporic community in Singapore in the colonial time was originally formed on the basis of the place of origin rather than on the homogeneity of a common ethnicity. It was not as geographically concentrated as the Chinatowns found in the United States and other Western colonies beyond Asia, and it was internally organized along the lines of social classes and dialect groups. The Hokkiens from southern Fujian province formed the largest group, followed by the Cantonese from southern Guangdong, the Teochews from eastern Guangdong, and the Hainanese from Hainan island.[34] These dialect groups organized themselves on the basis of a clan, hometown, district, or a region/province into family or district associations called *huiguan*, such as Hokkien Huay Kuan (Fujian Huiguan) and Guangdong Huiguan. The merchant elite formed the leadership of these organizations. Together with the Chinese language media and Chinese schools, these traditional associations become pillars of the diasporic community.[35]

The Chinese community in the United States prior to the civil rights movements of the 1960s and the surge of contemporary Chinese immigration followed an organizational pattern similar to that of the diasporic community in Singapore, with ethnic businesses serving as its base on which a range of ethnic organizations, the Chinese language press, and Chinese schools were established.[36] However, the diasporic community in the United States was excluded from the larger American society. Traditional ethnic organizations, including family and kin associations, hometown associations, and merchant-labor associations, or *tong*, emerged as mutual aid societies. Unlike that in Singapore where the Chinese Protectorate was established by the colonial government to manage Chinese affairs, the US state basically isolated the Chinese community and left it alone to be self-governed by an overarching organization, called the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA), which acted as a quasi-government in Chinatown.

New waves of Chinese immigration have created a visible impact upon the organizational structures of diasporic communities in Singapore, the United States, and around the world. The age-old concept of the "hometown" has been de-territorialized and transformed from representing a specific locality (e.g., a sending village or township) to being a cultural/ethnic symbol representing the Chinese from the mainland collectively and China as a nation-state.[37]

In Singapore, traditional kinship- or hometown-based organizations, run by earlier Chinese immigrants or local-born Chinese, have gradually evolved into civic organizations and integrated into Singapore's civic life. New Chinese immigrants, mostly highly skilled, tend to establish their own organizations that have no specific "hometowns" in the traditional sense of the word. For example, the Singapore Tianfu Hometown Association, founded in 2000, represents a larger "hometown" in a more inclusive and symbolic manner. Tianfu is an alias of Sichuan province, and the association's membership is not confined to those born in Sichuan and who speak a particular local dialect, but those who had studied or worked in the province or had business/cultural contacts with Sichuan prior to emigration. The word "hometown" was dropped from the name of the association in 2006, and the Tianfu Chamber of Commerce was established as an affiliated entity with members hailing from every part of China. The Singapore Huayuan Association (later renamed the Hua Yuan General Association of New Immigrants from China) was established in 2001 by mainland-born Chinese professionals. Its membership includes those who have become Singaporean citizens or permanent residents as well as those who are on long-term student visas or employment permits. The association's main missions are to assist members in better integrating into the multiethnic society of Singapore; to promote information exchange and communication; and to promote commercial and trade relationships between Singapore and China.

In the United States, traditional organizations have continued to exist to offer resettlement assistance to immigrants from original sending villages or towns. Three types of modern organizations have been developed rapidly in old Chinatowns or new Chinese ethnoburbs (middleclass suburbs with a visible Chinese presence in population and ethnic business), as well as in cyberspace: extended hometown associations, professional organizations, and alumni associations. New patterns of organizational development are similar to those found in Singapore but vary much more in type and size. Extended hometown associations are de-territorialized to be more inclusive, and their constituency is not bound by primordial ties such as locality and kinship. Professional organizations are based on a wide range of professions, ranging from sciences, technology, engineering, medicine, law, among others. Alumni associations are formed on the basis of college and universities and, to a lesser extent, high schools from which immigrants graduated in China. The main missions of these new organizations are similar to those organizations organized by new Chinese immigrants in Singapore, with the explicit dual goals of assisting immigrants to integrate into the host society and to maintain ties to China.

Divergent Patterns of Socioeconomic Integration

From our analytical framework illustrated in Figure 6.1, we view socioeconomic integration in terms of economic incorporation and identify formation. Our own research and past studies have consistently find that they are

growing roots in their new homelands. Even though the majority of Chinese immigrants and nearly all of their offspring in Singapore and the United States have successfully integrated into their respective mainstream societies, measured in average levels of education, occupation, and incomes, their diasporic communities grow in different directions, the former toward a broad civil society where ethnicity recedes into insignificance, and the latter toward an ethnic community with new meanings.

Singapore: The Singaporean vs. Chinese Divide

In Singapore, nation-building is promoted by the government through two policy priorities: (1) immigration to sustain economic growth and global competitiveness, and (2) integration to strengthen socio-political solidarity and national identity. While immigration is highly controlled, the government has encouraged new immigrants to seek assimilation into the host society and develop a shared national identity by learning English, interacting with locals, and taking part in civil society, so that in time they would become truly Singaporean in terms of their socio-political outlook and behavioral ways. The government has also been actively involved in the integration project by implementing a series of measures to differentiate the entitlements and benefits in education, public housing, and healthcare for citizens and permanent residents, so as to address citizens' concerns about negative effects of immigration and urge permanent residents to become naturalized citizens. Moreover, the government has established mechanisms, both top-down and bottom-up to promote integration via government-sponsored programs and activities to bond native citizens with newly naturalized citizens and permanent residents. Furthermore, it has engaged civil society organizations to assist with assimilation.[38]

Despite the fact that Singapore is a Chinese-majority nation and that public officials proactively engage integration project, there are undercurrents of public anxiety and xenophobia quite similar to those in other migrant-receiving states. For example, Chinese Singaporeans see new Chinese migrants as different—both from themselves and from their forefathers who migrated to Singapore in past centuries from South China. A mainstream media columnist lamented,

> For a moment, I felt like a stranger in my own country. It was the same feeling I got last Saturday night when I went to Geylang [a popular neighborhood for locals and tourists in downtown Singapore] … Making my way there, I was struck by the sheer number of Chinese nationals milling around me… Everywhere I turned I heard Chinese being spoken with accents that sounded strange to me.[39]

Chinese Singaporeans also resent being categorized as the same kind of people as the new Chinese immigrants. One Singaporean writes in Chinese to voice his complaint in a mainstream newspaper,

> I am a local-born Singaporean, and I have never migrated to anywhere. I would be angry if someone addresses me as an old immigrant, or considers me to be 'someone who came earlier.[40]

On the ground, the public discourses on *xinyimin* rarely make reference to ethnic solidarity and a shared cultural identity of the sort that xinyimin themselves and other non-Chinese immigrants often assume. Locals dispute the idea of a common cultural heritage or common cultural connections and invoke instead the national identity and political allegiances as points of reference vis-à-vis *xinyimin*. Thus, it is the *xinyimin* particularly rather than other non-Chinese immigrants or foreigners that have created a sense of "Singaporeanness."

Xinyimin's responses to the integration project are also shaped by the rise of China and by Singapore's significant position in a realigned regional geopolitical order with China. Many *xinyimin*, regardless of citizenship status, consider China their homeland and seek transnational engagement with China as a means of improving their SES in Singapore. And their transnational practices do not appear in conflict with the official dual goal of economic growth and integration. In fact, going global and engaging China are what exactly what Singaporeans and their economic institutions, including big or small businesses, have been doing and are encouraged to do.[41]

In the process of engaging China, something paradoxical is emerging: Singaporeans going to China to do business would invoke their Chinese ethnicity and reaffirm it as Chinese overseas (or *huaren* in Chinese), while *xinyimin* involving themselves in transnational activities in China would reaffirm their diasporic identity as overseas Chinese (or *huaqiao* in Chinese). In the transnational process, both Singaporeans and *xinyimin* look to China as a way of construct a sort of hybrid identity. The hybrid identity as both Singaporean and Chinese may, over the long run, ease the Singaporean vs. Chinese divide. However, there has been a rising trend of anti-*xinyimin* sentiment among native Singaporeans, most of whom are of Chinese descent. The government has taken note of the trend. For example, in his speech at the 2012 National Day Rally, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong not only reaffirmed the "Singaporean First" policy, but also reiterated the need for Singaporeans to show a generosity of spirit to newcomers and for newcomers to embrace Singaporean values and make an effort to integrate into Singaporean society.[42] Ironically, the government's restrictive immigration policy and proactive integration project, met with anti-immigrant undercurrent in the public, serve to reinforce *xinyimin*'s diasporic identity in a Chinese-majority nation.

The United States: The Model Minority vs. the Perpetual Foreigner

In the United States, socioeconomic integration is often conflated with the term "assimilation," as assimilation has long been an unspoken national

ideology. Unlike Singapore, however, assimilation has rarely been on the top agenda in immigration policymaking; if anything, it would be advocated for the purpose of immigration restriction. For example, during the congressional debate over the 1924 National Origins Act that targeted immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe, Senator Ellison DuRant Smith (1924) of South Carolina spoke with passion on shutting the door,

> Without offense, but with regard to the salvation of our own, let us shut the door … and develop what we have, assimilate and digest what we have into pure Americans, with American aspirations, and thoroughly familiar with the love of American institutions, rather than the importation of any number of men from other countries.[43]

Of the few state-sponsored "Americanization" programs that were developed to assist immigrant assimilation in the 1910s and 1920s, all ran under the assumption that immigrants' cultures and ways were backward, uncivilized, and incompatible with American democracy. Immigrants were urged to abandon anything attached to the old world in order to assimilate. At the wake of the immigration reform in the 1960s, the seemingly unassimilable immigrants and their offspring had been integrated into mainstream America and became indistinguishably white.[44] Assimilation seemed to work for European immigrants without much direct policy integration. Even among Americans of Asian ancestry, outcomes of integration were remarkable as Chinese and Japanese Americans made impressive inroad into the American mainstream and were thus applauded the "model minority."

The US immigration reform of the 1960s brought about massive influx of non-European immigration, but again no policies to help integrate America's newcomers. Integration is entirely left to market forces and immigrant's own agency along with their right value and work ethics. This stands in sharp contrast with the Singapore state. Chinese immigrants and their US-born and US-raised children experience a different type of paradox as they strive to integrate into mainstream America. Although they have attained levels of education, occupation, and income equated with or even surpassing, those of non-Hispanic whites, and although many have moved near to or even married whites, they still remain culturally distinct and suspect in society.[45] As a Chinese American woman pointed out from her own experience,

> The truth is, no matter how American you think you are or try to be, if you have almond-shaped eyes, straight black hair, and a yellow complexion, you are a foreigner by default…You can certainly be as good as or even better than whites, but you will never become accepted as white.[46]

This remark echoes a common-felt frustration among US-born Chinese Americans who detest being treated as immigrants or foreigners. Their

experience suggests that America racializes its own people. Speaking perfect English, effortlessly adopting mainstream cultural values, and even intermarrying members of the dominant group may help reduce this "otherness" at the individual level, but have little effect on the group as a whole who is affiliated with the foreigner image.

The China factor affects Chinese Americans differently than it does Chinese Singaporeans. Transnationalism in Chinese America is very much a first-generation phenomenon. This is not merely because the members of the second generation have been thoroughly assimilated and lack bicultural and bilingual skills, but also because of the possible ramifications of delicate United States–China relations. The historical stereotypes, such as the "yellow peril" and "Chinese menace," have found their way into contemporary American life, as revealed in the highly publicized incident about the trial of Wen Ho Lee, a Taiwan-born nuclear scientist suspected of spying for the Chinese government in the mid-1990s (eventually proven innocent). Ironically, the ambivalent and conditional acceptance by American society have prompted Chinese Americans to adopt an ethnic (*huayi*) identity vis-à-vis white and align with other Asian Americans to organize pan-ethnically to fight back—which consequently heightens their racial distinctiveness while simultaneous distancing themselves from their ancestral homeland China.

Conclusion

Diasporas are made up of migrants and their organizations. They are impacted by migration dynamics and are thus constantly evolving and adapting to changes. Some of these diasporas remain self-contained enclaves while others dwindle with time. Still others grow and become key spatial nodes and physical sites through which migrants reconnect with one another and with their ancestral homeland regardless of their residence. This chapter looks at the phenomenon of *xinyimin*, with a focus on their varied patterns of diasporic development, economic incorporation, and identity formation. We develop an analytical framework to guide our comparative analysis of *xinyimin* in contemporary Singapore and the United States. The divergent experiences of *xinyimin* suggest that diasporic development and identity formation are influenced not only by individual factors but also by factors associated with the context of exit and context of reception. Histories established through processes of emigration and immigration and social networks formed to facilitate migration and resettlement interact with immigration policy to influence who emigrates and where to. In turn, immigrant selectivity interacts with group positionality in the host society shape diasporic development and socioeconomic integration.

Our comparative analysis of *xinyimin* in two contrasting contexts of reception offer some important insight into future studies to new Chinese migrants and their communities in the globalized world, leading to new

possibilities for future research. First, countries in the Global South—Asia, Africa, Latin America alike—are developing rapidly. Many countries in the developing world draw exceptional rates of cross-border flows of people and capital from China. The rise of new modes of transportation and communication facilitates not only physical movement but also virtual travel and interaction and produces a host of new business opportunities to capitalize both on the migrants' desires to migrate and the struggle by governments to manage migration and development.[47] *Xinyimin* migrating into these new destinations, especially those where historically receive few Chinese and have little intergroup contact, face new sets of challenges and opportunities.

Second, countries of destination in the Global South presents several unique realities. One such reality is that many developing countries are becoming simultaneously sending and receiving countries. These countries receive immigrants to fill labor market demands but restrict immigrants' permanent settlement. Another reality is that the receiving society's mainstream is much more diverse without a single group dominating. This is quite unlike traditional Western countries of destination in the Global North, which are usually dominated by a clear racial hierarchy with white Christians constituting the "mainstream" and other racial and ethno-religious groups positioned on the margin. Still another unique reality is diverse migration streams have given rise to a highly stratified and globalized labor market with privileges for some but marginalization and exploitation for others.

Third, a rising China has challenged common-sense knowledge about migration and development. Emigration from China has not followed the same historical trajectory as migration to the Global North by, for example, populations from places previously directly colonized by the Global North.[48] Neither have Chinese migrations been wholly or uniformly encouraged by non-Chinese states as a means of economic development—on the contrary, they have often been discouraged. Moreover, China has undergone drastic economic reform and risen up to become a key player in the global economy while experiencing high rates of internal migrations and, on a small but highly visible scale, international or transnational migrations or both. Further, the growing economic power of new Chinese diasporas and the strong diasporic identity of some *xinyimin* toward China have rendered them increasingly important in regard to prospects for local and national development in China. Consequently, new institutional structures and cultures emerge to give rise to new patterns of socioeconomic integration.

Yet, established concepts, models and theories are often bounded by disciplines and have reached limits in explaining new patterns of mobility, cultural nuances, socioeconomic and environmental impacts, and societal complexity. The challenges for China as a giant migrant-sending country and for other migrant-receiving countries may be how to negotiate and manage international and transnational flows. However, the power of the state is severely constrained not only by the market but also by diasporic

and ethnonational networks, institutions, and communities. Policy-wise, it therefore becomes relevant to understand the formation and development of contemporary diasporas and their economic, sociocultural, and political impacts on a global scale, beyond that of the nation-state.

Notes

1 Data on which our study was based were collected from on a multi-sited ethnographic study that contains interviews, participant observations, and analysis of relevant event coverage and commentaries by the media, which were conducted between 2008 and 2013 in Singapore, the United States, and China. Part of the chapter was drawn from the authors' previously published works. An earlier version was presented at the International Workshop on *Globalization and Civil Society in East Asian Context*, Rikkyo University, Tokyo, Japan, March 10-12, 2017. The authors are grateful for the support by the Ministry of Education, Government of Singapore (grant no: MOE2015-T2-2-027), the Walter and Shirley Wang Endowed Chair's fund at UCLA, and a research grant (M4081392) from Nanyang Technological University. The authors thank workshop organizers Professor Chiharu Takenaka and participants for their helpful comments and suggestions.
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8 Wong, *Patronage, Brokerage, Entrepreneurship*; Liu, "Old Linkages, New Networks."
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Part 3

Globalization, Pluralism, Governance, and Civil Society

7 Active Democracy

How Political Activists and Ordinary Citizens Support Democracy in Taiwan

Hannah June Kim and Lev Nachman

Introduction

In 2016, Roberto Stefan Foa and Yascha Mounk raised a harrowing hypothesis: global support for democracy is declining.[1] The gloomy prediction made by Foa and Mounk brings alarm, especially concerning consolidating democracies and particularly those in East Asia, since it can lead to dire implications for regional stability.

Democratic support in the case of Taiwan has been particularly important both for political scientists and regional scholars alike. Taiwan is one of the two East Asian countries that democratized during what Huntington describes as the third wave of democracy, which includes democratic transitions between 1974 and 1990.[2] After four decades of a one-party dictatorship, Taiwan has sustained a constitutional democracy with a competitive party system since then. Yet whether or not the country is a fully consolidated democracy, and whether Taiwanese citizens support democracy, has remained open to contention.[3] This is especially critical since democratic support in Taiwan not only impacts its domestic politics but has critical implications for regional stability and Cross-Strait relations.

Indeed, a fundamental political question that Taiwan faces that is different from most countries, and that defines left-right political cleavage, is the relationship with China. Specifically, how one identifies—as Taiwanese, Chinese, or both—will place them respectively at the left, right, or center of the Taiwanese political spectrum. How one feels about Taiwan's position, whether it should push for more sovereignty, maintain its current status quo as a *de facto* independent state, or become more unified with China, has consistently been the most important issue during every election since Taiwan's democratization.[4] Since the question of Taiwan's sovereignty is intimately tied to one of regime preference, understanding support for democracy is critical for understanding Taiwanese citizens and the country's future.

This chapter engages with the extant literature on democratic support and examines how citizens in Taiwan gauge democratic support. More specifically, it looks in depth at various groups of Taiwanese citizens and examines whether participation in political activity affects democratic support. It

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also differentiates between support for democratic idealism, i.e. democracy in theory, and support for democracy in practice. It examines three broad and interrelated questions. First, do ordinary citizens in Taiwan support democracy as something more than just an ideal? Second, are ordinary citizens who are more politically engaged more committed to democracy than those who are less engaged? Third, do political activists support democracy both in theory and in practice and, if so, to what degree?

To address these questions, we examine democratic support among ordinary citizens with varying levels of political activity in Taiwan and conduct semi-structured elite-level interviews with 20 Taiwanese political activists.[5] There are three main hypotheses: First, ordinary citizens are more likely to support democracy in theory but less so in practice because they are less likely to have a clear understanding of what democracy entails. In other words, they only support the system as a "brand" name. Second, those who are more politically engaged are also more likely to have higher levels of explicit and implicit support, but they are still more likely to support it in theory than in practice. Third, interviews with political activists show us that activists have strong support for democracy as an ideal and in practice, but they have reservations about the way in which Taiwan's democracy functions.[6]

The next section describes general support for democracy among Taiwanese citizens. We then describe the history of democracy in Taiwan, focusing on Taiwan's history of social activism and how Taiwanese citizens and political activists support and define democracy. We conclude by discussing the implications of Taiwan's democratic consolidation and civil society.

Democratic Support in Taiwan

Taiwan is considered a young democracy, having transitioned during the late 1980s during the third wave of democratization.[7] The 1992 Legislative Yuan election and March 1996 presidential elections played critical roles in the consolidation process, since it was the first time the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) had given up its authoritarian control and changed the power relationship between political parties.[8] Taiwan's political society developed in this democratizing setting, but it struggled with formidable challenges including limited institutional infrastructure, strong party-state control, the media, the military, and state legitimacy (including its claim over sovereignty).[9]

The Taiwanese public, for the most part, supported this democratic transition and continue to show high levels of support for the regime type.[10] Survey data from the World Values Survey, for example, show that nearly 30% of respondents in Taiwan found the democratic political system to be very good while a substantial majority of 63% described it as fairly good.[11]

Yet democracy means different things to different people; the concept also varies based on culture and context.[12] As a result, the difficulty in defining

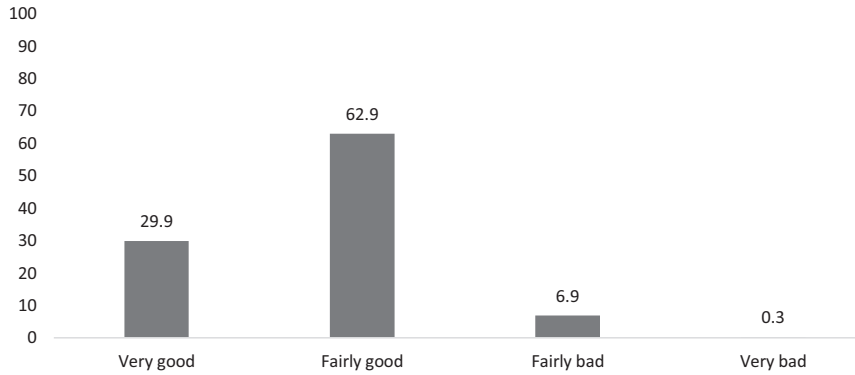

Figure 7.1 General support for democracy in Taiwan.
Source: The sixth wave (2010–2014) of the World Values Survey.

democracy makes it harder to measure support for it. This is especially the case since people respond more positively to survey questions that include the word "democracy" even if they do not support democratic practices.[13] Indeed, many people respond positively to the concept of democracy while remaining antagonistic and hostile to its core principles such as free and fair elections.[14] For example, while more than half of the Taiwanese respondents believe democracy is important, more than half also prefer to have a strong leader who does not bother with elections.[15] This is particularly the case in new democracies that have less than positive experiences with democratic governance. In order to properly unpack support for democracy in Taiwan and commitment to democratic values, it is thus important to also consider support for other regime types. By deducting preferences for autocracy from preferences for democracy, most people in Taiwan show much less support than in the previous measure. Only 4% of respondents show full support for democracy while most of the respondents do not show support for either regime type (see Figure 7.A in Appendix). More specifically, a large portion of Taiwanese respondents stated that they support democracy, but do not agree with having an elected leader who obeys institutional rules. Lip service toward democracy is thus much higher than actual support, indicating that the majority of people in Taiwan may not fully support democracy.[16]

This distinction between explicit-implicit commitment to democracy has been widely used in empirical research.[17] In this same vein, we also unravel the difference between explicit and implicit support through our discussion of support for democratic idealism, i.e. democracy as an ideal or democracy in theory, and support for democracy in practice in Taiwan. In looking at support for democratic idealism, we wish to gauge whether Taiwanese citizens prefer to live in a democratically governed country, while looking at support in practice allows us to determine the extent to which people support liberal democratic values. This difference between the support that is

mostly lip service and actual support for democratic practices is crucial in the case of Taiwan.

Given this distinction between support for democratic idealism and support in practice, we examine whether ordinary citizens, politically engaged citizens and political activists all support democracy explicitly and implicitly. This is especially important in Taiwan because of the significant role political activism has played historically in Taiwan's democratic development, through critical events such as the Sunflower Movement, and the growing democratic political culture that has become a vital part of Taiwan.

Political Activity & Democratization in Taiwan

Political activism has been a central part of Taiwan's history since Japan's colonial rule over the island.[18] Groups of students formed anti-colonial organizations to advocate for more rights for Taiwanese citizens under Japanese rule.[19] When the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) took over Taiwan and enacted martial law, Taiwanese political activists mobilized against the authoritarian government and advocated for democracy. Known as the *tangwai*, or "outside the party," this group of political activists would eventually form the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the main opposition party to the KMT. Bruce Jacobs describes the role of the *tangwai* as a key mechanism behind Taiwan's democratization: "In the early 1980s the opposition again used peaceful means of political action. This continued through the demonstrations in the mid and late 1980s and accounts for Taiwan's 'peaceful' democratic transition."[20] The *tangwai* and its relatively peaceful array of tactics is one of the key variables Jacobs attributes not just to Taiwan's democratization, but to what makes Taiwan's regime change unique relative to other East Asian countries.[21]

The DPP's establishment was not easily accomplished. What started off as an island wide social movement based in resistance against the KMT only became a political party after decades of institutional and interpersonal challenges. Factional disputes dominated the *tangwai* since its inception. The two largest factions were divided largely over a disagreement about tactical approaches. The mainstream faction, led by Kang Ning-hsiang, was focused on entering local elections and slowly changing the system from inside. Two smaller factions, the "New Tide Faction" and the "Tangwai Writers" preferred more direct tactics and were focused on grassroots organizing and street protests.[22] Despite their differences, all of these groups were able to support each other during protests and elections. For example, during the Meilidao Incident, one of the largest *tangwai*-led protests, social activist leaders from one faction were all arrested, but attorneys from another faction still defended them in court.

Events like the Meilidao Incident show that factional infighting was not the biggest challenge to the *tangwai*. The KMT's power monopoly in Taiwan created a political system that rendered their activism illegal. The incident

itself took place on UN Human Rights Day in 1979, when 10,000–30,000 people took to the streets of Kaohsiung to protest against the KMT. Riot police soon arrived, violently cracking down on protesters and arrested *tangwai* activists. Despite harsh state repression, the *tangwai* movement persisted, and continued to win local elections.[23]

In 1986 after decades of activism, the *tangwai* factions came together and established themselves officially as the DPP. At the time of the party's founding, the organization as a political party was technically illegal. The DPP, however, was allowed to run in the following year's elections until martial law was officially lifted in 1987.[24] The challenges did not simply end with the lifting of martial law. Democratization was still an uphill battle for activists. President Lee Tung-hui, who was sympathetic and far more accepting of the DPP than most other KMT politicians, still faced a number of criticisms from social activists. In 1990, student activists began a six-day pro-democracy protest known as the Wild Lilly Movement that called on President Lee to hasten Taiwan's regime transition. Students were worried about what exactly their future democracy was going to look like and insisted that they have a voice in the process.[25] The student body that organized the Wild Lilly Movement did not necessarily endorse the DPP. They wanted to make it clear that they were not simply a branch of the new opposition party, but were a separate force opposing the KMT.[26] After six days of protest, the movement retreated when President Lee agreed to meet with them and to invite them to participate in future discussions about democratization.[27]

The DPP eventually won their first presidential election in 2000 and, for a brief period, political activism lulled during the opposition party's tenure. However, political activism returned to the forefront of civil society in 2008 during KMT President Ma Ying-jeou's term that ousted the DPP from power.[28] Over the next eight years, there were a number of anti-KMT and anti-CCP social movements that sprang up, most notably the Wild Strawberry Movement of 2008 and the anti-Media Monopoly Movement of 2012.[29] The Wild Strawberry Movement was mobilized against the KMT's invitation of a high-ranking member of the Chinese Communist Party to speak in Taiwan. Young people in Taiwan were often described as "soft like a strawberry," and activists chose to name themselves as such in defiance of such characterization. Although their protests garnered national attention, they ultimately failed to grow beyond a few thousand participants.[30] "The anti-Media Monopoly Movement, on the other hand, managed to stop a media buyout of one of the last pro-Taiwan media organizations by the outspokenly pro-China Want Want media conglomerate. The KMT supported the buyout, but after months of protests against the deal, the deal was struck down for violating anti-trust laws.[31] Even though their gains were relatively small in scale, activism and calls for stronger democratic institutions from activists were central features of President Ma's tenure.

The climax of the Ma era protests, however, culminated in the 2014 Sunflower Movement that became a watershed moment for Taiwan's

contemporary politics and that reaffirmed the impact political activists can have on Taiwan's political arena.[32] In 2014, then-President Ma Ying-jeou championed the passing of the Cross-Strait Services Trade Agreement (CSSTA). The bill was controversial for two main reasons. First, it gave China overwhelming control over Taiwan's service sector, which makes up 70% of its GDP, giving China a disproportionate control over Taiwan's domestic economy. Second, it was rushed through the Legislative Yuan without formal review. The contents of the bill, and its hasty passage, prompted mass outrage across the island. Popular discontent with the Ma administration and KMT had been building for some time, and this bill was a catalyst for a large-scale protest across the island. This came to be known as the Sunflower Movement, and it mobilized thousands of people in every major city. Following three weeks of contention, including occupation of Taiwan's capital district and parliament building, the Legislative Yuan, the movement was successful in convincing the KMT government to revoke the CSSTA. Activists from the Sunflower Movement would go on to form their own political parties and heavily mobilize against the KMT in the 2016 election.[33] Due to their prominence and sustained activism or sustained mobilization, Sunflower activists represent a highly mobilized, highly politically active force within Taiwan.

The Sunflower Movement became a defining moment for Taiwan's democratic history and reflects Taiwan's now long tradition of political activism. The movement is remembered not only for its success in blocking the CSSTA, but also because it led to the formation of multiple new activist-based political parties, and launched the careers of many young and upcoming politicians. The Sunflower Movement showed that young people in Taiwan not only cared about democratic politics, but that they were highly critical of existing democratic institutions and practices. Despite having already achieved a moderate level of democratic consolidation, activists still call for Taiwan to have a better democracy with more transparency and accountability from political elites. The Sunflower Movement, like our survey results, reflect Taiwan's desire for a better democracy despite expressing critiques of democracy as a system.

From the *tangwai* movement during the 1980s democratization through the Sunflower Movement in 2014, every stage of Taiwan's democratic transition has seen social protest as a key feature. This reflects not only the value of political participation within Taiwanese civil society, but also how dissent and activism against the state has led to the building of stronger and higher quality democratic institutions in Taiwan. Without social protest, Taiwan's democracy would not have grown to where it is today. Despite its contested status, Taiwan reflects how democratization within East Asia is still closely tied to a healthy civil society, particularly one that regularly participates in contentious politics.

This history of social movements portrays an ever-increasing culture of democratic political activity that has become a vital part of Taiwanese

politics. We contend, however, that political activists have different perceptions of, and support for, democracy than ordinary citizens. While ordinary citizens may support democracy as an ideal, they are much more likely to remain apathetic when democracy is in turmoil in Taiwan. Political activists, on the other hand, may provide less support for democracy as a "brand name," i.e. explicitly, but they are more likely to evaluate democracy in its liberal form. Even citizens who are more politically engaged still have very differing views of democracy from those of political activists. Moreover, while people in general may view Taiwan as democratic, political activists are more likely to see distinctions between democracy as an ideal and in practice in Taiwan.

As such, our hypotheses are as listed below:

> *H1: Ordinary citizens are more likely to support democracy in theory than in practice in Taiwan.*
>
> *H2: Among ordinary citizens, those who are more politically engaged are more likely to support democracy both in theory and in practice than those with lower levels of political activity.*
>
> *H3: Political activists are more likely to support democracy in theory and in practice—but they are less likely to support the current democratic regime in Taiwan.*

In testing our hypotheses, we use data from the World Values Survey, our semi-structured interviews with political activists, and observations of political engagement among ordinary citizens to analyze the level and nature of support for democracy among different sectors of Taiwanese society.[34]

Democratic Support and Political Activity among Ordinary Citizens

To measure democratic support, we use two sets of survey questions. The first, which measures democratic idealism, includes a survey question that asks about the importance of living in a democratically governed country. The second, which measures democracy in practice, includes four questions that ask about essential democratic characteristics, two of which address democratic properties (i.e. free elections and civil liberties), and the other nondemocratic properties (religious authority and army leadership).[35] Political engagement is examined first through political activity using four questions on whether respondents have participated in any of the following political activities—sign petitions, join boycotts, join peaceful demonstrations, and join strikes—along with questions regarding political interest and the importance of politics.[36]

When examining support for democracy in theory and practice, i.e. Hypothesis 1, the results show that, overall, support in theory is higher than support in practice among Taiwanese citizens.[37] Nearly 95% of the

Table 7.1 Support for democracy in theory and practice in Taiwan

	Support in Theory	*Support in Practice*	
	Democratic Government (%)	*Average of Nondemocratic Properties (%)*	*Average of Democratic Properties (%)*
No	5.4	60	3.9
Yes	94.6	40	96.1

Source: The sixth wave (2010–2014) of the World Value Survey
Note: Based on Table 7.A in Appendix

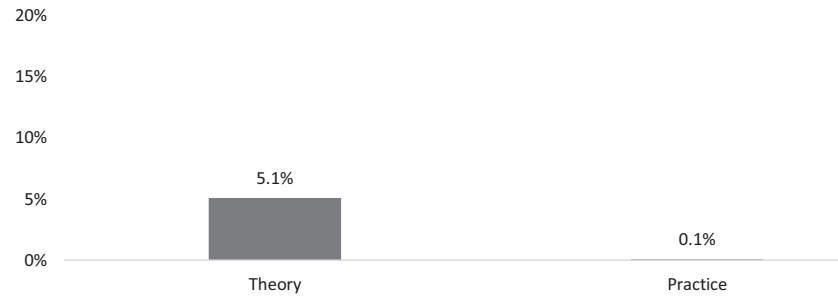

Figure 7.2 Political engagement and democratic support in Taiwan.
Source: The sixth wave (2010–2014) of the World Values Survey.
Note: Based on Table 7.B in Appendix.

respondents show support for democracy in theory, but by deducting support for democratic properties (96%) from nondemocratic ones (40%) the support for democracy in practice is at only 56%.

For Hypothesis 2, we look at how levels of political engagement impact both support in theory and in practice.[38] Support in theory shows a difference of 5% among those who are engaged in comparison to those who are not.[39] Support in practice, however, shows a difference of less than 1%, with.08%.[40]

The findings for Hypothesis 2 can also be seen through regression results (see Table 7.B in Appendix),[41] which show that Taiwanese citizens who are more politically engaged (i.e. have higher levels of political engagement, higher levels of political interest, and those who view politics to be important) are more likely to support democracy in both theory and in practice. Indeed, higher political engagement predicts 12% points in support for theory and 3% points in support for practice while increasing political interest predicts 7 and 3% points respectively. Increasing importance of politics further predicts 6% points in support for theory and 3% points in support for practice. In all variations of political engagement, however, support for

democracy in theory is greater than support for democracy in practice.[42] These findings indicate that politically active ordinary citizens are likely to support democracy and contribute to the growth of a democratic civil society in Taiwan through their activism. The results also indicate, however, that political activists are crucial in the political scene and may play an even bigger role in the democracy movement and democratic civil society in Taiwan.

Interviews with Activists

We focus on activists for two reasons. First, compared to average citizens, activists show a high level of interest in and commitment to politics. Second, regardless of what their political views are, activists have formed and informed opinions about politics. In other words, they represent a group of extremely active and highly interested individuals. Political activists are different from politically engaged citizens in the frequency and magnitude of their political engagement. A person who solely votes would not be considered politically active because that can be one of the minimal forms of participation. However, those who participate in multiple forms of formal and informal activity would be considered one.[43] There is no clear threshold between someone who is politically engaged and someone who is a political activist. However, all of our subjects are considered activists because they have recently and frequently engaged with all forms of political participation and they consider themselves as activists as well.

To confirm our final hypothesis, we use semi-structured elite interviews with 20 activists conducted during the summer of 2017.[44] The interviews lasted 30–60 minutes and were conducted in Mandarin.[45] We identify our interview subjects as activists based on two criteria. The first criterion is their history of political participation in both formal and informal practices. Specifically, all subjects have participated in a range of civil engagement ranging from voting, protest, boycott, among other activities.[46] Second, all subjects were participants in the Sunflower Movement. Some were key organizers and leaders of the movement and some were active participants. This not only shows that this group has a high level of political participation, but that the level of activeness varies even among its members.

Democracy in Theory

All of the subjects interviewed for this study signaled that they support democracy as a form of governance.[47] J, a web editor and local activists, states "It is critical to live in a democratic country… Once you have lived in a democratic system, you can never go back to the way things were before. We cannot go back to living under martial law or under an authoritarian system."[48] Other activists reacted even more strongly in support of democracy. "No Taiwanese person would ever be in support of any other form of

governance," says D, a small business owner and community organizer.[49] "In Taiwan we are extremely sensitive to changes in government, because of our history of martial law. We have lived through military governments. Democracy is something we must continue to have." "What matters to me is balance," says I, an organizing member of the Sunflower Movement.[50] "No branch of government should be too powerful, and the people should have the ability to choose and remove them from power." Y, one of the organizers of the Sunflower Movement, states "I get sick if I do not vote."[51]

Some subjects wanted clarification about what democracy means. J ponders:

> "Does anyone even know what true democracy is? I know what it's not. During the KMT's authoritarian era, that was not democracy. What China has is not democracy. But do we ourselves have democracy? Obviously, we are democratic, but there are so many problematic parts of our democratic system."

D concurs:

> You'll have to first clarify what you mean by democracy," "Do you mean the ROC government's version of democracy or the Taiwanese version? If it's the ROC version, then no I have no support. If you mean the Taiwanese version of democracy that we Taiwanese have been trying to build, then yes I have some faith. But overall I still have very little trust or faith in our system, especially since I'm actually quite anti-KMT."

Democracy in Practice

Once the conversations turned from democracy in theory to democracy in practice, activists became highly critical of democracy and the way it exists in Taiwan. One example comes from R, a small business owner who himself votes in every election and helps organize protests, who cited historical reasons for not supporting Taiwan's democracy:

> "Taiwan's current democracy? Right now our country's constitution is the Republic of China's constitution. To be a successful democracy you need four things, government, institutions, people, and land. If you match those criteria in our constitution to Taiwan today, it is all nonsense.[52] How does it have any legitimacy? Let me tell you, it has none. The only reason Taiwan was gifted back to the Republic of China is because Japan lost the Second World War, before Taiwan would have been given back to the Qing government, but instead we got stuck with the ROC. Taiwanese people never even had a chance to decide what we wanted. So to superimpose the ROC constitution on Taiwan was a

> mistake and made no logical sense, so our democracies legitimacy and rationality is all zero."[53]

Historically, the KMT, especially during the martial law era, was oppressive to the local Taiwanese population, and privileged the newly arrived Chinese population. This era, known as the "White Terror," is fundamental to both contemporary Taiwanese culture and identity. In relation to political activism, anti-KMT sentiment was one of the key driving forces behind the Sunflower Movement and the dominant political cleavage in the 2016 election.[54] Other subjects referenced the KMT's authoritarian history and its impact on Taiwan's democracy as the reason why they do not support Taiwan's democracy in practice. Specifically, they argued that Taiwan's democracy inherently lacks legitimacy because its former authoritarian ruler, the KMT, who still have political power today, founded Taiwan's democracy. J puts it simply: "I wish I believed in Taiwan's democracy. But as long as we are the Republic of China, I do not."[55]

Others addressed specific features of Taiwan's democracy that they find problematic. For example, Y explains:

> My feeling towards Taiwan's democracy…it is complicated. Taiwan's democratic system is lively, which is a great thing, but so much of our system is still influenced by remnants of our authoritarian period, it's influenced Taiwan's democratic growth. For example, in some ways our president has too much power, such as their ability to be party leader and president at the same time, which can influence how productive our parliament works, but also our president does not have to be responsible to congress. This has given us low quality presidents. At the same time, our two-party system that the KMT set up has not allowed more small parties to enter the political system. The former authoritarian government when designing our democracy also limited the citizen's rights to recall political leaders or enact public referendums. So even though our democracy may be lively, there are so many structural problems to it. And then above all else, there is the issue of sovereignty, but the independence/unification issue will forever hinder our democracy's ability to grow.[56]

He jokingly concluded with, "But I guess if you put all of those issues aside, our democracy is okay."[57]

Others say that their support for Taiwan's democracy depends on which party is in power. As A, an activist from Southern Taiwan, puts it:

> I am on and off about trust in our democratic system. When the KMT is in power I do not have any trust in our government. But, they are no longer the party in charge. But, the way our government has developed is tied too closely to the KMT. Even though we switch ruling parties with each election, it is tough to fully have complete trust in the system.[58]

Some activists also echoed A's sentiment. Since the 2016 election had just occurred, some noted how their faith in Taiwan's democracy was more optimistic because the DPP, not the KMT, was now in power. T, an organizer for a newly formed political party, observes:

> The KMT is no longer in power, we've switched ruling parties. Although normally I would say our system is not okay, especially since our country's development is so closely tied to the KMT, right now for me I would say we are okay. But others may still insist we are not, which I can also partially identify with."[59]
>
> Others did not see the DPP's control of Taiwan as beneficial to its democracy. R comments: The KMT for years was dominated by the so called 'second generation' politicians (the descendants of previous KMT officials). The problem though is the DPP's 'second generation' has now come about. They will tell you they are the Taiwanese person's party, but now have all the power, money, and resources and act just as corrupt as the KMT. I do not believe they will make our democracy better, I have little faith in them.[60]

Activists' critique of democracy in practice extends to both the KMT and the DPP. Although their critiques originate from the KMT, they rarely see the DPP as separate from the problem. Activist dissatisfaction and discontent toward the DPP can be traced back to the 2016 election.[61] Although this specific cohort of activists is in opposition to the KMT, and the DPP is the opposition party, this does not mean that activists naturally support the DPP. On the contrary, activists, especially in 2016, often did not support the DPP. Many activists see the DPP as incompetent and corrupt in many of the same ways as the KMT. Specifically their lack of support for Taiwan's two largest political parties is a direct reflection of their dissatisfaction with democracy in practice.

Finally, many were unsure about how to respond to the question about support for Taiwan's democracy because they did not know whether they should be comparing it and to what: "Compared to Japan? I do not think they are much better than us. But compared to European democracies? We are not were close. Taiwan has too many problems," R remarked.[62] "Compared to what, your country? I do not think America is doing too much better than us," R continued. "You also are stuck in a two party system, you also have dynastic political families, but I still would rather live in America's democracy than ours."[63]

Discussion

Our interviews point to a number of conclusions. First, activists are most likely to respond with a curt "no" if they are simply asked whether they support democracy in Taiwan today. This does not mean they do not support

democracy in practice, such as belief in free and fair elections, freedom of speech, right to assemble, and so forth. Rather, they do not support democracy as it is practiced in Taiwan. All subjects expressed how they value their ability to vote, protest, and live in a democratic country. It is Taiwan's form of democracy that they are critical of. Most attribute their lack of support to the Republic of China (ROC) framework of Taiwan's democracy and the KMT's continued role in Taiwan's democratic development. In theory, activists are adamantly in favor of democracy. However, they are also strongly anti-KMT, whose influence on Taiwan's democracy prevents activists from supporting it in practice. Activists seem to project their anti-KMT sentiment onto Taiwan's democracy and see their democratic system as being completely intertwined with a political party that they adamantly oppose. Although they are highly active in Taiwan's democracy, they are equally critical of Taiwan's democracy.

Civil Society and Prospects for Taiwan's Future Democratic Consolidation

While our analyses cannot predict the future of Taiwan's democracy, we can offer some insights into the current status of Taiwan's relative level of democratic consolidation. According to Diamond, democratic consolidation occurs when democracy becomes "so broadly and profoundly legitimate among citizens that it is very unlikely to break down."[64] Indeed, consolidation implies that democracy is immune to backsliding and threats of authoritarian transition. Civil society plays a vital role in the consolidation process, since "[t]he more active, pluralistic, resourceful, institutionalized, and democratic civil society is, and the more effectively it balances the tensions in its relations with the state—between autonomy and cooperation, vigilance and loyalty, skepticism and trust, assertiveness and civility—the more likely it is that democracy will emerge and endure".[65] One recent study of democratic consolidation in East Asia even describes Taiwan as "nearing the completion process."[66]

How then do our results speak to Taiwan's current level of consolidation? Our study shows a wide variety of support for democracy, ranging from strong support to weary skepticism. Although democracy skeptics may seem to prevent democratic consolidation, the presence of skeptics, as Diamond notes, may be a sign of a strong democratic civil society. The political activists interviewed for this study who are both highly critical of Taiwan's current democratic systems and supportive of democracy as a norm, also point to Taiwan's consolidation as moving in a positive direction.

Civil society, however, is not the only variable for democratic consolidation, as noted by Diamond. Our results should not be used as smoking gun evidence that Taiwan's consolidation is nearing completion or even moving in a positive direction. The strength of democratic institutions and democratic institutionalization are key. If we view consolidation as "so broadly

and profoundly legitimate among citizens that it is very unlikely to break down," such a goal may be challenging for Taiwan due to the unending potential for authoritarian takeover given the People's Republic of China's (PRC) position on Taiwan. So long as the PRC continues to explicitly state its intent to one day incorporate Taiwan—a democratic polity—into its authoritarian borders, it will be difficult to say with confidence that Taiwan will ever truly be consolidated.

One could argue that a strong, consolidated democracy could even be a key tool of defense against PRC coercion. As Taiwan's democratic institutions become more robust and institutionalized, the harder it will be to change. Even if the PRC attempts to change Taiwan's system, democratic institutions may have developed to a point where they are so intertwined with civil society that Taiwan cannot be forcibly integrated into an authoritarian system without a legitimacy crisis on the hands of the PRC.

Although our study is not one of democratic institutions or Cross-Strait relations, one cannot discuss Taiwan's relative level of democratic consolidation without at least paying mention to the role of the PRC. Historically, the PRC's constant rhetorical threats to retake Taiwan did not play a direct role in Taiwan's democratization project. Over the past 20 years, however, the rise of the PRC as a global power and increasing magnitude of PRC threats changes the qualitative nature of how they affect Taiwan's democratization process. Today, the PRC is perhaps the greatest threat to Taiwan's democratic consolidation. The PRC's intention to "retake" Taiwan despite having never governed the island continues to prevent Taiwan from realizing its full democratic goals. So long as the PRC contends Taiwan to be part of its own sovereign territory and actively prevents Taiwan from becoming a member of global order, it is difficult to consider Taiwan's democracy as fully consolidated.

Conclusion

This study indicates that there are variations in support as expressed by three groups of Taiwanese citizens: ordinary people, people who are politically engaged, and political activists.[67] Ordinary citizens are more likely to support democracy in theory than in practice. Among ordinary citizens, those who are more politically engaged are more likely to support democracy in both theory and in practice as compared to their non-engaged counterparts; however, they are also less likely to support it in practice than in theory. Political activists, on the other hand, are less likely to support it both in theory and in practice in the form that it exists in Taiwan.

How people assess their democratic regimes remains an important subject since their evaluations show how well democracy is functioning in their countries.[68] Attitudes toward democracy matter greatly in the case of Taiwan,[69] and though people support democracy, it is mostly lip service. We are not implying that democracy in Taiwan is in danger, but we note,

particularly through explanations shared by political activists, that democracy in Taiwan is not functioning in the way they would like.

Our contribution in this study is threefold. First, we use a measure that differentiates between explicit and implicit support for democracy to study people in Taiwan. Second, we use both survey data and interviews to assess normative commitment to democracy among people at large and analyze commitment to democracy among activists who continue to work for political change. Third, these interviews with Sunflower Movement activists clearly show the divide between supporting a liberal democracy in theory and supporting it less in practice, particularly within their own country. It also demonstrates variations in both support for democracy and justifications for support within the Sunflower activist cohort.

The results from this study may be applicable to other countries as well. Indeed, we may find similar attitudes in other consolidated democracies such as Japan and South Korea, where there may be many people who support democracy in theory and somewhat in practice, but are critical toward the democratic regime under which they live. The results nonetheless have strong implications about how both ordinary citizens and those who are politically engaged perceive democracy, and whether they will support Taiwan's democracy both as an ideal and as it is practiced. Moreover, it shows that the current generation of activists are less likely to be complacent in the existing political structures and may advocate for more fundamental changes in the future. If activists continue to play a dominant role in politics in Taiwan, the existing democratic platforms may change dramatically.

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Appendix

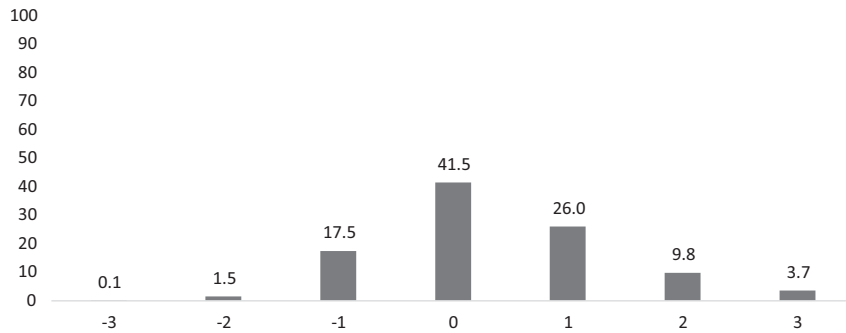

Figure 7.A Full democratic support in Taiwan.
Source: The sixth wave (2010–2014) of the World Values Survey,

Table 7.A Detailed version of Table 7.1: Support for democracy in theory and practice in Taiwan

	Support in Theory	*Support in Practice*	
	Democratic Government (%)	*Average of Nondemocratic Properties (%)*	*Average of Democratic Properties (%)*
1	0.5	36.4	1.1
2	0.1	13.8	0.6
3	0.7	15.8	0.6
4	0.3	9.0	1.1
5	3.9	12.0	5.5
6	3.9	5.2	6.0
7	7.4	2.8	9.6
8	15.1	2.1	16.9
9	12.4	0.8	12.2
10	55.9	2.2	46.6

Source: The sixth wave (2010–2014) of the World Values Survey

Table 7.B Full table for multiple regression analyses

	Model 1		*Model 2*		*Model 3*	
DV = Support	*Theory*	*Practice*	*Theory*	*Practice*	*Theory*	*Practice*
Political engagement	0.115*** (0.024)	0.032 (0.025)				
Political interest			0.070*** (0.019)	0.026 (0.020)		
Political importance					0.056** (0.019)	0.030 (0.020)
Income	0.035 (0.031)	0.060+ (0.034)	0.042 (0.032)	0.066+ (0.034)	0.041 (0.032)	0.066+ (0.034)
Education	0.065** (0.022)	0.018 (0.024)	0.085*** (0.022)	0.013 (0.023)	0.089*** (0.022)	0.019 (0.023)
Employment	−0.010 (0.016)	0.001 (0.017)	−0.009 (0.016)	0.002 (0.017)	−0.007 (0.016)	0.004 (0.017)
Gender	0.024* (0.010)	0.018 (0.011)	0.025* (0.010)	0.018+ (0.011)	0.022* (0.010)	0.017 (0.011)
Marriage	0.029* (0.013)	0.014 (0.014)	0.023+ (0.014)	0.015 (0.014)	0.024+ (0.014)	0.016 (0.014)
Financial satisfaction	0.018 (0.023)	0.040 (0.024)	0.015 (0.023)	0.044+ (0.024)	0.012 (0.023)	0.042+ (0.024)
Age	0.044+ (0.022)	0.008 (0.024)	0.038+ (0.026)	0.003 (0.025)	0.039+ (0.023)	0.006 (0.025)
Constant	0.748*** (0.255)	0.431*** (0.027)	0.733*** (0.026)	0.428*** (0.028)	0.732*** (0.026)	0.419*** (0.419)
N	1119	1040	1139	1054	1132	1053

Source: The sixth wave (2010–2014) of the World Values Survey
Standard errors in parentheses.
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

Notes

1 Foa and Mounk, "The Signs of Deconsolidation."
2 Huntington, *The Third Wave*.
3 Chu, Diamond, and Shin, "How People View Democracy."
4 Hsiao, Cheng, and Achen, "Political Left and Right in Taiwan."
5 We examine the Taiwan subset in Wave 6 (2010–2014) of the World Values Survey.
6 All interview quotes included in the study come from semi-structured elite interviews conducted in Taiwan the summer of 2017. The interviews were conducted in Mandarin and each lasted 30–60 minutes.
7 Wong, "Deepening Democracy in Taiwan."
8 Tien and Chu, "Building Democracy in Taiwan."
9 Tien and Chu, "Building Democracy in Taiwan."
10 Chu, Welsh, and Weatherall, "Democratic Citizenship and Asian Youth"; Dalton and Shin, "Reassessing the Civic Culture Model."
11 These results are from the sixth wave (2010–2014) of the World Values Survey.
12 Chu et al., *How East Asians View Democracy*; Shin and Kim, "Liberal Democracy as the End of History"; Shin and Kim, "How Global Citizenries Think about Democracy."
13 Chu et al., *How East Asians View Democracy*; Shin and Kim, "Liberal Democracy as the End of History"; Shin and Kim, "How Global Citizenries Think about Democracy."
14 Schedler and Sarsfield, "Democrats with Adjectives"; Inglehart, "How Solid Is Mass Support for Democracy—and How Can We Measure It?"
15 Data can be found on the 6th wave of the World Values Survey.
16 Out of 1135 respondents, 12.2% view a political system of having the army rule as fairly good and 1.23% as very good while 36.9% view it as very good and 49.7% as fairly bad. Out of 1128 respondents, 7% and 25.4% view having a strong leader that does not follow rules as very bad and fairly bad, respectively, while a large percentage of 40.4% and 27.2% view it as fairly good and very good, respectively. See Dalton and Shin, "Reassessing the Civic Culture Model," for details on democratic preference scale.
17 Chu et al., *How East Asians View Democracy*; Chu and Huang, "Solving an Asian Puzzle"; Shin and Wells, "Is Democracy the Only Game in Town?"; Zhu, Diamond, and Shin, "Halting Progress in Korea and Taiwan."
18 Hsiao, *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism*, 29.
19 Hsiao, *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism*, 30.
20 Jacobs, *Democratizing Taiwan*, 14.
21 Jacobs, *Democratizing Taiwan*, 14.
22 Rigger, *From Opposition to Power.*
23 Rigger, *From Opposition to Power.*
24 Rigger, *From Opposition to Power.*
25 Hsiao, *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism*, 104.
26 Hsiao, *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism*, 104.
27 Rigger, *From Opposition to Power.*
28 For a complete overview of social movements during Ma Ying-Jeou, see Fell, *Taiwan's Social Movements Under Ma Ying-jeou*.
29 Fell, *Taiwan's Social Movements Under Ma Ying-jeou*.
30 For a full summary of the movement see Yuan, "Virtual Ecologies."
31 Ebsworth, "Not Wanting Want."
32 For a thorough overview of the Sunflower Movement, see Rowen, "Inside Taiwan's Sunflower Movement."
33 Nachman, "Misalignment between Social Movements."

34 The independent variables include both ordinary citizens and their variations of political engagement along with political activists and the dependent variable includes the two forms of support for democracy. There are two main variables—support for democracy and political engagement—that are measured in two and three different ways, respectively. Control variables include income, education, gender, age, marriage, and financial satisfaction.
35 The four questions include: Democracy: Religious authorities interpret the laws, Democracy: The army takes over when government is incompetent, Democracy: Civil rights protect people's liberty from state oppression, and Democracy: People choose their leaders in free elections. The four items are grouped together, and we combine all four and deduct the responses for essential democratic traits from responses for not essential democratic properties. This average is taken as the dependent variable for support for democratic practice
36 The responses are ordered as never, usually, and always. Out of 1238 Taiwanese respondents in the 6th wave of the World Values Survey, 230 stated that they always partake in these activists while 618 stated that they would never partake and 275 stated that they usually do so. An item that combines the four items load onto one loading plot and retains one factor.
37 Support for democracy is separated into the averages of support for essential democratic properties and support for non-essential democratic properties. Responses are grouped into two (1–5, 6–10). See Appendix for more descriptive table.
38 We first run a difference-of-means test in order to examine support in theory in comparison to support in practice among those who are politically active and inactive. There are 614 respondents who are inactive (said they would never do or might do certain political activities) and 610 who are active (said they have done certain activities).
39 Results are statistically significant at $p = 0.000$.
40 Results are not statistically significant at $p = 0.894$.
41 For measurements of political engagement, we use the main one for Model 1, which is an item of four types of political activity, we use political interest for Model 2, and political importance for Model 3. Controls include income, education, employment, gender, marriage, and financial satisfaction. The responses are recoded on a 0 to 1 scale. See Appendix for the full version of the table with controls.
42 Moreover, the results for theoretical support is statistically significant while support for democracy in practice is not.
43 Wave 6 of the World Values Survey data shows that only 16 respondents took part in all of the activities.
44 For more on using qualitative interviews to study support for democracy, see: Carnaghan, "The difficulty of measuring support for democracy."
45 We use individual semi-structured interviews because they allow for subjects to freely answer our questions without requiring them to fit their responses into specific preset categories. Although there was a standardized set of questions asked based on our survey questions, topics were covered in a way that allowed for subjects to engage with the questions in a more nuanced and deep way. Rather than just answering the questions, subjects were able to explain their thought process as to why they feel certain ways about certain notions of democracy. These types of interviews also allowed us to properly identify where variation between activists as a specific cohort differed from society at large—and more importantly, why activists see democracy differently than the average citizen.
46 Specifically, all subjects have participated in the following activities: social movements, protests, marches, boycotts, strikes, petition signing, and voting.

47 In order to protect the privacy of the interviewees, we use initials for their names.
48 Personal Interview, June 18, 2017.
49 Personal Interview, June 21, 2017.
50 Personal Interview, July 1, 2017.
51 Personal Interview, June 23, 2017.
52 He used a strong explicative.
53 Personal Interview, July 3, 2017.
54 Nachman, "Misalignment between Social Movements."
55 Personal Interview, June 18, 2017.
56 Personal Interview, June 18, 2017.
57 Personal Interview, June 23, 2017.
58 Personal Interview, July 4, 2017.
59 Personal Interview, June 16, 2017.
60 Personal Interview, July 3, 2017.
61 Personal Interview, July 3, 2017.
62 Personal Interview, July 3, 2017.
63 Personal Interview, July 3, 2017.
64 Diamond, "Rethinking Civil Society."
65 Diamond, "Rethinking Civil Society."
66 McAllister, "Democratic Consolidation."
67 For more analytical studies of Taiwanese political participation, see: Achen and Wang, *The Taiwan Voter*.
68 Chu, Diamond, and Shin, "How People View Democracy."
69 Fetzer and Soper, "The Effect of Confucian Values."

8 Total Defence

Civil Society in Singapore and the Struggle Against Global Terrorism

Yee-Kuang Heng

Introduction

While the use of military force and state power often predominates in the war on terror, civil society actors also have important functions to fulfil in combatting extremist ideologies. In East Asia, civil society has taken on increasingly visible roles detecting and countering radical beliefs in a region long associated with hierarchical sociopolitical structures and state dominated politics. Although as Zubaidah and Barr suggest, "civil society continues to be carefully monitored and stifled by inadequate access to information,"[1] the Singaporean government, for one, has strongly encouraged civil society to play a larger role in maintaining security and community cohesion. Recognising the comparative advantages that civil society actors may possess in theology, the government has on its own initiative approached religious groups for instance to counsel detained terror suspects. Many civil society actors in turn cooperated with the state out of their own sense of obligation to serve the community. Civil society in Singapore is furthermore not monolithic. Voluntary groups with different agendas ranging from migrant welfare, law advice, youth engagement, to religious counselling, have in their own ways contributed to preserving societal cohesion and security.

The Globalisation of Terrorism and 9/11: The Patriot Act

As the events of 9/11 unfolded dramatically around the world, "live" on 24/7 media news cycles and TV screens, they highlighted the increasingly global nature of terrorist groups. The 9/11 hijackers were of different nationalities, including Egyptian and Saudi Arabian, had logistical support from Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and funds wired to them in the US through electronic bank transfers. The 9/11 attacks graphically highlighted the dark side of globalisation and its security implications. The terrorists employed the very tools and technologies that underpin and facilitate globalisation processes (e.g., electronic wire transfers, Internet communications, modern passenger airplanes) to attack what were seen as the symbols of US power and of

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global capital in the form of the Twin Towers in New York. This should not have come as too much of a surprise. Tony Blair in his well-known speech in Chicago in 1999 had pointed out that globalisation was not just an economic phenomenon; it also had a security and political component. Similarly, various US National Security Strategy and British Strategic Defence and Security Review documents had noted that globalisation, while beneficial, also brings risks. What implications does this have on the role of civil society in responding to these globalised risks and how might the relationship with governments shift as a result?

The urgency and impetus arising from the need to avert another catastrophic attack led to passage of the Patriot Act. The Act enabled law enforcement agencies tracking terrorist networks to use tools and methods that were already available to investigate organised crime and drug trafficking. Electronic surveillance and wire-taps were also authorised for use against the full range of terrorism-related crimes. It also authorised stiff penalties for organisations found to be supporting terrorism. Much of the Patriot Act pertains to federal law enforcement agencies and the question of government powers that raised concerns from civil rights activists about the implications for civil liberties. Many civil society groups such as American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), American Association of Law Libraries, American Booksellers for Free Expression, American Civil Liberties Union, American Library Association, Association of Research Libraries, Bill of Rights Defense Committee have expressed concerns and reservations about the Patriot Act. Writing more generally about counter-terrorism after 9/11, Lana Baydas and Shannon N. Green of the Center for Strategic and International Studies argued that the need for counter-terrorism have provided despotic and authoritarian "governments a convenient justification and sweeping new authorities for closing the space around civil society."[2] This criticism may not apply to the same degree to a liberal democracy like the US, but questions regarding the role of civil society in counter-terrorism efforts remain salient. As Baydas and Green also contend, "governments should enable civil society efforts to detect and disrupt radicalisation and recruitment, and rehabilitate and reintegrate those who have succumbed to extremist ideologies and narratives. Community and civic leaders are at the forefront of challenging violent extremism but they require much greater funding, support, and encouragement."[3] While Baydas and Green fret about shrinking civil society space, they also suggest that there might be opportunities to forge new roles and relationships with governments that are inclined towards enlisting and co-opting civil society to better manage security threats. This chapter evaluates this suggestion through the analytical lens of Singapore's experience with civil society groups that work to identify, counter, and rehabilitate radicalised individuals.

While the Bush Administration and its allies launched a military "war on terror" to eliminate Al Qaeda terror camps in Afghanistan and later Iraq, terrorism and its root causes constitute far more complicated challenges

than military force alone can eradicate. There is an ideological appeal that draws recruits to the terrorist cause in the first place. Moreover, the consequences of a successful attack may also extend beyond the immediate aftermath of death and destruction to include the destabilisation of societies and the calling into question of the legitimacy and competence of governments to protect their populations. Radicalisation processes and the willingness of individuals to participate in terror attacks crucially depend on motivations and beliefs. This is why scholars such as Joseph Nye have emphasised the use of soft power through popular culture and compelling ideas to counter extremist messages that advocate violence.[4] For instance, the Global Fund for Community Engagement and Resilience (GCERF) is a public-private partnership in Switzerland created to counter extremist messaging and recruitment. The United Arab Emirates has set up the Hedayah international centre for countering violent extremism based in Abu Dhabi that runs a counter-narrative project supported by eight countries. States no doubt have to invest in their messaging capabilities through enhanced public diplomacy efforts.

However despite the best efforts of governments, it is civil society organisations and grassroots groups that not only have greater legitimacy within the community but also better understanding of popular/grassroots sentiments and potentially vulnerable individuals. As Howell and Lind argue, many counter-terrorist legislations passed after 9/11 tended to satisfy a perceived public demand for a strong state-led response, which puts civil society under increasing strain.[5] A state-led approach also describes Singapore's response to 9/11 and global terrorism. However, despite the preeminent place that terrorism has occupied in the country's national security agenda, there seems to also be space opening up for civil society actors, space that is actively encouraged and supported by the state. Indeed rather than the widespread notion of weak and emasculated civil society actors, it may well be the case, as Chong has argued, that civil society in Singapore is based on a series of "reciprocal" relationships between civil society and state actors situated in different locations of power and able to engage with each other when their interests converge.[6]

Civil Society and Singapore's Total Defence Framework in an Age of Global Security Risks

In the case of Singapore, it must first be noted that the concept of defence has historically been extended beyond strictly military terms. The Total Defence Framework (TDF), first introduced in 1984, is modelled after similar frameworks in Denmark, Finland, and Austria. It reflects Singaporean leaders' acute awareness of their country's vulnerability as a tiny city-state that was ejected from the federation with Malaysia in 1965. There are five pillars underpinning Singapore's TDF. Psychological Defence stresses the importance of each individual's commitment to and confidence in the

country's future built on a resilient society and strengthening the people's bonds with the nation. Social Defence emphasises the importance of people living and working together in harmony and the interests of the nation and community. This aspect is especially important for Singapore given the multi-racial, multi-ethnic nature of the society and the imperative of maintaining a resilient and strong social fabric, particularly in light of the racial riots that wracked the city in the 1960s. It is also this pillar that is strongly reflected in political leaders' concerns about and response to terrorism. Economic Defence is about how the government, businesses, and industry work together to support the economy at all times, and cope in the event of economic recession or financial crises such as those of 1997 and 2008. Individuals are also meant to contribute to economic defence by working hard to meet the challenges of development while continually improving themselves and upgrading their occupational skills to stay relevant in an age of economic disruption and as Singapore's economy transitions to more high value-added manufacturing. Civil Defence, in turn, focuses on ensuring that the needs and safety of the community are protected during times of emergency, such as having sufficient capabilities for fire rescue and police to maintain safety and order. Military Defence is based on a more straightforward traditional notion of maintaining a strong armed force and of citizens doing their part to support the military through conscription and fulfilling their reservist duties.

While Total Defence was formulated in the 1980s, the Singaporean government continues to highlight its relevance in the 2000s. The Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) goes to great lengths to stress that contemporary threats and challenges to Singapore can come in many unexpected shapes and forms that may be vastly different from those of the past. As the MINDEF website states, innocent-looking civilians dressed casually like any other non-combatant can actually disguise terrorist intentions.[7] Travellers from around the world arriving in Singapore may unknowingly carry infectious diseases with them and infect others as in the SARS and COVID-19 outbreak. An insensitive deed or word spoken in the heat of a moment to a fellow citizen of another race or religion can directly or indirectly spark social tensions and, potentially, even riots. Domestic economic problems such as financial crises or stock market crashes elsewhere can snowball into a global economic crisis that impacts Singapore as well. To Singaporean security planners, the list of security threats is rapidly expanding. Natural disasters, climate change, energy, water and food scarcity, piracy, illegal immigration, self-radicalisation, cyber-crime are among other potential security threats.

The Singaporean official understanding of security is broad-ranging and comprehensive, extending far beyond narrow military threats. Given this rather wide spectrum of security threats, there is an important role for individuals and civil society to play. The Singapore Civil Defence Force reminds citizens that the changing nature of war, limited resources, and

Singapore's multi-cultural society and small size require a "Total Defence capability which involves not just the Singapore Armed Forces but also the civilian population."[8] There is consistently strong messaging that society at large, and not just the government, has important roles in national security: "Every sector of society is mobilised and has a part to play to ensure Singapore's security"[9]. In response to an increasingly complex security environment, the MINDEF also states that "*every small act counts*, whether being vigilant against suspicious activities, respecting and accepting people of different ethnic backgrounds, taking care of our environment, or simply looking out for one another: Total Defence involves e*very Singaporean playing a part individually or collectively* to build a strong, secure and cohesive nation."[10] To drum home the message that security involves wider societal efforts, a Total Defence theme song aptly titled, "*There's a Part for Everyone,"* was first released in 1984, and then refreshed in 2016 with updated lyrics and musical arrangements.

The TDF comprising of different societal actors is becoming more relevant as security threats become increasingly complex and multi-dimensional. The theme of the 2018 Total Defence campaign was "Together We keep Singapore Strong." One central security concern highlighted by the Defence Ministry was how "Terrorism is threatening our social cohesion and way of life."[11] To better reach out to youths, the campaign developed a "Guardians of the City" Card game aimed at providing high school youths with a better understanding of the TDF and the complexity of threats facing the country. The theme of the game – "We can all play a part to keep Singapore safe and secure"[12] – underscores the notion that all sectors of society can play potentially important roles in shoring up the nation's security. These card games are distributed to all members of the National Cadet Corps and National Police Corps units in high school, with each cadet receiving a personal set. As is evident from this initiative, the government does expect high school students to also lend a hand in maintaining the country's security.

Meanwhile, the development of new security structures such as the National Security Coordination Secretariat and counter-terrorism capabilities including joint army-police patrols at critical infrastructure such as airports are indicative of a strong state-led response in Singapore. New mobile Emergency Response Teams and specially trained teams of motorcycle police officers to navigate urban congestion, armed with enhanced firepower, counter-assault skills, and new rapid deployment methods to quickly arrive at a location under terror attack were also formed in response to recent terror attacks targeting urban cities.

While the state remains the principal architect of the country's defence, leading government figures and politicians view trans-national terrorism as a serious threat not just to public safety and security, but also to the delicate social cohesion that exists in multi-cultural, multi-racial Singapore. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, for instance, has repeatedly emphasised that "terrorist attacks not only damage physical infrastructure; they can

also destroy the social fabric that binds societies together."[13] Along with the restructuring of police counter-terrorism units, and newly established agencies and security measures, the government also asked civil society actors to take more responsibility to prevent, respond to, and recover from terrorist incidents. This is not just a continuation of the long-standing Total Defence concept that emphasised societal security and stability. PM Lee Hsien Loong has stressed that "the community is a far more effective early warning system, provided it trusts the government and the security agencies, and is willing to cooperate with them. It was in fact information volunteered by a local Muslim that alerted the authorities to the existence of the JI (Jemaah Islamiyah extremist group) in Singapore."[14] Notwithstanding perceptions of a tightly controlled and policed society, it signals the state's recognition that it may not necessarily be the only or the best positioned entity to identify radicalisation. The government has encouraged and praised civil society organisations that have taken on responsibilities to counter radicalisation and also identify radicalisation at an early stage. At the same time, many civil society actors do themselves feel obliged to help. Respected Islamic religious teacher Ustaz Ali who has volunteered in community activities for decades and worked with the government on counter-radicalisation, said, "We cannot run from community life, and serving the community is just like serving my own family" and that it is important "for religious teachers and the Government to work together to address important issues in the community and in Singapore."[15]

In a multi-racial multi-ethnic society like Singapore with one of the world's highest levels of diversity, "Social Defence," as one of the five key pillars of Total Defence, stresses the need for religious and racial tolerance to strengthen social cohesion and minimise the potential for conflict and misunderstanding among different ethnic groups and races. The state has repeatedly warned that radicalisation inspired by the likes of Al Qaeda and Islamic State has the potential to undermine the multi-ethnic societal fabric of Singapore, thereby threatening the security and stability of the country. There have been several cases of Singaporeans who were self-radicalised after being exposed to IS materials on the Internet while others have travelled to fight in Syria. The threat of returnee fighters launching attacks after returning from battlefields abroad is also of concern to the Singapore government. Porous borders in South-East Asia together with the siege of Marawi in 2017 by an IS-affiliated group in southern Philippines have further accentuated the threat perception in the minds of Singaporean security officials.

Civil Society Actors and Preventive Measures: Beyond Surveillance?

The Singapore government's initiative, SGSecure, reminds people to be on the lookout for suspicious activities or behaviour within the community that may be indicative of radicalisation. Mirroring social defence of the TDF,

SGSecure emphasises community vigilance, community cohesion, and community resilience. The rationale is based on a past experience whereby a member of the Muslim community reported the existence of a previously undetected terror group, the Jemaah Islamiyah, to the authorities. A key question then is what *kind of roles* exist for communities and civil society groups that would help maintain and strengthen the fabric of a multicultural society?

Surveillance and societal vigilance have emerged as key components of the state's security framework. The Singapore state's Internal Security Department (ISD) has already developed very effective surveillance apparatus over decades. This for instance led to uncovering of several radicalised individuals in Singapore planning to travel to Syria to fight for IS. While the government's ability to quickly detect these radicalised groups is a testament to the efficiency of their surveillance efforts, there are other more preventive measures that civil society can be encouraged to undertake. This role spans the spectrum of identifying radicalisation early, relaying of information to the government, prevention through countering extremist messages and online misinformation, building societal cohesion through inter-faith dialogues and post-hoc rehabilitation of radicalised individuals, and recovery. For instance, it is hoped that civil society groups can provide a contact point for accurate trustworthy information to dispel rumours slandering certain races during a terror attack, which is often accompanied by much fear and uncertainty. After an attack, civil society groups can also help to rebuild trust amongst different religious communities. Inter-faith dialogues and seminars have been organised to avoid a particular race or religion being tarnished by the acts of a minority and to demonstrate solidarity and support.

To help address these challenges, then-PM Goh Chok Tong proposed Inter-Racial and Religious Confidence Circles in 2002 (IRCC). This initiative involved many civil society actors at multiple levels. The premise was that community centres, schools, work places, local organisations, and constituent groups would develop "harmony circles" that help spread the movement of inter-racial confidence-building more extensively at the grassroots level. IRCC members would serve as "headmen" for their respective communities to turn to in case of a crisis. Religious organisations were also recruited into IRCCs to assist in contingency planning in anticipation of emergencies. IRCCs further helped to keep track of local grievances and complaints, and provide better understanding of local racial and religious sentiments. In other words, they were to serve as early warning mechanisms, as on-the-ground eyes and ears providing crucial information to the Government. One example of such initiatives is the Youth Dialogue on Social Cohesion and Security Threat held on October 2016. In an attempt to foster deeper inter-faith communication and understanding, religious organisations of different faiths sent speakers to the event, including from Hasanah Mosque, New Creation Church, Sikh Community, Sri Thendayuthapani

Temple, and the Singapore Polytechnic Buddhist Society. These can be seen as preventive measures to forestall the possibility of radicalisation within the community at large and also build a safety net of resilience in the event of an attack.

Another significant initiative was the invitation extended in 2002 by Singapore's ISD to two respected Islamic leaders, Ustaz Ali and Ustaz Hasbi, to speak face-to-face to detained JI terrorists. Out of this meeting, a voluntary group was formed in 2003 by individual members of the *ulama* (persons recognised for their level of religious knowledge and contributions to the local Muslim community) and wider community of *asatizah* (Islamic religious teachers) to communicate with terrorist suspects. This eventually became known as the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) that work through teams, each comprised of one RRG counsellor, one ISD officer, and one government psychologist assigned to each detainee. The initial goal was quite narrowly defined and focused on rehabilitating detained JI terrorist members and their families through counselling. Over time, and as the nature of the terrorist threat evolved, the scope of RRG activities expanded to include targeting and countering misinterpretations of Islam promoted by supporters of Al Qaeda and IS. The RRG has also launched a website aimed at Muslim youths in Singapore. Different types of radical ideologies are presented, accompanied by a counter-argument. Video recordings of talks and seminars presented by RRG counsellors are also uploaded onto the website, together with email contact information for reaching an RRG counsellor for guidance and discussion.[16] The goal is to build social resilience in the community through outreach programmes, conferences, and dialogues to dispel misinterpretations of Islam promoted by IS.

RRG is a voluntary civil society group but has links to Mendaki (the Malay Muslim community self-help group supported by the Singapore government) and academic institutions such as the Rajaratnam School of International Studies (which also receives funding from the Singapore government on counter-terrorism studies). Indeed, several RRG counsellors are also working at the RSIS as terrorism analysts. Other initiatives include the Singapore Islamic Scholars and Religious Teachers Association (Pergas), which has reached out to Singaporean students in Middle Eastern countries to prevent them from being swayed by radical ideas. The Islamic Religious Council of Singapore has also organised briefings by a government official from the ISD for young Muslims from *madrasah*-s and junior colleges in Singapore. Another project known as the Singapore Muslim Identity is designed to show how Muslims can retain their religious beliefs in harmony with a multi-ethnic multi-religious country like Singapore. The RRG Awareness Programme for Youth launched in March 2018 is designed to help youths understand the dangers of extremist thoughts and ideology.

In Singapore, it is apparent that the government has been working with civil society actors in combatting terrorism. What was initially a state initiative developed further momentum as religious leaders decided to expand

their own roles in counter-radicalisation. Government officials have repeatedly stressed that "religious organisations play a critical role in the community response plan…vital in not just keeping congregations safe but also ensuring Singapore society remains united and recovers quickly from an attack. Singapore counts on all of you, our religious leaders to work with the government to protect their followers and help others in the larger society."[17] PM Lee Hsien Loong has also sent a congratulatory and very supportive message to RRG: "thank you RRG for your courageous and good work guiding the Muslim community towards true interpretations of the faith and setting right those who have strayed." He also pointed to how "several respected religious scholars and teachers volunteered to work with the Government on this important challenge."[18] The RRG website has posted pictures of staff receiving visits from government officials on numerous occasions, a point to which we shall return below.

Responsibility, Credibility, and Blame

The premise of SGSecure is that "while the Government is fully committed to prevent an attack, it is ultimately the community which needs to fight terrorism on a sustained and long-term basis."[19] The terrorist threat has taken on greater urgency after the spate of attacks globally on urban centres from 2015 to 2017. Home Affairs and Law Minister K. Shanmugam noted that "responsibility" now lay with people who know of friends and family being radicalised.[20] This implies that responsibility is not just in the hands of state security agencies, but that the community is now obliged to do its part as well.

To combat the threat of radical Islamists, the state has reached out to civil society organisations such as religious groups and grassroots NGOs in their efforts at counter-radicalisation and at building general understanding and respect for others' religious beliefs. A whole-of-society approach, extending to business associations, industry, and academic institutions, is touted as a solution to complex security risks in a globalised, interconnected world. As Chong has observed, one interpretation of the Singaporean state's understanding of civil society suggests that it exhorts and expects these actors to perform a civic and national duty, in this case helping to counter-terrorism by helping lay the groundwork and foundation for action, thereby increasing the chance of success for state agencies.[21] The state engages civil society using the language of active citizenry and notions of citizen duty.[22] Civil society is thus expected and encouraged to play an active role using mechanisms and channels they have to connect with the grassroots in order to detect early potential radicalisation and enhance community resilience in the event of terrorist attack. Muslim religious preachers such as Ustaz Ali for instance were first approached by the security agencies to help debrief and counsel detained terror suspects belonging to the JI network. In this way, they were asked to assume these responsibilities, although Ustaz Ali

himself had long felt a personal obligation to work with the government. Ali then took further initiative on his own to develop a counselling and rehabilitation programme. The assumption was that these religious leaders would not only communicate better with radicalised detainees, but also have more religious clout to rehabilitate them. Hopefully, a better understanding of radicalisation processes might emerge. These leaders then took upon themselves to play wider and more active roles in initiatives such as to counter those propagated by radical extremist groups such as IS. As such, they now find themselves engaged in the politics of advocacy, promoting what they proclaim to be the "correct" message of peace and tolerance. However, there are other civil society groups such as Indonesia-based International Institute for Peacebuilding (IIP) which suggest that moderate preachers are not as effective counselling hardcore detainees. For this category, it may be more appropriate to deploy former members who had left the group or were disenchanted. IIP suggested different means of addressing the same problem, for instance utilising creative industries such as graphic novels about the victims of terror attacks, or social enterprises like restaurants to facilitate more interaction with non-Muslims.

These attempts have not gone uncontested, especially if civil society actors are misperceived as an extension of the state agenda. Religious leaders like the RRG have, by all accounts, acted in good faith and with wholesome intentions when cooperating at the behest of security agencies. Yet, even the Prime Minister of Singapore has noted that these leaders have faced the risk of being depicted as "lackeys" or "mouthpieces" of the government. This potentially undermines the credibility of the very narrative they are promoting to negate the radical interpretations of Islam within the Muslim community of Singapore. Ustaz Mohamed Ali thus clarified that the people RRG counsels are not reported to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) unless their violent tendencies persist: "RRG works with MHA, not for MHA."[23]

A blurring of the boundaries between the state's agenda and that of civil society actors may also prompt questions about the purview and scope of the state's mandate to provide security. According to a 2018 paper by the think tank Institute for Policy Studies, there are some amongst the millennial generation who do not want the government to be overly involved in policing and regulating the space of social media. Instead they insist on their own abilities to counter extremist views by having more open debates online, rather than closing or shutting down that platform entirely.[24] This raises questions about how far the population now wants the government to go in their counter-radicalisation efforts. Yet as Ramakrishna has argued, "Traditionally, providing for homeland security has been seen as the job of the government by the Singaporean public, and the government has always been regarded as doing a good job."[25] It seems that while there is public acceptance and expectation that government is ultimately responsible for security, some segments of the population at least are questioning some of the methods adopted by the government to achieve that goal. Excessive

intrusion and regulation may well once again reinforce the prevailing notion of Singapore as a "nanny state." Colonial-era legislation such as the Internal Security Act (ISA) which allows indefinite preventive detention has been criticised by civil rights groups and opposition parties. However, when detentions of radicalised individuals under ISA are announced, this appeared to be generally accepted by the public with a collective "sigh of relief."[26] At least when it comes to counter-terrorism, the state appears to have been given much leeway by the public in terms of the methods it uses. The state however may well be a victim of its own success providing security so far. As a managing director at security firm Certis Cisco Security said, "Perhaps, in Singapore, we are lured into a sense of complacency and an over-reliance on the authorities."[27]

It could be difficult to galvanise and raise awareness of, and mobilise the populace against the terror threat in a society that has long relied on the state as the sole guarantor of security. Home Affairs Minister K. Shanmugam acknowledged that "it is going to take a lot of effort."[28] Another high-profile cyber security breach that occurred in 2019 drew media criticisms of complacency and government ministers had to rebut claims they had "gone soft."[29] The populace has entrusted responsibility for security to the state. However over the years, the TDF has continuously mobilised society such that "Singapore's security is in part reliant on habits and rituals of self-governance among ordinary Singaporeans": a mentality described as *kiasuism* (fear of losing out) in the general population contributes to maintaining the political and security systems the state has developed.[30] There have been several laudable instances of station staff reporting suspicious parcels and powders at train stations for example. Still there is much to be done.

Limitations of Civil Society Actors in Counter-Radicalisation

The development of IRCCs and the RRG in Singapore provides intriguing evidence that the government has been inviting and encouraging these civil society groups to play a larger role combatting terrorism. However, there are some who may resent the cooperation between civil society groups and the state, perceiving such groups as collaborators and tainted by working too closely and being associated with the government message. This is a point that PM Lee himself noted when he said that "religious leaders took a leap of faith and took the risk of being seen as lackeys of the government."[31] Jihadist literature has strongly criticised how the "the so-called 'Islamic'" organisations in Australia were pressured to do things in order to appease the *kuffar* (non-believers), change their *da'wah*, and practice "Islam" in a manner that was acceptable to the Australian government."[32] Those who cooperate with the government are lambasted for their "treachery" and for being "apostates" who call for participation in democracy and seek to "appease the *kuffar* by erecting moderate Islamic centres."[33] As Ingram

has argued, when specially selected Muslim figures contribute to secular governments' attempts to counter violent extremism, these programmes can potentially adversely impact the credibility of those moderate Muslim scholars participating in the programme who are derided as advocates of "government Islam."[34] To further buttress this point, the now-deceased Anwar Al Awlaki, chief IS propagandist, had long warned of such government strategies as far back as 2008. This provides a strong reminder that there are skilled propagandists operating on behalf of radical Islamist organisations who are well-positioned to undermine such government initiatives that seek to engage community groups in counter-terrorism. In this respect, Singapore's RRG efforts run a risk that RRG counsellors are seen as government mouthpieces in the eyes of radicalised individuals.

While government support for the community initiatives discussed above is invaluable, such support, as Nawab and Ali suggest, could potentially risk undermining the credibility of RRG counsellors and their message of religious moderation and tolerance.[35] This visible relationship between government and the RRG might repel those very youths on the verge of radicalisation that RRG is seeking to target. A question mark thus hangs over the fundamental issue of whether, how, and to what extent governments should be involved in promoting community initiatives aimed at countering extremism. This dilemma is not unique to Singapore.

In terms of determining success or failure of such state sponsored civil society-anchored initiatives, it is extremely difficult to assess whether a detainee has been genuinely rehabilitated or whether the detainee is merely feigning contrition in order to obtain a release order.[36] Evidence suggests that the most hardcore detainees very possibly remain unmoved despite the efforts of RRG counsellors. As Ramakrishna has pointed out, there are also the underlying angst and identity issues felt by the Singaporean Muslim community.[37] For Ramakrishna, these include domestically, the ban on Muslim headscarves for students in national schools and the relative lack of Malays in senior military appointments (although this is improving). Besides hosting a US Navy 7th Fleet logistics unit, Singapore also participated in US-led military operations as part of the global war on terror in Iraq and Afghanistan. Singapore has also joined the international coalition against IS and maintains close diplomatic and security relations with Israel, another sensitive issue for Muslims. Singapore's military in its post-independence years was trained by Israeli military advisors.

Furthermore, as Nawab and Ali have noted, in 2009 there was a relative lack of programmes specifically targeted at Muslim youths in Singapore, apart from the RRG website and Young AMP programmes.[38] Few youths actually attended the numerous lectures, seminars, and conferences organised on the theme of countering radicalisation.[39] As Nawab and Ali suggest, what may be needed is a more accessible form of Islam that engages interactively with youths in innovative formats beyond simple lectures and seminars. Incorporating music, popular culture, and sports in outreach and

counter-extremism programmes could be an effective start. Issues such as the Arab-Israeli conflict were also not touched upon in past initiatives, yet these are concerns that go to the heart of the narratives propagated by extremists groups.

An important component when engaging civil society is empowering Muslim youths to take initiatives. Youth chapters could be established within the various Muslim organisations in Singapore specifically dedicated to this task. Since the 2009 study by Nawab and Ali, there have been several notable youth-oriented initiatives. A good example is the inter-faith, non-profit group Roses of Peace (ROP), which started in 2012 as a student-driven initiative by Muslim Nominated Member of Parliament (NMP) Abbas Ali Mohamed Irshad, who has been active in social work since his student days at Singapore Management University. ROP now counts approximately 3,000 youth volunteers in its membership, many of whom are Muslim youths along with those from other religions. The focus is on engaging youths, but not through conventional lectures about the theological aspects of religion or race that do not engage youths in meaningful ways. Instead, to better reach them, ROP has curated a select list of religious leaders to speak on the specific theme of how faith has motivated them to do social good. Through its Ambassadors programme, ROP also provides training on digital media engagement strategies to promote peace and harmony and in development of soft skills such as leadership and intercultural communication. It also offers opportunities for youths to build networks and self-improvement. These are important initiatives that allow individuals to also develop specific skill sets in the process, not just passively sitting through a seminar or a talk. The Asatizah Youth Network formed in 2017 and comprised of young religious teachers is another excellent initiative that uses digital media and counselling to counter youth radicalisation. Taken together, these initiatives have gone some distance in rectifying the previous lack of youth participation in community-led activities.

In a multi-cultural city like Singapore, which depends on numerous domestic helpers and migrant construction workers from other countries, the potential radicalisation of such workers and the impetus for radicalisation is another source of concern. In February 2018, a Malaysian national working at an airfreight cargo centre in Singapore, a sensitive security area, was radicalised online and planned to go to Syria to fight with IS. He was discovered and expelled from Singapore. Three Indonesian domestic helpers were arrested in 2019 on terrorism financing offences after they came across IS materials online and joined pro-IS chat groups on social media. A group of 27 Bangladeshi workers was expelled in 2016 after they were found to be planning terror attacks against the Bangladeshi government. How and, above all, why these foreign workers become radicalised can be linked to a combination of global factors, homeland politics, and their emotional well-being in Singapore. As Mohsina and Ranjan contend, religion is a source of comfort for Bangladeshi migrant workers living far from home, becoming

central to their identity.[40] Furthermore, the global war on terror and perceived oppressions of Muslims in India and Myanmar as well as in their native Bangladesh have created a sense of injustice. Islam and their identity are perceived to be under attack. Technological developments and social media additionally enable radical groups to connect with these alienated individuals in Singapore. Mohsina and Ranjan also postulate that being a migrant worker in Singapore also brings with it a sense of economic insecurity and of emotional vulnerability, making them targets for radicalisation. However, Singapore being seen as Muslim-friendly is not the target of their angst and anger which are directed at their home countries or conflicts elsewhere.[41]

Trust building, better integration of marginalised individuals such as migrant workers, and community resilience may also supplement the focus on surveillance and vigilance. Singapore's then-Minister in the Prime Minister's Office Chan Chun Sing had argued that "we must strengthen our efforts to integrate foreign workers and guard against ostracising them."[42] Apart from the global conditions that stimulate extremist beliefs, the local conditions that might make an individual receptive to extremist ideologies are another crucial issue for civil society to address. More critical approaches to radicalisation theory suggest that the role of injustice or policies in generating resentment has been overlooked by predominant assumptions that ideologies are the fundamental drivers of radicalisation.[43] Counter-radicalisation policies may also result in the "othering" of racialised or religious segments of the population, negatively impacting community cohesion.[44] A 2018 survey by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) reported that respondents believed that Muslims are more likely to be blamed than any other religious groups in Singapore in the event of an attack.[45] Encouragingly though, the report also indicated that a quarter of non-Muslims would participate in activities designed to show solidarity with Muslim Singaporeans if an attack was blamed on an overseas Islamic extremist group. The IPS study further showed that Muslim respondents appear to be more likely to take proactive steps to respond as a community, if and when a terror attack occurs. The report postulates that the international media's constant association of terrorism with Islam may explain mainstream Muslim community's wish to distance themselves from and disown extremist elements within their religion.

While many key drivers of radicalisation such as the war on terror and/or rise of social media are global or external, it is also important to understand and target the "internal" drivers that determine who gets radicalised, how and why? These would be important questions to ask in order to assess the appropriateness and efficacy of state and community interventions. Better integration with the host community was one option aimed at addressing "internal" drivers. Different segments of civil society have developed programmes in response. The Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (Muis) and local mosques have been working with

the Singapore Bangladeshi Association to improve the welfare of Bangladeshi migrant workers and address their emotional needs as well. To help new foreign workers better integrate, the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) has introduced a mandatory Foreign Worker Settling-in Programme (FW SIP) to educate migrant workers on Singapore's social norms, laws, workers' employment rights and obligations, and where and how to seek assistance. This programme is conducted in partnership with the NGO Migrant Workers Centre (MWC) that has also conducted numerous events for workers during festive periods such as Christmas, Ramadan, and Diwali; volleyball games with university students; and outings to attractions like the Science Centre. The Law Society of Singapore's Pro Bono Services Office together with MWC also runs a Free Legal Clinic. Mosques are also crucial sites where migrant workers volunteer their time during Ramadan. Texts of sermons have also been translated into Bengali for the benefit of migrant workers.

Scholars suggest that countering radicalisation might actually require policy programmes that encourage non-violent Islamic activism as a way to channel radical beliefs in a more peaceful fashion.[46] Civil society mechanisms such as the social enterprise sector of small-scale farming and restaurants have also been trialled in Indonesia to generate jobs providing work and income, and social interactions. These help keep ex-detainees busy and reduce their availability for return to violence. Others argue that "it is important to challenge and, if warranted, correct the grievances professed by terrorist and extremist groups and counter the attribution of guilt for (perceived) injustices to the side of democratic governments."[47] Injustices after all seem to be a central driver of the resentment felt by Bangladeshi migrant workers in Singapore toward their home country. Despite scepticism about the usefulness of grassroots programmes to integrate different faiths, findings from a 2018 survey conducted by the IPS think tank in Singapore suggested that even casual cross-racial interactions, such as attending a wedding or celebration of someone of a different race in the past two years, might be sufficient to enhance one's trust of people from that race.[48] Thinking about societal resilience in the aftermath of a terror attack, the same IPS survey found that "less than half of respondents were quite or very likely to believe that members of their own racial community would be suspicious or angry at people of a particular religion associated with an overseas extremist organisation of the same religion in the aftermath of a terror attack. This is indicative of some level of interreligious solidarity in Singapore."[49] However the report also concluded that for a multi-cultural country like Singapore, solidarity remains relatively low and is a work in progress. As for societal recovery after an attack, at least half of respondents felt it would take a year or less. Lower-income and lower-educated non-Muslims statistically were also more likely to demonstrate Islamophobia after any terror attack by overseas extremist Muslims.

Conclusion

In a city-state like Singapore that has long fretted about its vulnerability, its long-standing TDF provides a ready and useful conceptual lens to comprehend not only the complex nature of contemporary security threats, but also the ways in which civil society can serve security and defence functions alongside the state. The case of Singapore suggests that a working relationship could be forged between the government and those in the civil society to whom it delegates some responsibilities to counter a security issue. William Case once noted that the Singaporean state has created a paternalistic and corporatist state structure that subsumes non-state forces like civil society movements.[50] Granted, the state apparatus remains dominant in shaping the parameters and scope of interventions for civil society actors who may well be seen as what Chua has termed "junior partners,"[51] but civil society actors should not be considered in simplistic terms as purely passive or monolithic. Rather, as Chong has suggested, they can engage the state in "reciprocal" relationships based on their respective interests, power, and resources where interests converge.[52] The evolution of the RRG from initially focusing on *retrospectively* counselling detained terror suspects to more proactively *preventing* and countering radical narratives is indicative of the support it received from the state, as well as proactive initiatives it has launched itself. Youth-focused, bottom-up initiatives such as ROP also suggest that some space has opened up for civil society actors to play supporting roles in inter-faith dialogues and community cohesion. The Singapore government has in turn recognised that civil society provides useful resources in countering a complex threat such as terrorism in various stages from prevention to surveillance, recovery, and resilience. Such civil society actors may even be duty-bound to do so in the mind of the state.

While civil society actors do have a legitimate and very important role to play in countering the potential radicalisation of would-be terrorists, civil liberties and privacy safeguards need to be considered to avoid excessive snooping and surveillance of neighbours and their activities. The worst possible outcome would be the development of a society based on distrust and suspicion, which for all intents and purposes would be contrary to the multi-racial harmony and trust that the Singapore government has long favoured and promoted. As Joshua Reeves has shown in the case of the United States, the government has a history of using and teaching citizens to carry out surveillance and inform on their fellow citizens. Even in a liberal democracy like the US that protects individual freedoms and privacy, Reeves argues that American society has, in fact, fostered cultures of vigilance, suspicion, meddling, snooping, and snitching.[53] In the case of Singapore, the authorities have constantly reiterated its call for the community, family and friends to watch for tell-tale changes in behaviour and attitudes and to alert the authorities if they are unable to counsel the individual on their own. The RRG has also set up a Resource and Counselling

Centre in 2014 to provide guidance and counselling for individuals brought to their attention by family and friends. Additionally, the SGSecure website contains a list of what to look out for within the community that may be indicators of radicalisation. Home Affairs Minister K. Shanmugam has stated the need to be vigilant of behavioural or attitude changes that may lead to an eventual terror attack: "When you keep quiet, and an attack like this happens... you are doing a serious injustice to the system."[54] Here, the onus and, to some extent, even blame is placed on individuals for failing to report suspicious behaviour or patterns to the authorities. Responsibility for maintaining security, as such, is placed not just on the state, but also framed as a civic duty for civil society and community groups to help the state fulfil its responsibilities.

Understanding both the "external" and "internal" causes of radicalisation also mean that there is a crucial preventive function that civil society can undertake besides that of surveillance and vigilance. Preventive programmes such as grassroots education from an early age, integration of marginalised individuals, youth-oriented inter-faith programmes, and social enterprise initiatives including small-scale food outlets or urban farming can help bolster societal cohesion. Singapore has to strike a delicate balance between fostering strong, resilient societal bonds and trust that can withstand a terror attack, and being on the constant lookout for suspicious behaviours of family members, neighbours, and workmates.

Home Affairs and Law Minister K. Shanmugam points to another conundrum for government-led counter-ideological programmes: "If we as the government try to correct this we have no credibility. So the RRG comes in. Religious scholars and community leaders teach these people. Success depends on the credibility of the clerics."[55] Singapore's experience has raised fascinating questions about responsibility and credibility. As governments emphasise the responsibilities of civil society actors, it must be borne in mind that extremist groups also have their own narratives to "counter this counter-narrative." Credibility of the messaging is therefore of utmost importance to ensure that the message has sufficient impact to be taken seriously not only by the community but also by the very individuals that messaging is trying to reach.

Notes

1 Rahim and Barr, *The Limits of Authoritarian Governance*, 7.
2 Baydas and Green, "Counter-Terrorism Measures."
3 Green and Proctor, *Turning Point.* v.
4 Nye, "In Fighting Terrorism."
5 Howell and Lind, *Civil Society Under Strain.*
6 Chong, "Civil Society in Singapore."
7 "What is Total Defence," Singapore Ministry of Defence.
8 "Community and Volunteers, What Is Total Defence," Singapore Civil Defence Force.

9 "Community and Volunteers, What Is Total Defence," Singapore Civil Defence Force.
10 "What is Total Defence," Singapore Ministry of Defence.
11 "Total Defence 2017," Singapore Ministry of Defence.
12 "Total Defence 2017," Singapore Ministry of Defence.
13 Lee, "Speech at International Conference."
14 Lee, "Speech at International Conference."
15 Baharudin, "Honoured for Service to Nation."
16 Nawab and Ali, *Igniting Thought, Unleashing Youth,* 10.
17 Yeoh, "The Critical Role of Religious Organisations in Singapore's Security."
18 Lee, "Speech at International Conference."
19 "SGSecure Overview," Singapore Ministry of Home Affairs.
20 Mokhtar and Ting, "Misplaced Sympathy among Reasons Why Families Don't Report Radicalised Members."
21 Chong, "Civil Society in Singapore," 283.
22 Chong, "Civil Society in Singapore," 293.
23 Neo, "Religious Counsellors Save Two Secondary Schoolboys from Further Radicalisation."
24 Tang, "The Big Read."
25 Linder, "Singaporeans Don't Care About SG Secure."
26 Hor, "Terrorism and the Criminal Law."
27 Goh, "Singapore Security."
28 Sim, "SG Secure to Equip People for Crises."
29 Heng, "Singapore's Government Has Not Gone Slack."
30 Tan and Chew, "Governing Singapore's Security Sector."
31 Lee, "Speech at International Conference."
32 Ingram, "ISIS: Assessing Rumiyah." I am most indebted to Dr. Hororo Ingram for pointing this literature out to me.
33 Ingram, "Assessing Rumiyah."
34 Ingram, "Assessing Rumiyah."
35 Nawab and Ali, *Igniting Thought*, 14.
36 Ramakrishna, "Counter-Ideological Work in Singapore."
37 Ramakrishna, "A Holistic Critique of Singapore's Counter-Ideological Programme."
38 Nawab and Ali, *Igniting Thought*.
39 Nawab and Ali, *Igniting Thought,* 13.
40 Mohsina and Ranjan, "The Radicalisation of Bangladeshi Migrant Workers."
41 Mohsina and Ranjan, "The Radicalisation of Bangladeshi Migrant Workers."
42 Driscoll, "Actions of Those Arrested Under ISA."
43 Baker-Beall, Heath-Kelly and Jarvis, *Counter-Radicalisation: Critical Perspectives*, 1–14.
44 Ali, "Mapping the Muslim Community."
45 Mathews, Lim, and Selvarajan, "Community Relations Amidst the Threat of Terror," 56.
46 Edwards, "How (not) to Create Ex-terrorists."
47 Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation*, 57.
48 Mathews, Lim, and Selvarajan, "Community Relations Amidst the Threat of Terror," 109–110.
49 Mathews, Lim, and Selvarajan, "Community Relations Amidst the Threat of Terror," 56.
50 Case, *Politics in Southeast Asia,* 21.
51 Chua, "Non-transformative Politics."
52 Chong, "Civil Society in Singapore."

53 Reeves, *Citizen Spies.*
54 Cheong, "Vital to Report Radicalisation."
55 Sheridan, "Singapore's Counter-Terrorism a Great Success."

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9 Global, Regional, National, and Local Aspects of Hong Kong's Democracy Movement

Toru Kurata

Introduction

Globalization, along with phenomena such as regionalism i.e. cooperation among countries within a region such as EU and ASEAN are among the important trends in the world today that have strong impact on the world's politics. Simultaneously, we are witnessing recent emergence of strong opposition to international cooperation. "Brexit" and the electoral victory of Donald Trump revealed that there are strong antipathies to globalization and regionalism in many countries. While nationalist forces seem to be getting stronger in many counties, the regional push for independence from traditional nation states has also registered in many countries such as the case with Scotland in Britain, Kurds in Iraq, and Catalonia in Spain. What kind of influence do these trends have on the state of civil society in East Asia? Focusing on the democracy movement in Hong Kong, this paper examines the influence that these global trends may have on the state of civil society in East Asia. Beginning with an overview of Hong Kong 's profile as a global, regional, national, and local city, it examines how global, regional, national, and local developments have influenced Hong Kong's democracy movement.

In 2014, tens of thousands of people mobilized around the election system of the Chief Executive in Hong Kong. Over 790,000 people casted votes in an unofficial "Civil Referendum" which was organized by democrats to choose an ideal election method, along with mass turnout for the various events that were hosted around the campaign. And the "Umbrella Movement," calling for true democracy lasted 79 days, occupying major streets and attracting a large number of followers, especially among young citizens. These developments underscore the existence of a strong civil society in Hong Kong that can organize and mobilize pro-democracy movements, which begs the question as to what makes Hong Kong's civil society so active? Is it the trend in the world, influence from other Asian countries, policy of the Chinese government, or local social problems?

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Hong Kong: A Global, Regional, and National Center with Local Characteristics

Hong Kong is one of the most important international financial centers in the world, with strong and historical ties with neighboring Asian countries and nations. It is also part of a strong nation, China, but it has many special characteristics that distinguish it from other parts of China. From the very beginning of its history as a British colony, Hong Kong has kept its status as a free port for more than 170 years. Immediately following its acquisition of Hong Kong in 1841 in the aftermath of its victory in the Opium War, the British tried to attract Chinese and foreign traders to Hong Kong with guarantees of free trade and protection under the British flag for Europeans and Chinese.[1] Since then, Hong Kong grew into an entrepôt between China and the world. After the PRC was established in October 1949, the trade between China and Western countries dropped sharply, but Hong Kong survived this crisis by transforming itself into an industrial center, becoming one of the "four little dragons" of east Asia. In 1978, China introduced its open-door policy and attracted most of the manufacturing industries from Hong Kong to Mainland China. Hong Kong again changed its role and became a financial and service center. In 2017, Hong Kong's service sector contributed 92% directly to its GDP.[2] Today, Hong Kong is an important banking and financial center in the Asia Pacific.

Saskia Sassen argued that in the 1980s financial transactions became the main type of international flow and only a handful of countries—the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan—were able to play central roles in this major development. Major cities in these countries, namely New York, London, and Tokyo, thus emerged as critical hubs in the management and control of this global network.[3] Two Hong Kong sociologists, Stephen Chiu and Tai-Lok Lui, however, argue that Hong Kong is a "Chinese Global City," calling it the "center of Chinese capitalism."[4] If a global city needs support from a strong national economy, it is only natural that Hong Kong's status as a global city rises as Chinese economy grows. In 2008, the "Time" magazine published a front-page article about three global cities—New York, London, and Hong Kong (instead of Tokyo) —referring to them by a new term "Ny.lon.kong." The article pointed out that these cities are both financial and cultural centers in different time zones and that people could better understand the world by understanding these cities.[5]

However, by the word "Chinese capitalism," Chiu and Lui do not only mean Mainland China's economy. As overseas Chinese communities grew, Hong Kong serves as an intermediary between overseas Chinese communities and the emigrants' hometowns. Takeshi Hamashita argues that through migration and accompanying monetary flow, Hong Kong is connecting huge hinterlands surrounding it. Hamashita contends that Hong Kong is located at the entrance of eight "hinterlands," namely, (1) coastal China, (2)

Pearl River Delta, (3) Southwest China, (4) Continental Southeast Asia, (5) Indochina and Malay Peninsulas, (6) South China Sea Area, (7) Taiwan, and (8) Japan, Korea, and Northeast China, and that China's strategy to become a maritime country will make Hong Kong's role more important. He calls Hong Kong a "network city in Asia,"[6] suggesting that Hong Kong is a regional center having strong ties with neighboring Asian countries. For one, Hong Kong has many things in common with Taiwan. Both are ethnically Chinese communities with capitalist systems. They share a common written language, and many movie stars and singers performed in both places, thereby creating a unified market for publishing and show business. Together with South Korea and Singapore, they were called the "four little dragons" in Asia, countries that experienced rapid economic growth under authoritarian political systems in the post-war period.

However, it is clear that due to its economic growth, China and mainland Chinese companies have become stronger, with Hong Kong as one of the centers of Chinese economy. Immediately after the handover, Hong Kong was hit by the Asian financial crisis and its economy fell into a severe recession. When Hong Kong business sector and the Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government had to ask the Central Government for help, Beijing changed its policy from non-interventionism to economic integration. In 2003, Beijing and Hong Kong signed the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) and cross-border interactions between Hong Kong and the mainland became more extensive. In 1993, Chinese companies amounted to 4.78% of market capitalization in Hong Kong stock market; in 2008 the figure reached 54.57%.[7] The number of tourists from Mainland China also increased from 2.36 million in 1997[8] to 47.24 million in 2014.[9] Of the total 16,474 non-local university undergraduate students, mainland students accounted for 12,037 in 2016–2017.[10] As such, Hong Kong has become a financial and educational center for the PRC, absorbing companies, tourists, and educational elites from the mainland.

Despite the interdependence, it would be a misunderstanding to see Hong Kong simply as one of the Chinese cities like Beijing and Shanghai, as Hong Kong has distinct characteristics that distinguish it from the mainland. For instance although 92.0% of Hong Kong residents answered they are ethnic Chinese in the 2016 population by census,[11] many of them would rather call themselves "Hong Konger" than "Chinese." According to a survey conducted in December 2019, 77.8% of the respondents responded that they would identify themselves self as a Hong Konger, while 20.8% identify themselves as Chinese.[12]

Although recent studies argue that this "Hong Kong identity" has its origin in the early colonial period of nineteenth century, widespread sense of belonging to Hong Kong among its people was created mainly in the post-World War II period. Before the establishment of PRC, there were no border control between the mainland and the colony, but in 1950 Hong Kong government started to limit immigrants from the mainland in order to control

influx of refugees and to block the communists' influence. After that, China and Hong Kong developed in very different ways. While China suffered from economic disaster of the Great Leap Forward and political chaos of Cultural Revolution, Hong Kong enjoyed relatively stable political situation and succeeded in economic take-off. It is widely argued in the 1970s that Hong Kong identity emerged among her citizens due to the significant difference in lifestyle between the mainland and Hong Kong, along with the emergence of TV programs and movies by Cantonese language, which differs greatly from mandarin, the common language in Mainland China.

However, in the eyes of Beijing, Hong Kong is one of the local governments. Article no.12 of the Basic Law, Hong Kong's mini-constitution, stipulates that the Hong Kong SAR shall be a local administrative region of the People's Republic of China, and which shall enjoy a high degree of autonomy while under the Central People's Government. So, although Hong Kong is sometimes called an economic capital of China, it is a local place in terms of political reality. In short, Hong Kong is a global city, a regional center of Asia, an economic capital of China, and a local region of China, all of which makes Hong Kong's democratization issue very complicated and unique.

Democracy Development of Hong Kong

Hong Kong's democratization started in the 1980s and it is continuing. The method for selection of the Chief Executive and the election method for seats of the Legislative Council has developed gradually. The Chief Executive is elected by "Selection Committee (for the first election in 1996)" or "Election Committee (for elections after 2002)." In the first election of the Chief Executive in 1996, the Committee consisted of only 400 members. It was expanded to 800 in 2002 and 1,200 in 2012. Election methods of the Legislative Council is shown in Figure 9.1. The proportion of the seats elected by universal suffrage increased from 30% in 1991 to 50% in 2004.

Until the 1980s, Hong Kong had almost no democratic elections. Many reasons have been put forth to explain the delay in Hong Kong's democratic development, such as Britain's reluctance, China's opposition and Hong Kong people's apathy.

The situation changed drastically when Britain started to negotiate with China about Hong Kong's future after 1997. In November 1984, just before the negotiation was concluded, the British Hong Kong government issued a white paper and proposed to introduce indirect elections in the Legislative Council in 1985. This proposal sparked strong opposition from the Chinese government. Xu Jiatun, the head of the Hong Kong branch of the Xinhua News Agency and de-facto representative of the Chinese Government in Hong Kong, warned the Hong Kong government that their reform is breaching the 1984 agreements of the Joint Declaration, the aim of which was to maintain the status quo of Hong Kong. Following the negotiations,

		Legislative Council (colonial government)					Provisional Legislative Council	Legislative Council					
Year of election or selection		84	85	88	91	95	97	98	00	04	08	12	16
Governor, Officials and Appointed		47	33	31	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
indirect election	Selection Committee	—	—	—	—	—	60	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Election Committee	—	—	—	—	10	—	10	6	—	—	—	—
	Functional Constituencies	—	12	14	21	30	—	30	30	30	30	35	35
	Electoral College	—	12	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Universal Suffrage		—	—	—	18	20	—	20	24	30	30	35	35
Total		47	57	57	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	70	70

Figure 9.1 Number of seats elected by various election method in the legislating body.

Source: Norman Miners, *The Government and Politics of Hong Kong* (fifth edition), Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1995, p.116 and Legislative Council of the Hong Kong, Special Administrative Region, "Overview and composition", https://www.legco.gov.hk/en/about-legco/overview-and-composition.html.

Britain accepted China's demand to slow down the pace of democratization, and China in turn promised to continue the democratization process after the handover. In the Basic Law, China stipulated that the method for the selection of the Chief Executive and for forming the Legislative Council will progress gradually and the ultimate aim is the selection of the Chief Executive and the election of all the members of the Legislative Council by universal suffrage.

The June 4th Tiananmen incident of 1989 gravely impacted the political situation and democratic development in Hong Kong. A large number of people in Hong Kong joined the protest against Beijing's crackdown and in 1990 the leaders of these movements formed the United Democrats of Hong Kong that became the first major political party in Hong Kong. In the 1991 Legislative council election, 18 of the 60 seats were elected by universal suffrage for the first time in Hong Kong's history, with the pro-democracy camp achieving a landslide victory, winning 17 out of 18 seats by universal suffrage. The majority of Hong Kong citizens supported the democrats, seeing democracy as a tool to resist the communists.

Hong Kong people's enthusiasm toward democracy pushed the British government to change its policy. In 1992, Chris Patten, the last governor, proposed a radical plan for electoral reform to speed up democratization. This infuriated the Chinese government. On the day of the handover, the Chinese government dissolved the Legislative Council elected under the system introduced by Patten and established the Provisional Legislative Council, with almost no democrats joining in.

This, however, did not stop the democratization process. Since China at that time was eager to show the success of Hong Kong's "One Country, Two

Systems" to the world and, especially, to Taiwan people, China did not go so far as destroying the whole democratization process which had been stipulated in the Basic Law. In 1998 China dissolved the Provisional Legislative Council and resumed normal election process that conformed to the Basic Law, and the number of the members of the Election Committee of Chief Executive and seats of Legislative Council elected by universal suffrage increased gradually.

Popular dissatisfaction with the government and Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa grew after the severe recession that hit Hong Kong as a result of the Asian financial crisis just after the handover. On July 1, 2003, it finally exploded, as an estimated 500,000 people took to the street to join a rally organized by democrats, and demanded Tung's resignation. After the demonstration, democrats strengthened their demand for democracy, arguing that universal suffrage of the Chief Executive is needed for better political leadership.

The Central Government, however, viewed the problem differently. While they were shocked by the July 1st rally and studied its cause seriously, they concluded that the main problem which caused people's dissatisfaction was the economic recession. To address the problem, the Central government changed its policy from non-interventionism to active promotion of the so-called economic integration of Hong Kong and Mainland China. Just after the rally, China started to allow tourists from some parts of Mainland China to visit Hong Kong on an individual basis. The number of Chinese tourists to Hong Kong grew exponentially and Hong Kong's tourism and retail industry were revived dramatically. It also allowed Hong Kong's financial institutions to engage in Renminbi (RMB) business. Hong Kong became the largest offshore RMB market and strengthened its position as Asia's financial center. This economic policy also realized the improvement of Hong Konger's feelings toward the central government temporarily. They welcomed the economic integration policy and Public opinion polls showed an improvement in popular sentiment in Hong Kong toward the central government from 2003 to 2008.

Simultaneously, China took a hardline attitude toward the demand for democracy. When the debates on the election system intensified in Hong Kong after the July 1 rally, China started to insist that Hong Kong must be ruled by "patriots." China did not make it clear who it considers "patriots," but from the context it was clear that China did not want democrats who demand an end to one-party dictatorship to become a Chief Executive or to win majority seats in the Legislative Council. In April 2004, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPCSC) ruled that the Chief Executive will not be elected by universal suffrage in the next election.

However, in 2007, when deciding the process of the 2012 elections of the Chief Executive and Legislative Council, the Central Government proclaimed that the Chief Executive can be elected by universal suffrage in 2017. The timetable for democratization, which democrats have consistently

demanded since the handover, was finally set. The focus then shifted to the composition of the nomination committee and the method of the nomination of candidates. Article 45 of the Basic Law stipulates that "The ultimate aim is the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage upon nomination by a broadly representative nominating committee in accordance with democratic procedures." That meant that before the election by the Hong Kong people, the candidates will be selected by a body named "nominating committee." There was, however, nothing written about the committee in the Basic Law.

Concerned that if the committee was dominated by pro-Beijing people, pro-democracy candidates may not be nominated and may be excluded from the election, democrats started campaigning for "true democracy" or "genuine universal suffrage" that allows everybody to run for the election. This movement eventually turned into the "Umbrella Movement" after the central government ignored the democrats' demand and decided to introduce the eligibility restrictions on candidates in the 2014 Chief Executive election.

The "Occupy Central" Movement: Seeking for a Democracy of International Standard

In calling for true democracy, democrats insisted that the election method must satisfy "international standards." Pro-democracy Legislative Councilor Alan Leong argued that a clear definition of universal suffrage was given by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which proclaimed that every citizen shall vote "by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors," criticizing some pro-Beijing politician's argument that the definition of universal suffrage shall be determined by the Central Government.[13] In Article 25 of the Covenant, it is stipulated that every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections,[14] suggesting that not only the right to vote but also the right to be elected should be equal.

From the early stage of the democratic reforms, Beijing had opposed the idea of bringing "Western" political system to Hong Kong. When Deng Xiaoping met with the members of the drafting committee of the Basic Law in 1987, he said that "Hong Kong's system of government should not be completely Westernized; no Western system can be copied in toto," stating that "it would not be appropriate for its system to be a total copy of theirs with, for example, the separation of the three powers and a British or American parliamentary system."[15] Democrats saw such "Chinese-style" democracy as fake, and used the logic of "international standard" to resist Beijing. The "Occupy Central with Love and Peace (OCLP)" movement, which later developed into the "Umbrella Movement," was a project which was planned in accordance with the international standard. Benny Tai Yiu-ting,

an Associate Professor of Law at the University of Hong Kong, initiated the OCLP campaign. He expected that there was probably little possibility that Beijing would allow Hong Kong to have a full-fledged universal suffrage, and insisted that Hong Kong must have a stronger weapon to fight for democracy since traditional protest movements such as peaceful demonstration marches and gatherings were powerless. He proposed mobilizing more than 10,000 citizens to participate in a nonviolent sit-in at the main streets of Central area, Hong Kong's financial, political and commercial center, to paralyze Hong Kong's economic activities and to force Beijing to compromise if Beijing did not give Hong Kong a true democracy when they decide the election method on summer 2014.[16]

OCLP was a movement that stressed the "international standard" in many aspects. First, the idea of the movement itself was strongly influenced by some developments that occurred in the world. The "Occupy Wall Street" movement of 2011 gave rise to the first "Occupy Central" movement in Hong Kong. In October 2011. Young people, motivated by the Occupy Wall Street, erected tents in public spaces such as at the foot of the headquarters of Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, one of the symbolic buildings of Hong Kong economy, to protest against the high price of real estate and growing dominance of the financial sectors over Hong Kong economy and society. Although limited in scale, the movement was the longest "occupy" movement in the world, lasting until the complete removal of the protesters in September 2012.

While the theme of this first "Occupy Central" movement, like the movement in New York, was economic disparity, there was another major movement in the same year which called for democracy worldwide, including in Hong Kong. In 2011, simultaneous to the "Jasmine Revolution" in the Middle East, a movement named "Chinese Jasmine Revolution" was launched in Hong Kong, calling for democracy in China and Hong Kong. They held protest rallies every weekend in front of the Liaison Office of the Chinese Central Government in Hong Kong for 55 weeks. While "Occupy" was a protest against capitalism and spread mainly to the countries with advanced economies and electoral democracy, the "Jasmine Revolution" was aimed at the democratization of authoritarian regimes and spread mainly to countries in the Middle East. Although these movements occurred in the same year, it is rare to have two movements in the same place since the nature of these two movements were very different, one is a pro-democracy movement and the other is a movement occurred in countries with democratic political system. Hong Kong, as such, is a very rare place where both "Occupy" and "Jasmine" happened simultaneously. This reflects the characteristics of Hong Kong's political system. According to the "Freedom in the World 2019" report by Freedom House, Hong Kong's score for political rights is at 5 out of 7 on a scale of 1 being the freest and 7 as the least free. While it is slightly better than China (7), it is still a distance from the United Kingdom, Japan, Taiwan (1), and the United States (2). However, Hong Kong's

score for civil liberties is 2, which is the same as France and South Korea and much better than China (6), making Hong Kong a place with freedom but without democracy. Hong Kong's scores for political rights and civil liberties show a 3-point difference; of the 195 countries and 15 territories included in the report, no other country has such a large difference between these two criteria.[17]

A few factors account for this uncommon political situation. First, Hong Kong has a free, advanced economy and people enjoy the freedom of demonstration. Hong Kong also shares such problems as income gap and high cost of living with many advanced global cities, so people have sympathy for the "Occupy Wall Street" movement. At the same time, Hong Kong still does not have full democracy. Like people in the Middle East, Hong Kong democrats are asking for genuine democracy. Second, the background of the organizers of the movement was heavily influenced by "international standards" and Western thoughts. While the first "Occupy Central" movement was about economic issues, the theme of the second "Occupy Central" movement or the OCLP was democratization. Benny Tai, the initiator of the OCLP, is a common law specialist, trained in public law at the London School of Economics and Political Science, and a devout Protestant. He himself argues that such concepts as public, justice and citizenship have much to do with the Christian faith.[18] When he announced the OCLP plan in March 2013, he selected a church for the venue of the press conference. Besides Tai, two persons joined the leadership of the campaign—Chan Kin-man, an associate professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, specializing in Chinese society studies, and Reverend Chu Yiu-ming, the minister of a Protestant Church in Hong Kong, and a veteran pro-democratic activist who served as chairman of Hong Kong Democracy Development Network. They believe Western science and thoughts, and Christian values to be the "international standard." Third, the principles and methods of the OCLP were strongly influenced by the logic of protest activities, which was widely accepted in the world. OCLP was a movement to practice "civil disobedience," nonviolent resistance by refusing to obey certain laws. On 27 March 2013, the authors of the OCLP issued a manifesto, establishing the aims of the campaign as "to strive for the election of the Chief Executive by universal and equal suffrage in 2017," and linking civic awakening to the success of the movement. To achieve these goals, they announced that they should be like preachers communicating enthusiastically with different communities to convey what they see as universal values such as democracy, universal and equal suffrage, justice and righteousness. And they welcomed people who agree with these convictions to join the movement.[19] Civil disobedience was the most important concept of the OCLP movement. Citing from a research[20] that studied 67 countries where transitions from authoritarianism occurred and found that the force of nonviolent civic resistance was a key factor in driving 50 of 67 transitions (or over 70% of countries), the OCLP argued that civil disobedience is powerful.[21]

The Central Government's Attitude: Preventing "Color Revolution"

When Sino-British negotiations on Hong Kong's future were concluded in 1984, people expected that "One Country, Two Systems" may change not only Hong Kong but also China. Andrew Scobell argued in 1988 that Hong Kong was exerting a considerable degree of influence on China. Historically, the treaty ports in China's coastal regions played a crucial role in fomenting momentous changes that affected Chinese society, and cities such as Shanghai, Tianjin, Guangzhou and Hong Kong were places where new ideas, tastes, doctrines, and habits originated and were debated, tested and adopted. Economically, China was transforming from a Soviet-style command economy into a mixed system in 1980s. Culturally, Chinese society was experiencing a "Hong Kong and Taiwan craze," with movies, TV dramas and music from Hong Kong and Taiwan garnering a large audience in China. Politically, Beijing was facing the possibility of a democratic experiment. As such, Scobell argued that when China acquires Hong Kong in 1997, it may be another step in Hong Kong's gradual annexation of China.[22]

However, for the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the idea of the Communist regime being overthrown and a new government founded under the influence of Western democracy was a nightmarish prospect. The CCP was to face a real threat when Tiananmen Square was occupied by students calling for democracy in 1989. At that time Hong Kong was in the transition period for the handover and played a major role in the democracy movement in China. Activists of Hong Kong organized huge demonstrations that attracted as many as 1 million people. Some students also visited Beijing to support mainland Chinese student protesters. After the crackdown, Jiang Zemin, the newly selected Communist Party leader, warned Hong Kong that "Well water (Hong Kong) should not mix with river water (the Mainland)," to mean that Hong Kong should not interfere in China and that China would also not interfere in Hong Kong.[23] After the handover, China kept border control between the Mainland China and Hong Kong unchanged. This arrangement blocked the "well water" from pouring into the river. Pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong were denied visits to the mainland. Hong Kong citizens traveling to the mainland could only bring in pro-CCP newspapers and magazines. Hong Kong TV programs were allowed to be broadcasted on the mainland and were very popular especially among people in Guangdong province who understand Cantonese language, but when a program referred to political issues such as demonstrations and protests, the screen suddenly turned black or the program switched to commercials. However, this kind of information control became less and less effective when mainland Chinese citizens started traveling outside the mainland as a result of China's economic growth. As shown in Figure 9.2, the number of mainland Chinese tourists visiting Hong Kong increased dramatically after the handover from 2.3 million in 1997 to 51.0 million in 2018.

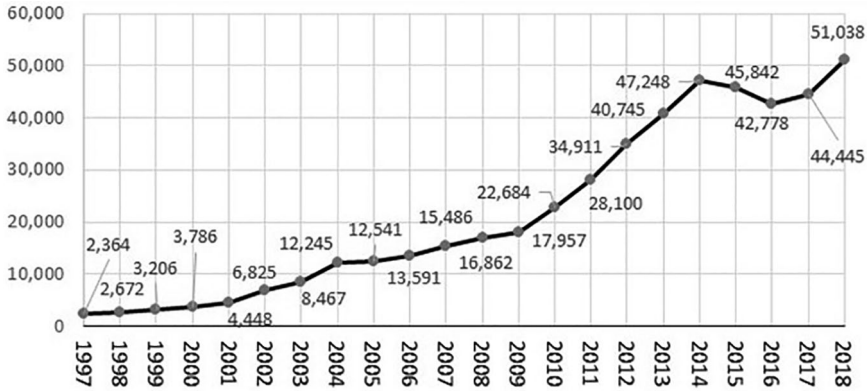

Figure 9.2 The number of the mainland visitors to Hong Kong.
Source: Hong Kong Annual Digest of Statistics (1997–2019).

Especially, starting from 2003, the Central Government allowed individual trips to Hong Kong for residents of developed regions of China including Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Shanghai, and Beijing. While for most tourists, the purpose for visiting Hong Kong was shopping and tourism, some of them also visited bookstores to buy books banned on the mainland, enjoyed web surfing without censorship and even joined some anti-government demonstrations. Many social movements in neighboring Guangdong province are said to have occurred under the influence from Hong Kong. On 25 July 2010, a crowd of about 10,000 gathered at Guangzhou Metro Station in a protest to support Cantonese language. Protesters sang a famous song by a Hong Kong rock music artist "Beyond" and showed placards with a parody of the Hong Kong government's slogan for promoting political reform.[24] In 2013, a New Year's special editorial of a mainland Chinese newspaper, "Southern Weekly" of Guangzhou, calling for more democracy was revised under pressure from the party propaganda officers, causing the staff of the newspaper to go on strike to protest the censorship, thus sparking demonstrations in front of the office of the Southern Weekly, participated by many Hong Kong citizens who came to Guangzhou to join the protest.[25] In 2011, a large protest occurred in a Wukan village of Guangdong province over the electoral process, resulting in the successful expulsion of the village officers and the election of new leaders though a democratic process in the following year. A search for "Wukan" in the WiseNews Chinese-language newspapers database for 19 December 2011 yields no article in mainland newspapers on this topic, an indication that no coverage of this protest was archived by the more than 200 mainland newspapers, while, for the same day, 37 articles could be retrieved of Hong Kong newspapers.[26] Information from Hong Kong media seems to have played a crucial role in this event.

As a result, when the "Umbrella Movement" emerged, the Chinese government tried its best to prevent it from affecting the mainland. In the early

stage of the movement, Chinese media kept silent and reported virtually nothing about it. Soon thereafter, the Chinese government launched a massive negative campaign against the movement through major official medias. On September 30, 2014, Xinhua news agency published very long reports on the movement, contending that the movement may bring about negative effects on Hong Kong's economy and the loss caused by the movement may amount to 40 billion Hong Kong dollars.[27] People's Daily also published articles criticizing the movement almost every day throughout the first week of October. While on a visit to Russia, Vice-Premier Wang Yang remarked on October 11 that "Western countries are trying to fabricate a 'Color Revolution' by providing aid to the opposition in Hong Kong."[28]

This official position seemed to be accepted by many Chinese people who live under a system where they cannot access many international media information. A study comparing the discussion of the Umbrella Movement on two social media, Facebook and Weibo, found that Hong Kongers and mainlanders had different ways of talking about the movement. Facebook, which is blocked in Mainland China, was top among Hong Kong citizens' social media site usage in terms of user percentage, while Weibo's primary user base was in Mainland China. The Weibo discourses, not surprisingly, revealed more oppositional attitude toward the movement than Facebook. Mainlanders attributed the rise of pro-democracy movements to influence from Western countries and organizations aimed at destabilizing China. Hence, their discussions were generally critical of social movements. Mainland Chinese put a premium on the sovereignty of their country and often considered the "malicious" Western influence a cause of domestic unrest, regardless of whether or not there was explicit evidence. The study concluded that though Hong Kongers and mainlanders belong to the same country, speak the same language, and discussed the same event, they remained largely separated and developed vastly different discourses, with little apparent communication.[29] Alex Chow Yong Kang, the secretary-general of the Hong Kong Federation of Students, points to the fact that decision-making authority resides with the central government as the reason why the movement was not successful. He states that "Occupy" had to contend with both the Hong Kong government and the Chinese government that stood behind it, and that it lacked the power to confront the latter.[30]

The Emergence of the Localist Groups and the Independence Movement

Although the Umbrella Movement became a huge mass demonstration and continued for weeks, they achieved nothing in terms of the "true democracy." In the later stage of the movement, some participants started to criticize the organizers' strategy of stressing peaceful protest as too weak-kneed and suggested using more radical methods. Much of this criticism was made by the newly emerged group called the Localists. Traditional democrats in

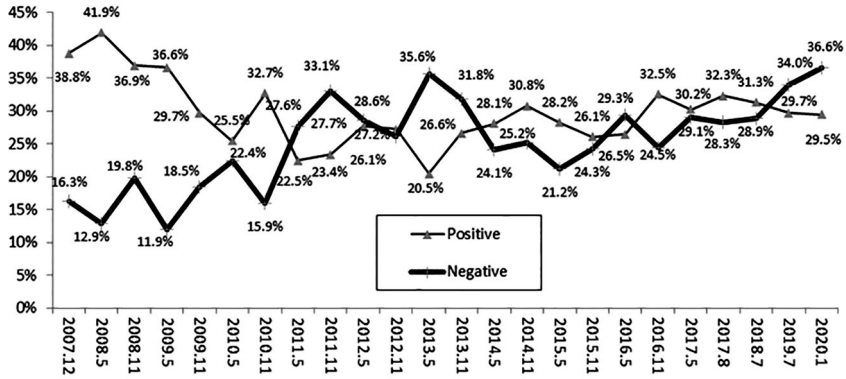

Figure 9.3 Hong Kong people's feeling about the mainland Chinese people.
Question: Generally speaking, are your feelings about the mainland people positive or negative?
Source: Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute website, https://www.pori.hk/pop-poll/people/v004 (accessed 20 May 2020).

Hong Kong are patriots who are ardent Chinese nationalists. Although they criticize the CCP, they also criticize Japan on historical issues and on the Senkaku-Diaoyudao dispute. Simultaneously, traditional democrats stress universal values such as democracy, human rights, and peaceful citizen's movement. On the other hand, most of the newly emerged localists claim that they are Hong Kongers, not Chinese. On the other, they criticize the leaders of the Umbrella Movement who were mostly scholars and students from top-ranked universities in Hong Kong, as being disconnected from Hong Kong's reality. That is, they put importance neither on Hong Kong's Chineseness, nor on Hong Kong's cosmopolitanism. They claim "Hong Kong first."

The Localist movement became active in 2010s when Hong Kong people's sentiment toward Mainland China became increasingly negative (Figure 9.3).

The explosive increase of Chinese tourists to Hong Kong contributed to recovery of Hong Kong's economy and was welcomed in its early stage, but later caused many social problems such as shortage of milk powder (tourists bought it up to use or sell on the mainland where fake milk powder had caused the death of many infants) and increase of land price (rich mainland tourists were said to contribute to it by buying high price flats.) Yet, both the Central government and the Hong Kong government continued to promote the economic integration policy between the two places to increase the influx of people and money from the mainland to Hong Kong since it has contributed significantly to Hong Kong's economy. With the deepening of economic integration, Hong Kong people's negative attitude toward the mainland intensified, as evidenced by the sharp increase of participants in the annual candlelight vigil to commemorate the Tiananmen incident on June 4 since 2009 (Figure 9.4).

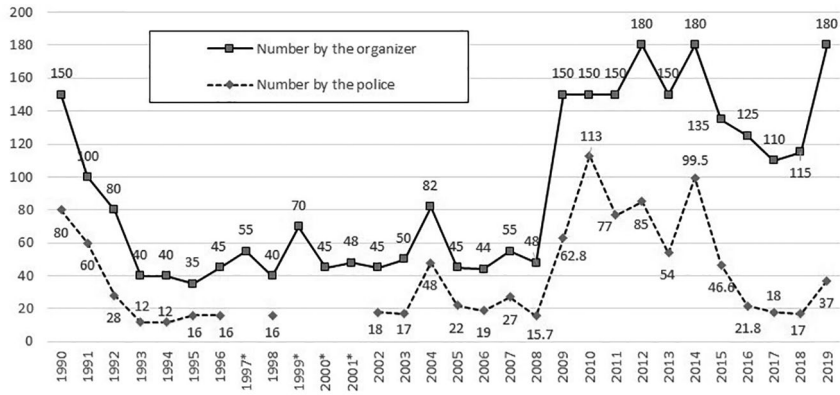

Figure 9.4 Tiananmen incident candlelight vigil participants (in thousands)
Source: Ming Pao, 5 June 2019.

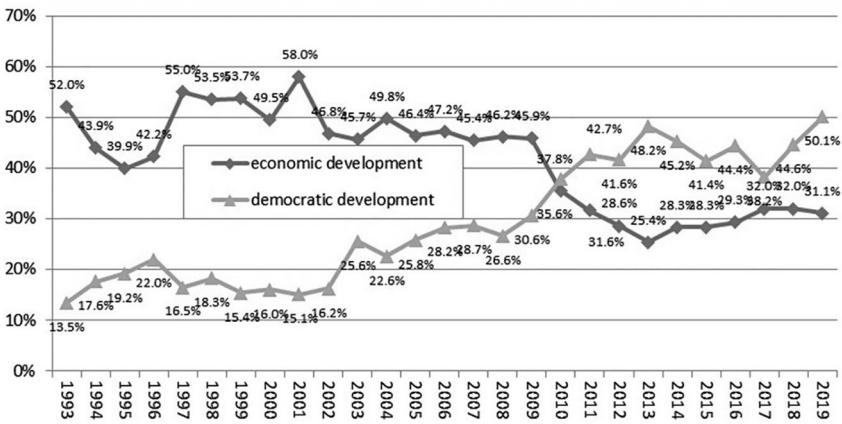

Figure 9.5 Hong Kong people's attitude toward China's democracy.
Question: Which do you think China needs more: economic or democratic development?
Source: The University of Hong Kong public opinion programme website https://www.pori.hk/pop-poll/taiwan-tibet-issue/m005 (accessed 21 May 2020).

This change reflects Hong Kong people's wish for the mainland to become more democratic. Figure 9.5 shows that those in Hong Kong who used to think that China was poor and should wait to democratize after it has become sufficiently rich, started to change their minds and to think that it is time for China to be more democratic.

However, this in turn caused deterioration of mainland Chinese's feelings toward Hong Kongers. While Hong Kong people criticized mainland Chinese that they are not democratic, their manners are bad, they are arrogant, mainlanders don't like people from Hong Kong because they are seen as

not patriotic enough (here the word "patriot" means the loyal follower of the Communist Party, not the lover of Chinese culture, history etc.) often look down on mainland Chinese and always complain about the political situations, even though they enjoy the privilege of the "One Country, Two Systems" and that mainlanders are helping Hong Kong's economy. In 2012, a professor of Beijing University Kong Qingdong said on a TV program that Hong Kong people are "dogs" (a metaphor to mean an agent of colonial authority) that sparked a protest in Hong Kong. Hong Kong Localists, in turn, compared Chinese tourists to locusts, because they come in huge number and buy up everything and nothing is left after they are gone. It is undeniable that the Umbrella Movement was shaped not only by the aspiration for democracy, but also by a strong anti-China sentiment. The 2014 February issue of *Undergrad*, the official magazine of the Hong Kong University Students' Union which was one of the major organizers of the Umbrella Movement, featured a cover story entitled "Hong Kong people deciding their own fate." In 2013, *Undergrad* also published a book titled "Hong Kong Nationalism" calling for Hong Kong to find a way to self-reliance and self-determination. To the Chinese government, which stresses that Hong Kong is part of China, the arguments put forth in these publications were totally unacceptable, and Chief Executive C. Y. Leung virulently criticized these publications by name.[31]

After the Umbrella Movement, the Localists launched more radical movements. An organization called "Hong Kong Indigenous" was founded in January 2015 by many radical activists who had joined the Umbrella Movement. They organized some anti-mainland protests and in February 2016, some of the members including Edward Leung Tin-kei, who was a candidate in the 28 February by-election of the Legislative council, were involved in violent clashes with the police and arrested. This made Edward Leung a hero in the eyes of young people and he got 66,524 votes (about 15% of total votes). In March 2016, "Hong Kong National Party," the first political party in Hong Kong advocating for Hong Kong independence, was founded by other young radicalists. Although "Hong Kong Identity" is a longstanding issue, there has not been any major independence movement in Hong Kong prior to this. Historian John Carrol said in an interview that 2016 was the first time when people in Hong Kong discussed independence seriously.[32]

The emergence of independence movement angered the Central Government. Therefore, the Hong Kong government took unprecedented measures to expel localists from the political arena. In July 2016, Edward Leung applied to run in the Legislative Council election, but the government disqualified his nomination, contending that judging from his past comments on the media and Facebook, he is advocating for Hong Kong independence. In the September election, some localists got seats, but were disqualified in the first meeting of the Council because they did not follow the official script when they took the oath of office (Legislative Council members are required to swear allegiance to the "the Hong Kong SAR of the People's Republic of

China.") In his speech at the 20th anniversary ceremony of Hong Kong's handover on July 1 2017, President Xi Jinping pointedly stated that "any attempt to endanger China's sovereignty and security, challenge the power of the central government and the authority of the Basic Law of the Hong Kong SAR or use Hong Kong to carry out infiltration and sabotage activities against the mainland is an act that crosses the red line, and is absolutely impermissible."[33]

Taiwan and Hong Kong

When analyzing the neighboring Asian countries' impact on Hong Kong's democratization, Taiwan is the most important actor. There is a strong relationship between the two places: Many of the same publications are produced in both places because of shared linguistic tradition. The Apple Daily, one of the largest newspapers in Taiwan, was founded by Hong Kong's anti-communist Apple Daily in 2003. People travel frequently between the two places. In 2017, Hong Kong-Taipei was the busiest international route, with 29,494 flights between the two cities during that year.[34]

Initially, China had proposed a "One Country, Two Systems" formula with the purpose of reunifying Taiwan. In the first years after the handover, the mainland government refrained from intervening in Hong Kong affairs in order to show Taiwan that "One Country, Two Systems" was working well. Many foreign observers appreciated that China was respecting Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy. However, Taiwan did not see Hong Kong in the same way. With its full-fledged democracy, Taiwan did not see Hong Kong's political system as sufficiently attractive to accept reunification with China. In 2000, pro-independence Chen Shui-bian was elected as Taiwan's president and he criticized Hong Kong for not having a democracy.

After Taiwan started democratic elections of its presidents in 1996, Li Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian, whom the Chinese government had criticized for being pro-independence, were elected successively, a situation that perhaps made the central government warier of democratization. After the mass demonstration on July 1, 2003, Hong Kong democrats asked for universal suffrage in the 2007 Chief Executive election and 2008 Legislative Council election. The central government did not provide an immediate clear response. However, when Chen Shui-bian was re-elected in the election on March 20, 2004, the Central Government quickly decided on 26 April to reject the 2007 and 2008 universal suffrage.

The Chinese government also applied the economic integration policy to Taiwan to get support from Taiwan people as she did in Hong Kong. In 2010, China and Taiwan signed the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), a Taiwan version of CEPA with Hong Kong. The resulting development in Taiwan was similar to that which occurred in Hong Kong. There was an economic boom in the initial stage of the economic integration, but soon Taiwanese grew cautious of the magnitude of China's

influence. In 2014, the Sunflower Student Movement emerged in Taiwan in protest of the hasty passing of the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement in the legislature and students occupied Legislative Yuan for 23 days.

Although the Sunflower movement occurred about half a year earlier than the Umbrella Movement, it is not correct to say that Hong Kong's movement occurred because of Taiwan's influence, since Hong Kong's Occupy Central movement had already emerged since 2013. It is, however, possible to say that the Sunflower Student Movement did inspire students in Hong Kong. There were strong ties between students and scholars in Taiwan and Hong Kong, and the same slogans such as "if you do not stand up today, then tomorrow you will not be able to stand up" were used in both movements.

In the eyes of Beijing, this meant that there was collaboration between the independence movements in Taiwan and Hong Kong. In fact, according to a survey, popular support in Hong Kong for Taiwan's independence grew stronger recently (Figure 9.6). In the survey conducted in January 2020, 47.8% of the respondents showed support for the independence of Taiwan, whereas only 38.6% opposed. It was the first time in more than 20 years of this opinion poll's history that the opposition rate has dipped below that of support rate.[35]

Charles Ho Tsu-kwok, a pro-Beijing businessman and a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, said that the reason why there were people advocating for Hong Kong's independence was because there was a group of people who often went to Taiwan. He argued that they absorbed the idea of independence in Taiwan that sparked their desire for Hong Kong independence when they returned.[36] This notion was underscored by the formation of the "Taiwan Congressional Hong Kong Caucus" on 12 June 2017 by 18 Taiwanese lawmakers

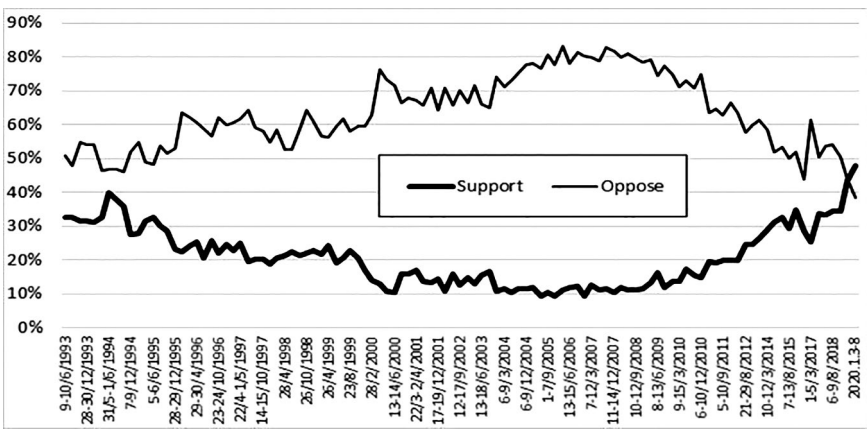

Figure 9.6 Hong Kong People's Opinion on Independence of Taiwan.
Question: Do you agree to Taiwan becoming independent?
Source: The University of Hong Kong public opinion programme website, https://www.pori.hk/pop-poll/taiwan-tibet-issue/m005 (accessed 21 May 2020).

to foster closer ties with democratic and localist legislators and to support Hong Kong's democratic development.[37] Ma Xiaoguang, spokesman for the State Council's Taiwan Affairs Office, responded this development with the statement: "We resolutely oppose the collusion between the forces of 'Taiwan independence' and 'Hong Kong independence.'"[38]

In order to cut the ties between democratic forces in Taiwan and Hong Kong, the Hong Kong government recently repeatedly denied Taiwanese activists entry into Hong Kong. Chen Wei-ting, a leading figure in the Sunflower movement, was deported back to Taiwan soon after his arrival in Hong Kong on June 2014. In December 2016, two Taiwanese academics, Wu Jui-jen and Wu Chieh-min, both associate research fellows at Academia Sinica, were denied visas to Hong Kong.

The "New Cold War" and Hong Kong's Democracy Movement

After the failure of the Umbrella Movement, Hong Kong's democracy movement fell into a slump period due to the pressure from the government. Many activists were arrested, and the sense of powerlessness spread over Hong Kong society.

However, the movement revived suddenly in 2019 when the government tried to amend extradition ordinance to establish a mechanism for transfers of fugitives for Mainland China. Since Hong Kong has a history as a city of refugees from the Mainland, many Hong Kongers thought that to be extradited to the Mainland, where the independence of jury is under question, is a nightmare. On June 9th, more than 1 million people took to the street against the extradition bill, but the government still tried to push through it. Legislative Council building was surrounded by angry protesters in June 12th and the meeting to pass the bill was suspended. Some of the protesters tried to plunge into the building and clashed with the police. Starting from this moment, mass rallies of thousands of people took place all around Hong Kong almost every week, and numerous clashes between radical protesters and police taken place. Although the government finally gave up the bill, the public sentiment became more and more furious about the government's fierce attitude toward the protesters. People realized that non-democratic government will never accept public opinion and started to ask for the universal suffrage again during the movement. Thus, a movement to block an amendment of law developed into a new democracy movement.

This protest movement has some new characteristics compared with the Umbrella Movement. One of the reasons why the Umbrella Movement failed was internal dissension within the protesters. Peaceful demonstrators and radical protesters criticized each other and finally the movement was sprit and lost its energy. Learning lesson from this failure, this time protesters put stress on the unity: although there maybe difference of opinion within protesters, they were determined that they will never attack each other. As a result, peaceful demonstrations and radical protests occurred at the same time. So, on the

whole, the movement became a "shapeless" movement: sometimes people organized peaceful mass rally of tens of thousands of people, and sometimes protesters fought a fierce battle with the police. The style of the movement changed very quickly again and again during months of the movement.

The government tried to isolate radicalists from majority of people but never succeeded in it. Whenever the government use tear gas and guns to suppress radicalists, peaceful citizens which composed majority of the population became angrier, feeling that their comrades are attacked. Most of the actions were planned and discussed on the internet and there was no prominent leader, so it was also impossible for the government to crush the movement by arresting the leaders.

In the Umbrella Movement, Hong Kong activists studied experiences of the democracy movements in the World's history. This time, Hong Kong invented new style of the movement and affected internationally. The participant of the movement asked for support from the international community, especially from the United States to counter the strong power of Chinese central government. Donald Trump showed no interest in the movement in its earlier stage: on 1st of August he described protests in Hong Kong as "riots" that China will have to deal with itself. However, when China dispatched army to Shenzhen, the city adjacent to Hong Kong, Trump warned China on 18th of August that "another Tiananmen Square" would harm trade talks. Protesters in Hong Kong organized demonstration in front of the U. S. consulate in Hong Kong to urge the U.S. to pass "Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act." The act requires the U.S. government to impose sanctions on Chinese officials responsible for human rights violations, and also requires the State Department to annually review Hong Kong's situation of autonomy in order to judge whether the U.S. will continue preferential trade treatment toward Hong Kong. the act was initially introduced in 2014 just after the Umbrella Movement but did not gain a vote until 2019. During this period, the public sentiment of the U.S. people against China have been deteriorating under the circumstance of US-China "new cold war," and in the face of the huge demonstrations in Hong Kong, the U.S. lawmakers accelerated discussion in the congress and finally passed the bill almost unanimously. The president Trump signed the bill into the law on 27th of November. Hong Kong's protesters succeeded in involving the U.S. into the movement. The Hong Kong protesters also inspired protesters all around the world: it is widely believed that the method of the Hong Kong's protest movements inspired other protests in the world occurred same year such as Chilean protests and Catalonian independence movement.

The movement is still going on and nobody knows how this will end. However, Hong Kong's "One Country, Two Systems" is now facing unprecedented threat from the Chinese government. On May 2020, National People's Congress decided that they will introduce "National Security Law" to Hong Kong. Undoubtedly, the central government's aim is to inhibit the democracy movement. The U. S. and Western countries soon criticized Beijing, insisting

that this is a breach of Hong Kong's autonomy. President Trump announced that the U.S. will sanction China for its handling of Hong Kong. Whether Hong Kong's autonomy and democracy can survive or not is under question due to the emergence of the "new cold war" between the U. S. and China.

Conclusion

Historically, Hong Kong has been developed as a global, regional and national center with local characteristics. As a result, Hong Kong's democratization movement has been strongly influenced by external factors. Through the media and other channels, activists in Hong Kong came to quickly absorb many new ideas and methods invented and practiced all over the world. They have robust connections with neighboring East Asian countries and regions that have also been experiencing democratization in the last several decades. Hong Kong's particular characteristics that distinguish it from Mainland China also nurtured its identity and its people's demand for autonomy.

However, the central government recently has increasingly stressed "national security" as a counter to the demand for democracy in Hong Kong. The central government has accused Hong Kong democrats of conspiring with foreign countries to overthrow the government. It also criticizes localists of polarizing the country, noting instead that what China champions is "democracy with Chinese characteristics." China does not see multi-party electoral democracy as a universal model, and wants to confine the scope of Hong Kong's democratization to the national level, that is, "democracy with Chinese characteristics."

Andrew Nathan argues that although Beijing may challenge its neighbors, for the time being, China's strategic situation does not permit an all-out challenge to democracy beyond its shores.[39] However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the relationship between China and the West is getting worse, and China will stress patriotism more and become warier about the foreign influence. Under this situation, what may happen in Hong Kong in the near future maybe a good test of China's global influence.

Notes

1 Carrol, *A Concise History of Hong Kong*, 15.
2 Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government Information Services Department, *Hong Kong 2018*, 37.
3 Sassen, *The Global City*, 324.
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10 Looking into States and Civil Societies in Taiwan and Singapore Through the Lens of Sexual Minorities

Keiko Tsuji Tamura

Introduction

The Taipei Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Pride Parade on October 26, 2019, drew more than 200,000 participants, including many foreign nationals from neighboring Asian countries. The parade was first held in 2003 with only 500 participants but is now estimated to be the largest parade in Asia. Some foreign companies, such as J.P. Morgan donate money to the Pride Parade and encourage their employees to join. These companies pay family and marriage allowances to staff who are sexual minorities. On May 23, 2017, the constitutional court of Taiwan ruled that the current law should be amended within two years to expand the definition of marriage to allow same-sex couples to wed, making the country the first in Asia to recognize the rights of same-sex couples to marry.[1] On May 17, 2019, Taiwan became the 27th nation and the first in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage. As evidenced by this event, Taiwan displays the greatest tolerance for sexual minorities in Asia.

In contrast, sexuality in Singapore is micromanaged by the state through various apparatuses and agencies including written laws. Most significantly, sexual intercourse between men remains illegal. However, Singapore has often been praised as an emerging gay capital in Asia because of public LGBTQ (Queer) event held from 2001 to 2004, and the common understanding that many members of the nation's artistic and literary circles are homosexuals. The annual LGBTQ rally, Pink Dot, began in 2009 with about 26,000 people joining the event in 2016. Even though the government banned the participation of foreign nationals in the Pink Dot rally, about 20,000 local Singaporeans took part in it in 2017, 2018, and 2019. As 20,000 people is the maximum capacity of the venue, it demonstrates a greater openness in the city state toward sexual minorities.

This chapter aims to analyze forces and factors that brought about the rise of such contrasting attitudes and political processes in these two states with deep roots in Chinese culture, in order to shed light on sexual minority issues, as well as the characteristics of civil society that shape these differences.

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Taiwan

Sexual Minorities Under Martial Law

At 36,000 km^2, the area of Taiwan is about the same as Kyushu Island in Japan, with a population of 23.6 million (2019), broken down into native people of Polynesian origin (5%), immigrants from the southern part of China after the sixteenth century (84%), and mainlanders who came over to Taiwan after 1945 (10%).

Japan governed Taiwan from 1895 when the Treaty of Shimonoseki was concluded to 1945 when Japan was defeated in World War II. After the war, Taiwan was returned to the Republic of China (ROC) in accordance with the Cairo Declaration. In 1949, after the subsequent defeat of his army on the mainland against the Communist Party, Chiang Kai Shek moved his government to Taiwan with some two million people, consisting mainly of soldiers, members of the ruling Nationalist Party (Kuomintang or KMT) and intellectual and business elites.

The ROC maintained an authoritarian, single-party government from the 1950s to the 1970s. Martial law, declared in May 1949, was used as a way to suppress political opposition. Arrests, torture, imprisonment and execution awaited citizens with anti-KMT government views or pro-Communist sympathies.

Chiang Kai Shek proposed the Chinese Revivalism Movement in response to the Cultural Revolution of the Chinese Communist Party government in China, emphasizing the protection of "home" and "tradition" and a Confucian home ethic as its policy pillar. This is because he had to strengthen the ideology as the ruling government in Taiwan. At the International Women's Day of 1954, Soong May Ling, the wife of Chiang Kai Shek, said "To protect our state and nation, women in Taiwan should aim to be good citizens as well as good wives and wise mothers."[2] She insisted that Taiwanese women should play the role of ideal mothers and wanted to extend the idea of a mother's love to national defense. Under the Chinese Revivalism Movement, police were given the authority to monitor "sexually-immoral persons" and sexual minorities became the target of strict control.

The misconception of the relationship between AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) and sexual intercourse between men arose in Taiwan when the first Taiwanese AIDS patient was reported in 1985. The Taiwanese Ministry of Health strengthened control over drug users, prostitutes and homosexuals, and insisted on the "splendor of monogamy."[3] The overwhelming majority of KMT soldiers who came to Taiwan were male, and some had sexual relationships with local boys and men. *Niez* (*Cristal Boys* in English) written by Bai Xian Yong who came over to Taiwan with his father, a high-ranking KMT officer, describes homosexuality and the loneliness and difficulties of a boy whose father was a KMT soldier and his mother, a local woman in Taipei in the 1970s. The work is appreciated as a monumental achievement of modern Chinese literature and has been translated

into many languages, including English. After *Niez* was published in 1983, a homosexual literary genre called *tongzhi* (comrade) emerged. Many gay bars found success in Taipei after Taiwan concluded a military alliance treaty with the United States in 1954 and provided a military base and amusement facilities for American soldiers during the Vietnam War in the 1960s.[4] Although sexual minorities became a target of strict control during the period of martial law, they were given a tacit nod by authorities as Taiwan was the site of a civil war between the Communists and the KMT, as well as the Cold War between the east and the west.

Democratization and Sexual Minorities

After martial law was lifted in 1987, authoritarian rule relaxed. Various social, labor, and women's movements emerged, and many civic groups were established. Women's groups and female lawyers played a major role in the revision of civil law in which paternal authority and husband's rights were given priority, and in the development of a new and democratic civil law.[5] For example, the Awakening Foundation, a feminist organization known for its promotion of policy and institutional reforms since the martial law period, introduced the Gender Equality in Employment Act, which was passed in 2001 after a decade of continual proposals to the government. The Awakening Foundation has also coordinated with other groups to enact legislations such as the Gender Equity Education Act.

Discussions on sexual minorities by advocacy groups became a part of daily discourse, organized by researchers and activists who came back to Taiwan in the 1980s after studying at universities and graduate schools in the US and Europe. As noted, "university campuses in Taiwan soon became the active base of the LGBTQ movement."[6] Professor Emeritus of the National Central University, Ho Chuen Juei, who obtained degrees from several universities in the US advocates for the rights of sexual minorities. She established the Center for the Study of Sexualities at the National Central University in Taiwan in 1995. The center operates as a base for research and the collection of information on sexuality in relation to other issues such as class, race and age. The center tries to "Taiwanize" European and American theories on gender and sexualities, carrying out many activities, including joining demonstrations, organizing international conferences and workshops, and developing publications.

In 1998, the Taiwan Tongzhi Hotline Association, the largest organization of sexual minorities in Taiwan, was established to achieve equality for all and provide resources for the community of sexual minorities through telephone consultations, public dialogue and gender-inclusive education on sexuality.[7] Several laws to support the rights of sexual minorities have been enacted and revised. A clause on "gender-related discrimination" was added to the Gender Equality in Employment Act in 2008 to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. The Domestic Violence Act of 2007 was also

revised so that it would be applicable to any couple, regardless of whether it involves a relationship between two men, a man and a woman, or two women.

The Gender Equity Education Act of 2004 is a landmark law in Asia because it stipulates that schools must provide a gender-free learning environment, and give due consideration to students and faculty staff of different genders, gender identities, and sexual orientations. The Act was amended in December 2018.

The tragic story of the death of a 15-year-old boy sparked the establishment of this law. This boy was constantly bullied by his schoolmates because of his effeminate behavior and school bullies sometimes would taunt him even pulling his pants down in the school toilet. He complained repeatedly but school officials did nothing. As a result, he usually went into the bathroom five minutes before a break to avoid being harassed. One morning in April 2000, he asked his teacher if he could go to the bathroom before the class ended. A few minutes later, his lifeless body was found on the bathroom floor. Although no one has been convicted of his murder, the long-term bullying certainly contributed to the tragedy. His sudden death shocked the society. The Taiwan High Court handed down a prison sentence to the school's principal and two school officials for neglecting to provide care as required by their positions. After the Gender Equity Education Act was enacted, six organizations, including the Taiwan Tongzhi Hotline Association, established the Civil Alliance to Promote Gender Equity Education Act to help the general public develop a better understanding of sexual minorities and gender issues. For example, in 2015, the Taiwan Tongzhi Hotline Association visited 415 schools from elementary to universities to talk about sexual minorities and gender issues.[8]

Toward Marriage Equality

"BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS BILL" BY CHEN SHUI BIAN

In 1986, one year before martial law was lifted, same-sex marriage was discussed publicly for the first time. Chi Chia Wei, a Taiwanese writer, and his same-sex partner who was a foreign national, submitted their notification of marriage to the city government. Their application was refused. They then petitioned the Legislative Yuan (Diet), which also turned them down, stating that homosexuals were sexual deviants satisfying their own sexual desires and go against social manners.[9] The story was sensationalized in the newspapers as public interest on same-sex marriage was considerably lower in those days. Public interest rose in the 1990s, as movements for the rights of sexual minorities became popular. Chi Chia Wei held the first same-sex wedding ceremony in Asia with his partner in 1990. Many people involved in show business attended the ceremony, while protests against same-sex marriage took place outside.[10]

When Chen Shui Bian of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), who was elected President in the national election, proposed the Basic Human Rights Bill in 2001, a heated debate about same-sex marriage transpired.[11] This presidential election, the first change of government from long standing, single-party control of the KMT, impressed the world with Taiwan's democratic maturity. His bill stipulated that a same-sex couple should be able to legally marry and adopt children. Unfortunately, the Basic Human Rights Bill was never enacted into law because the argument on same-sex marriage was still in its infancy. The effect of what the President himself suggested however, was significant. In May 2006, a DPP Diet member submitted a same-sex marriage bill to the Diet, although the bill was withdrawn before it was discussed.[12] The Pride Parade, which started in 2003, drew 18,000 participants in 2008, reflecting the rapid increase of those who publicly supported the protection of human rights and same-sex marriage for sexual minorities.

TAIWAN ALLIANCE TO PROMOTE CIVIL PARTNERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP SYSTEM

The establishment of the Taiwan Alliance to Promote Civil Partnership Rights (TAPCPR) in 2009 is considered to be a watershed moment in the promotion of same-sex marriage and protection of the rights of sexual minorities. Victoria Hsu, President of the TAPCPR, a lawyer and former member of the Awakening Foundation, established TAPCPR with her wife. Many members of the TAPCPR are also feminist lesbians who had long participated in the feminist movement.[13] After investigating the rules and regulations of other countries, the TAPCPR proposed the first draft amendment to the Civil Code in 2007, which urged the inclusion of "same-sex marriage, civil partnerships, and multiple-person families" in the Civil Code in the hope that all types of relationships and families currently existing in society would receive equal protection under the law.[14] Hsu says, "I make speeches in many cities in Taiwan. When I start by saying, 'I am a lesbian' at the night markets, many people are surprised, but listen to my speech until the end. Some even hug me afterwards."[15]

The TAPCPR campaigned hard for the draft amendment in many places in Taiwan, collecting signatures from 150,000 people and pledges of support from more than 400 private companies over the period of one year. However, the TAPCPR was able to collect signatures of the members of the Diet only for the same-sex marriage bill because many people were uneasy about the inclusion of the wording "civil partnerships and multiple-person families." The TAPCPR submitted the draft amendment to the Diet, which ultimately failed in the end due to lack of time. In addition to lobbying the Diet for the same-sex marriage bill, the TAPCPR organized an event in May 2005 with 300 sexual minorities who marched through the city holding signs that said, "I am a gay" or "I am a lesbian." This event had a major impact on society.

Thanks to the activities of civic groups, including the TAPCPR, public opinion in support of same-sex marriage rose rapidly. Some opinion polls show that the number of people who have positive feelings about same-sex marriage is higher than 50% of all responses.[16] According to a survey by Taiwan's Academia Sinica (the central research academy) in July-October 2012, 52.5% of people agreed with the legalization of same-sex marriage, while the percentage of those who objected was 30.1%.[17] *Lien He Bao* (United Daily News) also conducted a survey and found that 55% of people supported legalization. According to surveys by TAPCPR, support for same-sex marriages increased from 23.64% in 2003 to 52.76% in 2013.[18] In an interview, a staff member of the Taiwan Tongzhi Hotline Association said, that "more and more youths today understand what sexual minorities are. Very few students knew the issue when we first started talking to students about sexual minorities ten years ago, but today one-third of the class is familiar with it."[19]

The public's positive feelings towards same-sex marriage encouraged newly-elected mayors and local assembly members of the DPP to promote the rights of same-sex couples. All six cities directly controlled by the central government and some prefectures started to permit same-sex couples to be entered in family registers.[20] Although registration does not guarantee legal rights, a person can apply for family-care leave and medical care allowances for his/her partner such as signing the written consent necessary for operations and treatment. About 1,700 couples have been registered as partners as of December 2016.[21] Eighty percent of the people registered are female. This is because women have had more opportunities to come out than men, as women's groups such as the Awakening Foundation and TAPCPR, have played an important part in advocating for the rights of sexual minorities, and because generally lesbian couples have lower incomes, requiring them to petition the government for assistance. A 35-year-old internet entrepreneur was appointed to the post of Minister Without Portfolio in August 2016. Born male, she changed her gender and name in 2005. The government explained, "Our hope is that by inviting her to join the government team, she would be able to contribute to assisting government agencies in building communication platforms for all kinds of public policies and putting government information to good use."[22] Her appointment marks a milestone for gender equality in Taiwan and in Asia.

Increased Opposition

As same-sex marriage became a prevailing social concern, opposition also became powerful. In 2003, the Taipei City Government confiscated publications from a bookstore on the grounds they were not healthy readings for minors after women's groups and churches insisted on regulations and reinforcement of sexual morals to protect minors.[23] The website of the Center for the Study of Sexualities at National Central University was considered

questionable, and Ho Chuen Juei was sued in an effort to force her to step down, although she won the suit.[24]

According to a survey by *Lien He Bao* in 2013, 75% of people who identified as Christian opposed the legalization of same-sex marriage, and more than half of Taoists and Buddhists were against it by a narrow margin.[25] Christians make up approximately 5% of the total population of Taiwan, but many rank high on the social ladder and have quite influential voices. Some Christian groups conduct activities on university campuses in protest of sexual minorities. For example, Fu Jen Catholic University, a well-known private university, prohibits students from establishing student clubs for sexual minorities. Taiwan Religious Groups for the Protection of Family, established in September 2014 and organized mainly by Christians, held a large meeting of 100,000 people to oppose the legalization of same-sex marriage in front of the Presidential Residence in November 2014.

Tsai Ing Wen of the DPP who supported the legalization of same-sex marriage was elected President in January 2016. Her party also won the majority of the Parliament for the first time. In this election, however, eight candidates from the Faith and Hope League appealed to the public to "protect the traditional family" in opposition of the legalization of same-sex marriage. All lost, receiving only 1.7% of the vote. Victoria Hsu, President of TAPCPR also ran for election but lost by a narrow margin.

Judgment of the Constitutional Court

A panel of grand justices from the Constitutional Court started to discuss whether the present civil code, which does not allow two persons of the same sex to get married, violates the Constitution's guarantees of freedom of marriage in May 2017 after Chia Chi Wei and the Taipei City Government asked the Constitutional Court for an interpretation of the Constitution. The Constitutional Court determined the current civil code to be unconstitutional and announced that the "authorities concerned shall amend or enact laws as appropriate within two years from the announcement of this interpretation. If the authorities concerned fail to do so, two persons of the same sex who intend to create the said permanent union shall be allowed to have their marriage registration effectuated at the authorities in charge of household registration, by submitting a written document signed by two or more witnesses."[26] It is noteworthy that the decision attaches a counterargument to the opinion:

> *The basic ethical orders built upon the existing institution of opposite-sex marriage will remain unaffected, even if two persons of the same sex are allowed to enter into a legally-recognized marriage. The fact that two persons of the same sex are incapable of natural procreation is the same as the result of two opposite-sex persons' inability, in an objective sense, or unwillingness, in a subjective sense, to procreate. Disallowing the marriage of two persons of the same sex, because of their inability to reproduce, is a different treatment having no apparent rational basis.*

Thanks to this decision, parliament started a discussion on how to legalize same-sex marriage.

The fight was however was far from over. A group called the Coalition for the Happiness of Our Next Generation proposed a referendum on same-sex marriage to prevent its legalization. Stressing that both a father and mother are indispensable for a family, the coalition called for a "special law" that offers same-sex couples' rights similar to marriage, instead of amending the civil code to change the definition of marriage as the union of a man and woman.[27] The TAPCPR was persistent in its insistence on amending the current civil code. The president of TAPCPR says, "Enacting a new law means distinguishing same-sex marriage from opposite-sex marriage. This cannot be called real equality."[28] The coalition collected the necessary signatures to conduct a referendum. In November 2018, three referendums concerning marriage issue were held and 67% of the voters in Taiwan backed a "special law" without amending the Civil Code. The pro and con camps of a "special law" held big rallies on the streets though the government had earlier said that the referendums would not affect the court ruling. In May 2019, only a week off the two-year deadline, lawmakers in Taiwan's legislative Yuan managed to pass a bill making same-sex marriage a reality without amending the Civil Code.

Singapore

Section 377A of the Penal Code and booming Bugis Street

Singapore is a small city state with an area that is slightly bigger than the 23 wards of Tokyo. With a population of approximately 3,990,000 people (citizens and permanent residents) in 2019, Singapore is home to Chinese (74%), Malay (13%), Indian (9%), and Others (4%). Most of the population are descendants of immigrants who came over to Singapore from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. The overwhelming majority of the first wave of immigrants were young males. According to Turnbull, "In 1884, there were 60,000 Chinese men but only 6,600 Chinese women, of whom at least 2,000 were prostitutes."[29] Homosexual prostitution was popular at that time, fueled for many years by the influx of boys from Hainan, an island in the southern part of China. Sexual relations between men were viewed as normal in colonial Singapore. The British, however, imposed Section 377 of the Penal Code of the UK that forbade sexual intercourse between the same sex to Singapore, stating that:

> *Whoever voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 10 years, and shall be liable for a fine.*

This is also referred to as the "anti-natural (not for reproduction)" sex law. Section 377A also states:

> *Any male person who, in public or private, commits or abets the commission of or procures the commission by any male person of, any act of gross indecency with another male person, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 2 years.*

When Singapore separated from the Federation of Malaysia and became an independent republic in August 1965, Sections 377 and 377A remained on the books.

Soon after independence, the fledgling Singapore government established a relationship with the US that would offer economic benefits and security. Singapore permitted the US armed forces stationed in South Vietnam to use the Singaporean military base to repair damaged battleships and planes and provided amusement facilities for US soldiers. Bugis Street near the city center, a busy area filled with energy, was a popular destination for American soldiers on furlough. With the rise in the number of US soldiers to the area, so did gay bars and gay saunas.[30] Policemen were almost never on patrol because most of the people who frequented the area were foreign nationals, including US soldiers. A small number of local sexual minorities also frequented the area, but they were seldom arrested for violation of 377A.[31] Section 377 and 377A of the penal code were subsequently abolished in the UK in 1967.

Reinforcement of Control and Monitoring by the Nation

The government started reinforcing control and monitoring of sexual minorities when they became uneasy about the risk of HIV/AIDS infection. When the first Singaporean AIDS patient was reported in 1985, most gay bars and gay saunas disappeared almost instantly and only a few remained open under police control.[32] Even more important, the government started to encourage women to have more babies, stressing a return to Confucian values.[33] After the mid-eighties, faced with labor shortage, the government launched a pro-natalist policy with the slogan, "Have Three or More if You Can Afford It." The government also announced five core Confucian values (nation before community and society above self, family as the basic unit of society, community support and respect for the individual, consensus not conflict, racial and religious harmony) as the "National Ideology" that should be shared by all Singaporeans. The ruling People's Action Party (PAP), which had dominated the political scene of Singapore since independence in 1965, attributed the drop of its approval rating not to its authoritarian-style, but to an irresponsible young generation influenced by European and American liberal values, that accepted anti-governmental thoughts.

Of the five values, the idea of family as the basic unit of society was regarded as the most important, and the government subsequently announced the idea of "Singapore Family Values," which highlighted love, care, and

filial responsibility in 1994. The government also decided that it was obligatory for adult children to provide financial support to their parents. The proposed bill became the Maintenance of Parents Act in 1994. Furthermore, the government announced a range of incentives to encourage more births and promote "family values," such as tax breaks for married couples who have three or more children, although only legally married couples are recipients of these incentives. When a same-sex couple wants to purchase public housing, they must be more than 35 years old and can only buy secondhand flats as "friends."

The government regarded same-sex couples as incapable of natural procreation and allowing them to marry could become a factor contributing to social instability because they do not share the same idea of "family values." Sexual minorities were not employed as civil servants and the government severely censured print publications, public performances and media broadcasts that featured homosexuality, except for films shown at an international film festival held in Singapore.[34] A lesbian woman recalled the 1980s:

"The eighties were not an easy time for any of us. Gay and lesbian books were banned in libraries and bookshops. Girls were getting raped for holding hands, boys were getting arrested and having their pictures put in the newspaper for being gay. You had to just grin and bear it."[35]

Sexual minorities hid themselves to survive at that time. All male citizens must serve in the military for 2 or 2.5 years. If he makes it known that he is gay when he enlists, he is often posted at a desk and assigned to administrative functions because homosexuality and transsexuality are regarded as a threat to military life. Military laws protect their privacy, but rumors circulate that those who come out can face discrimination and may receive a black mark on their record that precludes them from later working in the government.[36] As a result, almost all gay men finish their military service without coming out.[37]

Toward an "Open and Inclusive Society"

A "KINDER, MORE GENTLE SOCIETY" UNDER THE NATION'S SECOND PRIME MINISTER GOH AND "NATION PARTY"

When Singapore's first Prime Minister, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, stepped aside in November 1990, Goh Chok Tong, the country's second Prime Minister, took office. He launched his own administration with a call for more gentle and liberal rule and promised to create an open and inclusive society. Many Singaporeans welcomed his attitude, feeling the rush of the promising winds of a new era where they could speak freely after Lee's long and strong authoritarian rule. Soon after his inauguration, gay bars and saunas started to open again. A group called "People Like Us" formed in 1993 to promote awareness of issues concerning sexual minorities, started organizing meetings with 80–200 participants.[38] A gay church and a library for books and

journals on sexual minorities also opened.[39] Communities of sexual minorities were finally emerging in Singapore.

The Nation Party, an event proposed by a government officer who had lived in the US for many years was held to coincide with Singapore's National Day on August 9, 2002, with the participation of around 1,500 gay men. This party was held again in 2003 and 2004. Eight thousand gay men, including 2,500 foreign visitors, joined the party in 2004, which, as a journalist reported, seemingly "hailed Singapore as the gay capital of Asia."[40] Many sexual minorities applauded Prime Minister Goh's words that "gays are like all of us and should not face discrimination in civil service."[41]

The driving force behind this liberation was a campaign to protect the rights of sexual minorities, which began in the 1970s in Europe and America and was spreading throughout the world in the 1990s. The Goh administration could not ignore this trend. The government also needed to hang on to foreign professionals to keep its economy developing. "We will do anything to accept immigrants with ideas and abilities," a government officer said.[42] The Nation Party was organized to appeal to foreign professionals and demonstrate that Singapore was a creative, intelligent and ideas-driven city. Earning "pink money," a reference to the purchasing power of the gay and lesbian community, was also a consideration. Organizers estimated that the party and related events pulled in nearly six million Singapore dollars.[43]

Conservative Christian groups however, took the lead in opposing these liberal movements. The influential National Council of Churches of Singapore, composed of 150 churches including Methodist and Presbyterian, stated in 2004 that homosexual or bisexual practices are contrary to the teaching of the Bible and the government should keep the present Penal Code to punish homosexuals.[44] Some churches actively worked to try to change people's sexual orientations with banners saying, "Homosexuals can Change" hanging from the ceilings of the churches. A Christian boys' school sent a gay student to a Church-based conversion center to "train" him to be heterosexual.[45]

The government, acknowledging that the issue on sexual minorities might divide society, banned the Nation Party in 2005. The 2006 party was held in Thailand. The group, People Like Us, was not permitted to register as a legal group in 1997 and again in 2004 on the grounds that "the proposed group is likely to be used for unlawful purposes prejudicial to public peace, welfare or good order in Singapore."[46]

REPEAL 377A: PETITIONING FOR LEGAL REFORM IN PARLIAMENT

The Repeal 377A campaign of 2007 was the first time that an activist from a sexual minority openly challenged legal reform in Parliament. The campaign started when the Ministry of Home Affairs proposed a review of Section 377 of the Penal Code, deeming it to be outdated for heterosexual sex

relations after former British colonies, such as Hong Kong and Australia, repealed 377A in 1991 and 1997.

Section 377 was revised but 377A remained. Activists from sexual minorities took action against the discrepancy associated with revising Section 377 (in the clause that sexual penetration of a corpse is forbidden) and retaining 377A. A petition to repeal 377A was submitted to the Parliament with 8,120 signatures in October 2007. It was a historic moment. For the first time in Singapore, a parliamentary petition was submitted, backed by popular support. According to Singapore's Constitution, a Member of Parliament may present a signed parliamentary petition, but for activists it was very difficult to find a sponsor in the Parliament, someone to present the petition, and to collect thousands of signatures under the country's strong authoritarian rule. The fact that activists could find a sponsor and collect thousands of signatures meant that sexual minorities have obtained a "space" in society.

At the same time, however, a group calling itself the "Majority" set up a website to collect signatures backing a call for the government to keep 377A. The group, in an open letter to Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, asks the government to "do what is right and retain Section 377A for the future of our children and our nation. Section 377A is a reflection of the sentiments of the majority of society. Most Singaporeans hold conservative family values and do not accept homosexuality as the norm."[47]

An unusually-heated discussion took place in Parliament in October 2007. For the first time in Singapore's independent history, the presence of homosexuality in society was openly acknowledged in parliament. A nominated member of parliament[48] who submitted the petition said "the law is discriminatory and unconstitutional. The repeal of 337A is not just about fighting for gay rights. There are bigger issues like tolerance, understanding and inclusiveness. It is about upholding the fundamental protections afforded by the Constitution, the basic pillars underpinning our country. These are surely issues for all Singaporeans." The majority of Parliamentarians, however, were in support of retaining Section 377A because it reflected "the moral and social values of the majority of Singaporeans." [49]

In his speech, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong highlighted the point that Singapore was "basically a conservative society with many uncomfortable with homosexuals, more so with public display of homosexual behavior. However, as recognition that homosexuals are often responsible, invaluable, and highly respected contributing members of society, the government would not proactively enforce Section 377A," but added that "the government would not allow or encourage activists to champion gay rights as they do in the West." He also mentioned that "when it comes to issues like the economy, technology, education, we'd better stay ahead of the game and adapt faster than others. But on moral values, we will stay one step behind the frontline of change, watch how things work out elsewhere before we make any irrevocable moves."[50] Thus, to bring the heated discussion to an

end, he asserted that the government would not proactively enforce 377A but would keep the law on the books.

No one has testified to the veracity of his remark about Singapore as a conservative society uncomfortable with the idea of homosexuality because very few opinion polls on homosexuality have been conducted. One of the few polls was a national survey in 2003 by Our Singapore Conversation, a government outreach program with a sample size of 4,000, which found that 47% of Singaporeans reject "gay lifestyles," versus 26% who are in support and 27% who are undecided. There was even less acceptance of same-sex marriage with 55% rejecting the idea, 21% in agreement and 24% undecided. Views differed across age groups and educational levels with the younger and more educated segments of the population being relatively more accepting of gay lifestyles and same-sex marriage.[51] However, there was much criticism of the government's intentional use of the words "gay lifestyle" without a definition which suggested deviancy and inevitably skewed the survey.[52]

"THE AWARE SAGA" AND PINK DOT

While the Prime Minister's speech seemed to be meant as a statement in support of the status quo, in effect it set the stage for both advocates and opponents of the rights of sexual minorities to compete in taking the lead in public discourse. In May 2009, a group of women from the Anglican Church of Our Savior, a newly emerging Christian group, joined the Association of Women for Action and Research (AWARE) a few weeks before the association's executive committee election, capturing a majority of seats on the committee.[53] AWARE is the most prominent NGO in Singapore, which advocates and defends the rights of women. These new members insisted that AWARE had been too tolerant of sexual minorities; for example, it initiated sex education in school where pupils were taught to accept homosexuality as neutral rather than negative.[54] Angry at this turn of events, older members created an online petition to "Save AWARE" that was in direct opposition of the association's new leadership. Membership of AWARE soared from 700 to 3,000. An extraordinary general meeting was called for a vote of no-confidence in the new committee members and they were finally ousted.

This ended the "AWARE Saga," as it is generally known in local parlance,[55] but the Ministry of Education had stopped requesting AWARE to provide sex education and announced new rules a year later that providers of sex education should inform students that homosexual acts are illegal.[56] In this sense, it can be said that conservative Christians were the clear winners in the "AWARE Saga" conflict.

The "AWARE Saga" however sent out several signals to activists supporting the rights of sexual minorities. The setback on sex education reaffirmed the activists' assessment that they must build a stronger movement through closer partnership with allies. A gay activist proposed the organization

of a public rally named Pink Dot for sexual minorities with the slogan of "Freedom to Love."[57] In May 2009, about 2,500 sexual minorities and allies flocked to the Speakers' Corner in Hong Lim Park, the only place where open-air events are permitted to be organized with prior notification to police. They brought anything they could find that was pink to celebrate "Love for All: Love between couples, lovers, brothers, sisters and friends." They noted that pink is the product of what happens when Singapore's national flag colors of red and white are mixed. The protesters also pointed out that the color, the result of accepting diversity, is already part of what it means to be Singaporean because it is the color of the identity cards issued only to citizens.[58] Pink Dot turned out to be a family-friendly and patriotic parade aimed at cultivating familial ties, friendships and national feeling, which appealed to a wide audience.[59]

Since 2009, Pink Dot has become an annual event with the number of participants increasing each year. In 2016, Pink Dot organizers decided to focus on more active participation rather than simply on the number of participants/attendees. They distributed 5,000 plastic boards to the first 5,000 participants to let participants write messages or draw pictures and set up desks to provide legal advice and counseling.[60] Foreign companies such as J.P. Morgan and Google started to support Pink Dot financially and asked their staff to join the event, just as they did in Taiwan. Fifteen companies became corporate sponsors in 2015, with the number growing to 18 in 2016.

Counter-movements, however, also intensified. A Muslim group organized an event called "Wear White Movement" in opposition to Pink Dot, while the "Love Singapore Network" organized by more than 100 Christian churches in coordination with the "Wear White Movement" held a major event opposing Pink Dot with 8,000 participants.[61] One day after the 2016 Pink Dot event, Christian churches held a meeting with 3,000 participants to promote traditional "family values." The National Council of Churches of Singapore, meanwhile, adopted a wait-and-see attitude stating that while it does not condone homosexual or bisexual practices, it also does not condemn those who are struggling with their gender identity and sexual orientation.[62]

GOVERNMENT COUNTERMEASURES

With the sharp spike in support for and opposition to the Pink Dot rally, the government decided that the best move was to suppress both sides to avoid a split in the society. According to the Singapore Census of Population in 2010, Christians make up 18.3% of the population and Muslims 14.7%. Over the past ten years, the percentage of Christians has increased by 3.7%.[63] Both religious groups generally do not accept sexual minorities.

Following the government's decision, two children's books depicting families of same-sex parents were pulled off the shelves in the children's section

of the National Library after complaints were received that said these books did not promote "Family Values." One of the two books has been selected as "Notable Children's Books" in the US. The National Library's move sparked concern among civil society activists. The Library stated: "Young children are among our libraries' most frequent visitors. Many of them browse books in our children's section on their own. As such, we take a pro-family and cautious approach in identifying titles for our young visitors."[64] The statement is a reflection of the government's position.

In June 2016, the government announced a new law that "foreign entities (foreign companies and foreign nationals) should not fund, support or influence such events held at the Speakers' Corner. In the context of LGBT issues, this will apply both to events that advocate the LGBT cause such as the Pink Dot, as well as events whose purpose is to oppose the LGBT cause."[65] However, it was obvious that the government wanted to suppress the former because the government believes it does not promote "Family Values."

Human Rights Watch, a New York-based group on human rights issues, criticized the new law, stating, "This is an outrageous interference in the right to freedom of association and a clear continuation of Singapore's anti-LGBT bias. Foreign companies with regional headquarters in Singapore should reconsider the city state's suitability as a business location."[66] The organizers of Pink Dot said that they were disappointed with the new law, but hoped that "more local companies would share our idea of 'Freedom to Love' regardless of sexuality or gender identity' and would support us."[67]

2017 PINK DOT AND THE "CULTURE WAR"

Many worried that the 2017 Pink Dot rally would be smaller in scale because 13 out of the 18 companies that donated money to the 2016 event were foreign companies. In the end, however, 120 local and small companies offered their support to the 2017 event.

The atmosphere at the start of the 2017 Pink Dot rally on July 1 was bewildering. The Speakers' Corner was surrounded by a long fence with seven makeshift gates watched over by security guards who checked identity cards and belongings so that only citizens and permanent residents would be able to enter. It took a long time for participants to enter the area and there were seemingly never-ending lines in front of each entrance. Foreign media representatives with name cards distributed by the organizers that identified them as press were also frisked and checked for official media passes at the gate.[68]

Participants wearing pink arrived in a steady stream. People could hardly move when they raised their own pink light devices at 8:00 PM at the climax of the event. Representatives from various active organizations distributed

information about their groups and activities. Booths were set up to offer legal advice and counseling. There were also 500 volunteers, double the number from the previous year, helping to manage the event.[69] Some advised visitors who were waiting to enter the area to stay calm because the event could be canceled next year if a disturbance was to occur. After the climax of the event, the organizers reported that the event was a great success with 20,000 participants,[70] although the mainstream media reported the event only very briefly without referring to the tough security checks.

Singapore might have entered a new era of cultural pluralism. One of the most prominent issues facing the society and government is the rights of sexual minorities, which is often referred to as the "culture wars."[71] The government does not appear to have any strategies for resolving this issue, it only tries to suppress both advocates and opponents of sexual minority rights in order to avoid societal division. Sexual minorities must consciously choose to work and live within the existing accepted social and legal norms.

Conclusion

Taiwan became the first state in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage. In contrast, sexuality in Singapore is micromanaged by the state through various apparatuses and agencies including written laws. Most significantly consensual sex between men remains illegal in Singapore. This chapter aimed to analyze factors that account for why two states rooted in Chinese ideas display such contrasting attitudes and political processes, in order to shed light on sexual minority issues, as well as the characteristics of the various segments of civil society that shape these differences.

The most important factor in Taiwan is that "free space" expanded rapidly after martial law was lifted in 1987. Sexual minorities who had been suppressed for years started to stand up for their rights. Due to the Gender Equality in Employment Act (2001) and the Gender Equal Education Act (2004), the younger generation regards gender equality as a natural extension of their rights as citizens. The Taiwanese government, which had isolated itself from the international community, has also supported expanding the rights of sexual minorities to show the world that Taiwan is a democratic country, unlike China.

Singapore inherited the British penal code prohibiting sexual intercourse of same-sex couples which was retained after independence. Sexual minorities have been oppressed by the conservative, authoritarian government since independence until today and no democratic movement has yet emerged. The government has had no pressure to promote democracy from Western countries because corporate tax is very cheap and foreign investment activities are free in Singapore.

The government has become stringent in its monitoring of sexual minorities while also pushing traditional "family values" (heterosexual couples with children). The ruling PAP which brought miraculous economic growth and wealth to its people has promoted such Confucian values to be shared

by all Singaporeans. Same-sex couples are regarded as an unstable force in society since they do not give birth to children. At the same time, the city-state needs to earn "pink money" by allowing gay bars and saunas to open, and to convey to foreign professionals the notion that Singapore is a creative, intelligent, and ideas-driven city.

Recently, the "culture wars" concerning the abolition or continuation of Section 377A, have intensified. The government thinks that the only measure it can take to support the status quo is to regulate the mobilization of both advocates and opponents of the rights of sexual minorities.

The culture wars will be long ones.

*This paper was written in 2019. In August 2022, the Prime Minister of Singapore stated that 377A would soon be repealed, but that same-sex marriage would not be recognized. The culture wars over same-sex marriage may intensify for the foreseeable future.

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31 Tan, "Oi, Recruit! Wake Up Your Idea," 128.
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