

# **China's Grand Unification, Cross-strait Relations and Related Policies**

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The idea of Grand Unification is an important element of the Chinese culture, as it has been part of the worldview of numerous Chinese people over the centuries. While inquiries into the idea have mostly been textual analysis, the present study attempts to explore the substantive conditions that gave rise to the idea. The competing theses of the Hydraulic Society (Wittfogel, 1957) and the Single Authority (Hsiung, 2011) are examined both theoretically and empirically. Then, the implications of the idea of Grand Unification for public policy are discussed, with a particular focus on China's political system, the conflict across the Taiwan Strait, and China's presence in the international community. The present study has two main implications: First, the idea of Grand Unification as a mental construct in the Chinese cultural tradition is related to substantive social factors, thus providing a firmer understanding of the idea. Secondly, assessment of the idea's impact on public policies is made with respect to cultural and not political considerations. At each juncture along China's long history, the idea of Grand Unification may be politically correct from the standpoint of contemporary interests; from the perspective of long-term interests of the Chinese civilization, however, the idea may not be culturally correct.