

**TAIWANESE PERCEPTION OF STUMBLING
CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS (II):
EXPLAINING THE TAIWANESE
SUBJECTIVITY**

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Executive Summary

1. Poll data show that Taiwanese subjectivity, a Taiwanese consciousness that could differentiate between Taiwanese and Chinese and shares senses of attachment to living in Taiwan, has continued to develop and fortify.
2. This defence-oriented consciousness that focuses on self-defence and has yet to become aggressive and idealised is evolving due to a Taiwan-centred theme history education that contributes to the burgeoning of this Taiwanese subjectivity. The robust democratic system that routinises and solidifies democratic practices also helps strengthen this subjectivity.
3. A document first introduced by Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in 1999 later gained recognition among the public in the discussion of Taiwan's future. Accordingly, the Taiwanese hold that Taiwan has existed and self-governed as an independent sovereign state for many decades under the Republic of China. Any change would require a referendum.
4. The “more exchanges, more understanding” model does not work out fine as originally intended, particularly with the massive inflow of Chinese tourists and the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement (CSSTA).
5. The Taiwanese generally hold negative views of Chinese tourists as economic benefits are distributed unevenly and they have to bear with the inconveniences generated. For the CSSTA, the failure to acquire legislative approval was a consequence of the Taiwanese hesitation to closer integration with China.
6. Challenges lie ahead. First, the revitalised social movements, along with the close cooperation of such with DPP, has largely enhanced this subjectivity. Yet, the social movement-DPP coalition is campaign-oriented and without solid idealistic basis.

7. Second, the subjectivity leads to the burgeoning of new types of labour activities that are locally based. As Chinese influences may not easily intervene, it allows Taiwanese subjectivity to further develop; at the national level, the Tsai government may have to work on integrating these local economic activities into its bigger economic and industrial policies to reduce implementation costs.
8. The Tsai government undoubtedly faces great challenges in this zero sum game of maintaining the Taiwanese subjectivity and making rapprochement in cross-strait relations.