

A Test of Chinese National Community Consciousness Based on the Anti-Japanese History of Guangdong and Hong Kong

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Abstract

As an important part of national social development, the Chinese national community consciousness is of high research value in today's society. In this paper, the relationship between the Chinese national community and Chinese national community consciousness, the Chinese national community consciousness embodied in the war of resistance in Guangdong and Hong Kong, the importance of forging Chinese national community consciousness, and the methods of forging such consciousness are examined about to with concerning the history of the resistance in Guangdong and Hong Kong.

Keywords: Chinese national community consciousness, Anti-Japanese War, Guangdong and Hong Kong

1. The Relationship Between the Chinese National Community and the Chinese Sense of Community

The Chinese ethnic community refers to the ethnic complex with Chinese historical and cultural ties, stable economic activity characteristics, and psychological qualities formed with China as the main region, mainly in the political, economic, cultural, and lifestyle aspects. The Chinese ethnic community is a community of people formed during the long-term historical development of the Chinese people, which is politically united, culturally inclusive, economically interdependent, and emotionally close, with you in me and me in you, and no one can be separated from anyone else, and is a community of destiny based on common historical conditions, common value pursuit, common material foundation, common identity, and common spiritual home. Hong Kong has been an integral part of the Chinese national community since ancient times, and under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, it has shared the sufferings and destiny of any piece of land in the whole of China, which was fully reflected in the war against Japan. In this regard, FANG Zhenghong mentioned in "Hong Kong's Historical Contributions and Insights in the All-China War of Resistance" (Fang Zhenghong, 2007), "After the Japanese launched the war of aggression against China, the people of Hong Kong enthusiastically supported the war of resistance of the motherland from the beginning to the end, showing their strong friendship to share the national tragedy." The people of Hong Kong provided enduring material support to the Mainland, "In August 1938, various sectors in Hong Kong held charity sales and offered money to save the country" (Fang Zhenghong, 2007), and compatriots returned to their hometowns to serve and dedicate themselves to the war effort, "In April 1939, the Tsung Ching Association of Hong Kong and the Zhongshan University Northward Service Corps joined together to form the former Dongjiang Front Ambulance. In April 1939, the Hong Kong Tsung Ching Association and the Sun Yat-sen University went north to form the Tsung Ching Team, which went to the front line of Dongjiang and opened a public clinic in Longchuan." (Fang Zhenghong, 2007) In addition, the people of Hong Kong also actively advocated national justice and fought against traitors and traitors.

The Chinese national community consciousness refers to the awareness that compatriots of all nationalities "identify with the great motherland, the Chinese nation, Chinese culture and the road to socialism with Chinese characteristics". Under this consciousness, every nationality and every citizen believes that they should contribute to the realization of the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and share the

fruits of the prosperity of the motherland. In 2005, Secretary Hu Jintao made a speech at a conference to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. The Chinese nation's sense of community was highly appreciated: "In the magnificent nationwide war of resistance, all Chinese sons and daughters were united in one heart and one will, and all parties, nationalities, classes, strata, and groups made common cause and joined in the national tragedy. ... The vast number of compatriots in Hong Kong and Macao, Taiwan, overseas Chinese and the Chinese overseas, together with the Chinese people, made a great deal of effort to make the war a success. Overseas compatriots and overseas Chinese, share the same breath and fate with the motherland, and participate and support the people of the motherland in various ways in the war of resistance, and many compatriots have died for the country." (Guangming Daily, 2005) And Hong Kong, like other regions, shared this sense of national community and wrote a magnificent chapter about resisting foreign insults and resisting war to save the country.

So, what kind of relationship exists between the Chinese national community and the Chinese national community consciousness? In the author's view, only by vigorously cultivating a sense of Chinese national community and casting a firm ideological foundation of the Chinese nation as a family can we build a community of destiny for the Chinese nation; the formation of a sense of Chinese national community is a prerequisite, while the Chinese national community is the result. As the 19th National Congress of the Party said, only by deepening education on ethnic unity and progress, forging a firm sense of Chinese ethnic community, and strengthening exchanges and integration among ethnic groups can the Chinese ethnic community be firmly established, and all ethnic groups can "cling together like pomegranate seeds". This article will trace the roots of the war in Guangdong and Hong Kong to find the active footprints of the Chinese national community consciousness.

2. A Sense of Chinese Community in the War in Guangdong and Hong Kong

The sense of the Chinese national community is the foundation of national unity, the basis of national solidarity, and the soul of spiritual strength. (Meng Fanli, 2022) Zhou Ping, in his book *The Revival of the Chinese Nation and the Shaping of National Consciousness* (Zhou Ping, 2022), says: "Casting a firm sense of Chinese national consciousness or Chinese national community consciousness is of key and pivotal importance, and provides the possibility and necessity of renting the realization of national development goals through influencing the Chinese national community consciousness". The importance of Chinese national community consciousness in our times is also evident. Throughout the 5,000 years of Chinese history, and especially during the 14-year war of resistance, the people of Hong Kong, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC), joined hands with the people of the Mainland to fight against the Japanese in unity, reflecting the unique sense of community of the Chinese nation.

Wu Kau Teng was an important base in Hong Kong during the war of resistance, located in the North District of Hong Kong's northeast New Territories, formerly known as Wu Kau Teng, and adjacent to Plover Cove Country Park. Here, the people of Guangdong and Hong Kong wrote a unique history of resistance with blood and tears. In late November 1941, the Guangdong People's Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Force was instructed by Political Commissar Yin Linping, who was in Hong Kong for a meeting, to "prepare for contingencies and send troops into the Hong Kong and Kowloon areas immediately to carry out guerrilla warfare behind enemy lines in the event of war" (Li Jiwei, 2021), and to "prepare for contingencies and send troops into the Hong Kong and Kowloon areas immediately to carry out guerrilla warfare behind enemy lines". The establishment of the Hong Kong-Kowloon Independent Brigade of the Dongjiang Column was a manifestation of the unity between Guangdong and Hong Kong in defending against foreign humiliation, and a clear manifestation of the sense of the Chinese national community. After the Japanese attacked Hong Kong in 1941, the Dongjiang Guerrillas gradually infiltrated the Hong Kong area, using Wu Kau Teng as their anti-Japanese stronghold. The members of the Dongjiang Guerrillas established relations with the villagers as Hakka (He Peiyan, Xu Chengen & Zhang Mingjia, 2000) and encouraged them to actively participate in anti-Japanese activities, using a variety of methods to flexibly unite them against the Japanese. More than 500 people from the village of Wujiao Teng, under the leadership of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Brigade of the Dongjiang Column, actively signed up to join the guerrilla group to carry out anti-war work such as fighting traitors, purging bandits and nuisance to the Japanese army. The establishment of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Independent Brigade of the Dongjiang Column is a vivid example of the anti-Japanese resistance and national salvation in Guangdong and Hong Kong, a common memory of the unity of the Hong Kong people and their united efforts to fight against the Japanese invaders, and an indispensable part of Hong Kong's history and culture. (Li Jiwei, 2021) is a concrete manifestation of the sense of community of the Chinese nation.

It is against this backdrop of common resistance to Japan that the Hong Kong Wu Kau Teng Anti-Japanese Martyrs Monument, which unites the spirit of the Chinese community, was quietly erected to commemorate the villagers of Wu Kau Teng who died bravely during the war against Japan. It is not only the only monument in

Hong Kong to be awarded a red five-star rating, but has also been included in the second batch of national war memorial facilities and sites by the State Council of the People's Republic of China. On 25 September 1942, Japanese troops surrounded Wu Kau Teng village and forced the villagers to surrender their weapons and give up their identities as guerrillas. (Chen Junfeng, Peng Jianxin & Hu Geng, 2012) Many villagers bravely resisted the violence and eventually died under the cruel guns and knives of the Japanese. The monument is engraved with the words, "The blood of the past sages the blood of the past, the memory of the martyrs", which still shine in the hearts of every patriotic people.



Figure 1. Hong Kong Wu Kau Teng Anti-Japanese Martyrs Monument

The creation and publication of this newspaper, *The China Business News*, also left a glorious mark on the history of the anti-Japanese resistance in Guangdong and Hong Kong, highlighting the sense of the Chinese national community. The *Chinese Business Daily* was founded and led by the Communist Party of China as a united front newspaper at the critical moment of the anti-Japanese war and published openly in Hong Kong. (Leung Hung-ho, 1992) was launched on 8 April 1941. On 10 February 1941, Comrade Liao Chengzhi, who was tasked with leading the anti-Japanese national united front of the Communist Party of China in Hong Kong, sent a telegram to Secretary Zhou Enlai asking for instructions, saying, "There are now quite a lot of cultural people arriving in Hong Kong. We have decided to set up a newspaper in Hong Kong, ... in the guise of the National Salvation Army, but not too revealing, although important documents of our Party should be published. I think that with the *Xinhua Daily* being oppressed and other newspapers in Hong Kong being bought and sold by the Kuomintang, it makes sense to run this newspaper to break their blockade, even if its life is only a few months." Reaching out to the literati in Hong Kong and uniting together to save the country is the original intention of the *Chinese Business Daily*, and it is also a clear manifestation of the Chinese national community consciousness. In its launch speech, entitled "Our beliefs and aspirations", the newspaper mentioned that "We are deeply concerned about the fate of our motherland at this important time, in Hong Kong, the nerve center of the Far East. The motherland is struggling hard to reach the goal of national liberation. How can we achieve this goal? It depends on the united and unrelenting efforts of every son and daughter of the Republic of China, both at home and abroad. The achievement of this goal will not only be our victory but will also be of great importance in determining the destiny of the world. Therefore, we would like, by following the above beliefs, to take up the task of calling for and promoting public opinion overseas in the process of resistance (war) and nation-building." The Chinese people at that time, even though they were not on the Mainland and were nakedly subjected to the humiliation and destruction of the Japanese army by swords and guns, were firmly united as a community of the Chinese nation with a determination to unite against the Japanese, to resist foreign humiliation together and to achieve national liberation.



Figure 2. Evening edition of the Hwa Chong Pao, April 1941

3. The Importance of Forging a Sense of Community Among the Chinese People

In 2014, the Central Ethnic Conference namely proposed that the relationship between the Chinese nation and the ethnic groups is that of a large family and family members, and the relationship between the ethnic groups is that of different members of a large family. “The whole Party should bear in mind the basic national condition that China is a unified multi-ethnic country, insist on safeguarding ethnic unity and national unity as the highest interest of all ethnic groups, unite the wisdom and strength of all ethnic groups to the greatest extent possible, and work with one heart and one mind to achieve the goal of ‘two hundred years’ and realize the great Chinese nation. This was the first time that the sense of community of the Chinese nation was explicitly stated, and since then, the sense of community of the Chinese nation has been gradually taken seriously. At the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping directly pointed out the need to “forge a firm sense of community among the Chinese nation and build a Chinese national community”. He also stressed that national sovereignty and territorial integrity should be firmly safeguarded and that the historical tragedy of national division would never be tolerated again.

Even so, unlawful forces that threaten the formation of a sense of Chinese national community still exist in some areas, and historical nihilism and national nihilism are still active in different corners. A study of the history of the Chinese Communist Party’s leadership in Hong Kong’s war of resistance (Lujun Mao Jianfeng, 2021) mentions that “before the handover of Hong Kong, the martyrs of the Hong Kong Kowloon Brigade were deliberately ignored in the various activities of the British Hong Kong government to officially commemorate World War II, both in the monument to the restoration of light and in the list of those who died in the war of resistance”. Since June 2019, the opposition and some radical forces in Hong Kong have been carrying out various radical resistance activities in the name of peaceful marches and rallies, including surrounding and clashing with institutions in Hong Kong, wantonly insulting the national flag, and organizing attacks on police officers, leading to social disorder and panic in Hong Kong, according to media reports such as the People’s Political Consultative Conference website. According to various media reports such as Globe, Upstream News, and Sohu.com, on the eve of the 88th anniversary of the September 18 Incident in 2019, Hong Kong’s only red five-star monument to the martyrs of resistance against Japan, the Wu Kau Teng Monument to the Martyrs of Resistance against Japan, was defaced and spray-painted with the words “Anti-Sending to China” and “Anti-Sending to China (Martyrs)” were sprayed on it. All three of these examples are direct challenges to the Chinese national community and pose a serious threat to the forging of a strong sense of the Chinese national community. Only by forging a firm sense of Chinese national community, promoting national unity, strengthening the sense of national identity and belonging, and jointly resisting historical nihilism and national nihilism, can the 56 nationalities always think in one place, work in one place, and unite as one to build a socialist country with Chinese characteristics.

4. Ways to Forge a Sense of Community Among the Chinese People

A sense of Chinese national community is the ideological basis for safeguarding national unity, a necessary condition for promoting national unity, and an inevitable requirement for achieving the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Casting a firm sense of the Chinese national community requires that people of all ethnic groups enhance their identification with the great motherland, their identification with the Chinese nation, their identification with Chinese culture, and their identification with the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Strengthening family and national education, vigorously promoting the excellent Chinese traditional culture, and at the same time formulating scientific guidelines and policies for the benefit of the people, are important ways to forge a firm sense of community among the Chinese nation.

Strengthening education in the home country and enhancing the people's understanding of the state is the first step in forging a sense of community among the Chinese nation. The state can impart more knowledge about the country to the people in homeland education. As Qing Jue and Xu Xinshun put it in *Chinese National Community Consciousness: Conceptual Connotation, Elemental Analysis, and Practical Logic* (Qing Jue & Xu Xinshun), the state "needs to provide a reliable supply of knowledge and theory" and guide the people of all ethnic groups through general education and media communication to understand the country. In this way, the people are taught the basics of the historical memory, customs, rituals, symbols, and institutional systems of the nation, the region, and the ethnic group, so that they can develop their collective dignity. Through such education, the people will gradually improve their perception of the national community, feel the vast 5,000-year history and civilization of the Chinese nation, and feel that everyone shares the same breath and destiny and is a member of the national community. In terms of the war of resistance against Japan, the insistence on education on the "14-year war of resistance", the careful compilation of textbooks on the war of resistance in the nine-year compulsory education service, the establishment of memorials to the war of resistance against Japan in public places and the active development of red tourism are all conducive to family education and the strengthening of the people's sense of national community.

Vigorously promoting the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation, taking the essence of traditional culture and removing the dross, and insisting on promoting the core socialist values is the second step in forging a firm sense of community among the Chinese nation. When the people consciously inherit the excellent Chinese traditional culture and recognize the core socialist values, they will enhance their sense of identity and belonging to their own culture and be nurtured by the rich heritage of Chinese culture. In addition, the masses will also train themselves with excellent moral qualities such as "virtue", "benevolence" and "solidarity", and their sense of humanistic care and rules will also be raised accordingly, which will have a subtle, far-reaching, and lasting impact on the people and will gradually unify their value system. This will help the people to realize the importance of "holding together like pomegranate seeds" and their sense of mission, and will also help to forge a stronger sense of community among the Chinese people. If we look at the history of the war between Guangdong and Hong Kong from a cultural perspective, we need the country to promote the heroic war spirit of Guangdong and Hong Kong of making a common cause, uniting as one and defying violence, and upholding the overall leadership of the Communist Party of China.

Lastly, the formulation of scientific policies for the benefit of the people has provided institutional safeguards to strengthen national identity and forge a sense of community among the Chinese nation. The policies introduced by the state must meet the needs of the people and the laws of historical development, such as the historical "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong" and "one country, two systems", etc., which have been adapted to local conditions, flexible and effective, and have not only enhanced the people's sense of access and happiness but also indirectly forged the people's sense of national community. This has not only enhanced the people's sense of achievement and happiness but also indirectly forged a sense of national community among the people.

5. Concluding Remarks

This article tries to analyze the sensitivity of the Chinese national community against the background of the anti-Japanese history of Guangdong and Hong Kong. The sense of the Chinese national community is a communal concept of sharing solidarity, honor and disgrace, life and death, and destiny, which not only carries on the history of the resistance in Guangdong and Hong Kong but also writes a glorious and bright future together with all Chinese sons and daughters.

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