

**Public Culture and The Taiwan Imaginary:**  
**Freedom, The Nation, and Welfare, as ~~Social Justice~~**

**Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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## Abstract

This thesis attempts to develop a fresh perspective on the study of political development. By drawing on the experience of Taiwan's postwar political trajectory while critically appropriating the existing concepts relevant in the field, I employ 'public culture' as a new conceptual tool for understanding and explaining political change. Public culture is defined as *the process of public deliberation in which public intellectuals as well as the general public are engaged, public consciousness is formed and contested, and public consensus to various degrees is arrived at*. Central to the concept of public culture is the role of political ideology and intellectual articulation and debates in social evolution and transformation.

Modernisation theories and 'transitology' remain dominant in the comparative study of political development. The public culture perspective developed in this thesis counters the economic determinism of modernisation theory and the elitism of transition theory while retaining the historical and structural approaches typical of the former and attention to the role of elite actors characteristic of the latter. Public culture is an attempt to provide an angle from which the context and text of ideological discourses and their sociopolitical implications can be analysed for a better explanation of Taiwan's experience.

This thesis demonstrates that Taiwan's postwar public culture is featured by a twin development of liberalism and nationalism against the backgrounds of the Second World War, Chinese Civil War and Cold War. In the same context welfarism as social justice emerged as another influential discourse. Postwar Taiwan's institutional change from authoritarianism to liberal democracy reflects this feature.



## **Author's Declaration**

I declare that the work presented in this thesis is mine alone.

Wei Mei-chuan

*Wei Mei-chuan*

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Without the support and assistance of many people, this thesis would not have been possible. My deepest appreciation goes to my supervisor, Dr. Lin Chun, for her patience and trust, and for enabling me to conduct a research project that requires intellectual capabilities superior to what I have acquired. My gratitude also goes to my advisor, Dr. Cecile Fabre, for her invaluable comments and suggestions and Dr. Tseng Yi-jen, in Taiwan, for directing me to Habermas' theory of public sphere. I have learnt a great deal from them and should have learnt more.

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## **Note on Romanisation**

The political division between Taiwan (or the Republic of China) and the Chinese mainland (or the People's Republic of China) extends to the different systems of Romanisation used by each side. This presents problems for any work that deals with both Taiwan and China when it comes to presenting Chinese proper names and terms in English.

The principle that has been adopted in this thesis is to use the Wade-Giles system for the names of individuals, places and terms in Taiwan. In contrast, the (Hanyu) Pinyin system is used for the names of individuals, places and terms in the Chinese mainland. The Wade-Giles system has been used for all references of Chinese-language works.

With regard to the citation of Chinese names, the Chinese method of naming has been adopted in this thesis. That is, the surname or family name comes before the first name.

## Contents

<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Author's Declaration .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Note on Romanisation .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Chapter One Introduction: Situating Postwar Taiwan—A Historical Review .....</b>	<b>8</b>
A Historical Account of Taiwan's Postwar Political Development .....	9
A Brief Discussion of the Concept of Public Culture.....	32
Theory and History .....	33
The Orignisation of The Thesis .....	35
<b>Chapter Two Public Culture and Taiwan's Modern Development.....</b>	<b>37</b>
Modernisation Theory, Transitology and Taiwan's Political Development .....	37
The Perspective of Public Culture .....	47
Defining Public Culture .....	48
The Elements/Dimensions of Public Culture .....	58
Political Development: the Evolution of Public Culture .....	64
Public Culture and Taiwan's Political Development —Liberalism, Nationalism and Welfarism as Social Justice.....	65
<b>Chapter Three Liberalism and Taiwan's Political Development.....</b>	<b>82</b>
The Chinese Civil War, Cold War and the Liberal Movement in Postwar Taiwan .....	82
A Liberal Seed in Illiberal Soil: The Aftermath of the KMT's Defeat and the 'Free China Movement' from 1949 to 1960 .....	84
The Silenced Liberal Voice and Its Re-emergence, 1961-1975 .....	100
The Dangwai Era: the Turn towards Democratisation, 1975-1987 .....	105
Liberalism Challenged: Confronting Egalitarianism, Nationalism and Postmodernism, 1987 to the present.....	109
Feminist Interventions: The Debate Between Liberal and Lesbian Feminists .....	122
<b>Chapter Four Nationalism, Taiwanese Consciousness, and Taiwan's Identity Predicament.....</b>	<b>132</b>
The 'Nationalistic Turn' in Taiwan's Public Culture .....	132
The Beginning of the Tragedy—The 'Febuary 28 <sup>th</sup> Incident' in 1947.....	134
Official Chinese Nationalism vs. Taiwanese Consciousness, 1947-1970 .....	139
Neocolonialism, Anti-imperialism, Chinese Nationalism and the Nativist Literary Debate, 1971-1979 .....	143
The 'Chinese Consciousness vs. Taiwanese Consciousness' Debate and the Emergent Taiwanese Nationalism, 1980-1990 .....	161
The 'Taiwanese Nationalism vs. Chinese Nationalism' Debate and Identity Politics, 1991 to the present.....	180

<b>Chapter Five</b>	<b>Welfarism and Social Justice .....</b>	<b>216</b>
	The Historical Background of the Welfare Development in Taiwan .....	216
	Social Investment in Postwar Taiwan, 1945-1970 .....	218
	Political Crisis, the Nativist Debate and Social Policy in Transition, 1971-1980 .....	233
	The 'Economy Growth vs. Social Welfare' Debate, 1980-1987 .....	239
	Welfare State or Welfare Society? 1990 to the present .....	245
<b>Chapter Six</b>	<b>Conclusion: The Future of Taiwan.....</b>	<b>260</b>
	The Taiwan Imaginary: Freedom, The Nation, and Welfare as Social Justice .....	263
	Afterword: The Future of Taiwan.....	274
<b>Bibliography .....</b>		<b>278</b>

# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction: Situating Postwar Taiwan**

### **-- A Historical Review**

In this thesis, I attempt to develop a perspective of public culture to fill the gap created or left unbridged in existing theoretical approaches to the comparative studies of political development, primarily modernisation theories and transitology. While acknowledging the valuable contributions of these two theories- mainly the structural analysis of the former and the emphasis of historical contingency and the role of elite actors in regime change of the latter, the theory of public culture rejects their economic determinism and elitism respectively.

Public culture is defined as the process of deliberation in which public intellectuals as well as the general public are engaged, public consciousness is formed and contested, and public consensus to various degrees is derived. The focus of public cultural analysis is on the role of ideological discourses as well as intellectual articulation and debates in social evolution and transformation. Apart from examining the participants in public deliberation, this approach also examines the conditions, characteristics, process and consequences of the process.

This thesis demonstrates that liberalism, nationalism, and welfarism as social justice are the main public discourses in postwar Taiwan that feature Taiwan's postwar public culture. It argues that, instead of prioritising liberal democratic political institutions in Taiwan centring on the idea of direct democracy, which is widely equated with referendum, a democratic public culture that emphasises the role of public deliberation in the formation of public consciousness or general will should be regarded more

crucial to the future of Taiwan's democratic development. In the rest of this chapter, I will first provide a historical account of Taiwan's postwar political development, followed by a discussion of theory and history and finally an explanation of this thesis' organisation.

### **A Historical Account of Taiwan's Postwar Political Development**

'With the stunning defeat of the KMT in the year 2000 presidential election, the resiliency of Taiwan's new democracy has passed its last test. But the emerging consensus over national identity is by no means consolidated'.<sup>1</sup> Here, two prominent political scientists in Taiwan sum up the island's development since the end of the Second World War. While acknowledging democratic progress, they highlight a crucial element of Taiwan's postwar political evolution: national identity. A distinctive feature of postwar Taiwanese public culture is the dual development of liberalism and nationalism in a setting of 'growth with equity'.

In most literature on Taiwan's democratic development, its relatively equitable society is rarely taken into account, let alone considered a significant socioeconomic precondition for its democratic transformation, widely praised as a 'quiet revolution'. Oft-repeated accounts, such as those rooted in modernisation theories, focus on Taiwan's rapid economic growth and concomitant sociocultural changes. As one expert on Taiwan's equitable development has pointed out, the spectacular growth of per capita income and the distribution of that income, at least up to the late 1980s, are without parallel. While average real per capita GDP rates (percent per year) generally

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<sup>1</sup> Chu & Lin, 2001, 'Political Development in 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Taiwan: State-Building, Regime Transformation and the Construction of National Identity', *China Quarterly*, 2001, p. 129.

rose, increasing from 5.9 in the 1960s through 8.1 in the 1970s and 5.6 in the 1980s to 7.3 in the early 1990s, inequality of income (Gini coefficients) fell, from 0.56 in 1950 through 0.44 in 1959, and 0.29 in 1970. It raised again from 0.29 in 1978 to 0.38 in 1990. Taiwan also did well in improving basic living conditions. Though excluded from the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) *Human Development Report* for political reasons, estimates by economists show that Taiwan's human development index (HDI) rating has improved steadily, from 0.618 in 1976 to 0.898 in 1993.<sup>2</sup> The Taiwan experience thus provides a persuasive counter-example to what was once viewed as Kuznets' inverse-U-shaped iron law.<sup>3</sup>

The domestic socioeconomic factors that facilitated Taiwan's political development must however be understood in the broader historical and political contexts of the end of the Second World War, the Chinese Civil War and the Cold War. Taiwan's location in the 'web of empires', as Michael Mann described it, illustrates these contexts well.<sup>4</sup> These contexts have influenced the formation of Taiwan's public culture, intellectually and politically. The attraction of liberal ideals of civil liberties and parliamentary democracy, the emergence of nationalist politics and its overtaking of liberalism within public debate, and the dearth of discussions of social welfare in studies of Taiwan's

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<sup>2</sup> Gustav Ranis, 1999, 'Reflections on the Economics and Political Economy of Development at the Turn of the Century', in Gustav Ranis, Sheng-cheng Hu and Yung-peng Chu (eds.), *The Political Economy of Taiwan's Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, pp. 5-8. Howe's article provides figures on Taiwan's real GDP growth (percent per annum) from 1992 to 1998: 6.8 in 1992, 6.3 in 1993, 6.5 in 1995, 5.7 in 1996, 6.8 in 1997 and 4.8 in 1998. See Christopher Howe, 2001, 'Taiwan in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Model or Victim? Development in a Small Asian Economy', *China Quarterly*, p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> Simon Kuznet's 'inverted U-curve hypothesis' is the most influential idea ever put forward on inequality and development. It states that 'inequalities first rise with the onset of economic growth, eventually level off over time, then begin to fall in advanced stages of development – thus the growth-equality relationship is characterised by a trajectory in the shape of an inverted U'. See Timothy Patrick Moran, 2005, 'Kuznet's Inverted U-Curve Hypothesis: The Rise, Demise, and Continued Relevance of a Socioeconomic Law', *Sociological Forum*, June 2005, p. 209.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Mann has discussed Taiwan's case from a specific perspective of the relationships between wars, capitalism and empires. Mann, 2004, 'Taiwan in the Web of Empires', paper presented to Conference 'Taiwan at the Edge of Empires', Taipei, December 18-19, 2004, pp. 14-5.



democratisation reflect the impact of these postwar factors.

National identity was long missing from the mainstream literature on Taiwan's political development. This changed when acute ethnic conflicts in some third-wave democracies, specifically former communist states in Eastern Europe, prompted democracy scholars to scrutinise the relationship between democratic consolidation and nationalism. The Taiwan case was relevant because of the nation-building movement launched by the regime under Lee Teng-hui and the island's transition to liberal democracy beginning in the early 1990s. Since then, argue liberal democrats, a divided national identity and nationalist politics have been the most crucial factors affecting Taiwan's democratic consolidation, threatening the stability of liberal democratic constitutionalism on the island.

Yet evolving nationalism has always influenced the trajectory of Taiwan's postwar political development. This includes the Kuomintang's (hereafter the KMT) anti-communist struggles, which began in the Civil War on the mainland in the 1950s and ended in the early 1990s as a result of Taiwan's new mainland policy. This entailed a shift away from viewing the People's Republic of China (hereafter the PRC) under the Chinese Communist Party (hereafter the CCP) as national enemy, to treating it as another political entity within the territory of China. Also significant was the left-wing campaign against American neo-colonialism launched by the Nativist Literary Movement in the 1970s.<sup>5</sup> At the time, Taiwan was experiencing rapid capitalist

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<sup>5</sup> Neocolonialism is the term formulated to designate a specific form of imperial domination distinct from the 'old' form of imperialism, which is characteristic of emigration and colonialism, referring to the attempt to create colonies. As Johnson understands it, 'The characteristic institution of so-called neocolonialism is the multinational corporation covertly supported by an imperialist power. This form of imperialism reduces the political costs and liabilities of colonialism by maintaining a facade of nominal political independence in the exploited country.' He drew on the Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara's

economic development and a series of diplomatic setbacks in the wake of the normalisation of Sino-American relations. Finally, Taiwanese nationalism continued to mutate in the late 1990s as China emerged as an important regional and global player, mainly because of its economic achievements.

Under the terms of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, signed by China and Japan after China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War of 1895, Taiwan, a peripheral island little valued by both the Qing government and the nearby Japanese Empire, was ceded to Japan as war booty. Taiwan then experienced half a century of colonial rule. The Japanese took over the project of modernisation begun by Liu Ming-chuan, the provincial governor of Taiwan appointed by the Qing regime, harnessing it to meet the needs of Japanese imperialism. Japan initially viewed Taiwan as a means of bolstering its capitalist development and later used it as a bridgehead into the Chinese mainland. Japan later moved into Fujien province. By the mid-1930s, when Japan was on the brink of total war with China, Taiwan had been transformed into a factory producing military supplies and a base for advancing southwards. Besides, the Japanese direct imperial rule was more benign than Japan's imperial rule elsewhere, such as Korea. This might explain why anti-Japanese sentiments are far stronger among the Korean people than the Taiwanese. Taiwan in fact is probably the only place in Asia where anti-Japanese feelings are weak.

Throughout Japanese colonial rule, debates emerged on the best political order for the Japanese homeland. Should Taiwan be assimilated? Based on Law No. 63 (adopted by

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observation, arguing that 'neocolonialism "is the most redoubtable form of imperialism—most redoubtable because of the disguises and deceits that it involves, and the long experience that the imperialist power have in this type of confrontation."' Chalmers Johnson, 2004, *The Sorrows of Empire*, p. 30.

the Imperial Diet in 1896), the Taiwan governor-general was able to issue law-like decrees, unchecked by other institutions. Public opinion on colonial policy in the Japanese homeland was divided, providing the politically active in Taiwan with a chance to seek support from sympathisers. They faced a dilemma. Should they play down their Taiwanese identity and emphasise their Japanese identity, reinforcing their claim to equal rights as citizens, or risk losing the support of Japanese assimilationists by stressing their distinctiveness?

(National) self-determination and equal citizenship were both desirable, yet could not be attained at the same time. Through the wartime 'Japanisation' movement (converting the colonials into imperial subjects), the colonial government not only intensified its penetration of local communities, but also aimed to eradicate Taiwanese people's Chinese consciousness and identity ('de-Sinicisation') by making them adopt Japanese customs, religion, language and even names. This policy was later used by the defeated KMT to justify its 'de-Japanisation' policy, pursued by means of similar measures, after it took over the island in 1945. Most notorious of all was its language policy, embodied in the so-called 'national language movement'. Mandarin was the minority language used primarily by KMT officials and those mainlanders who had fled to Taiwan with the regime following its defeat by the CCP. This movement aimed to make Mandarin Taiwan's official language by suppressing the use of local dialects in public space.

In August 1945, with Japan's unconditional surrender to the Allied forces, Taiwan was returned to China, specifically to the KMT government led by Chiang Kai-shek. The KMT took over the island without a carefully prepared plan; Taiwan was a sideshow within their effort to recover all of China after the war. Taiwan's value thus resided in

its function as an outpost for the KMT's anti-communist campaigns. The new government under administrator-general and garrison commander Chen Yi paid little attention to the local people. The KMT favoured mainlanders and 'half-mountains' (*banshan*), the so-called 'token Taiwanese', that is, natives who had spent the war years in China and had been recruited by the KMT, to fill the huge number of government vacancies left following the departure of the Japanese.

The economy deteriorated rapidly; the transmission of hyperinflation from the mainland had a devastating impact on the war-torn island. At the same time, Taiwan's resources were siphoned off to the mainland by the KMT government to fuel their military struggle with the Chinese Communists, and by corrupt carpetbaggers to enrich themselves. The tragic February 28 Incident, centred on disputes over the confiscation of assets formerly owned by the Japanese and thought by many to be a key experience in the formation of Taiwanese identity, erupted against this background.

The story goes that an old woman tobacco peddler, who had been selling black market cigarettes to make a living, got into an argument with officers of the Monopoly Bureau of Tobacco and Alcohol in Taipei. By the time a large number of frustrated and jobless Taiwanese conscripts from southern China and Southeast Asia returned in 1946 and 1947, the island was already at boiling point. The ill feeling between the mainlanders and the Taiwanese/islanders, stemming primarily from the KMT government's poor management of the economy, unfair allocation of government vacancies and corruption, came to head on February 28, 1947, when the officers killed the female hawker. Angry bystanders attacked the officers, whereupon they fired into the crowd, killing people. Island-wide violence erupted.

The KMT government responded with a brutal military crackdown, though it had

initially promised peaceful negotiations. Thousands of native Taiwanese were persecuted. Yet it would be misleading to suggest that only the native Taiwanese were the victims in these tragic conflicts. Native Taiwanese elites were either annihilated, co-opted as collaborators, or fled abroad (mainly to Japan). Over the following decades, these events, commonly known as the '2-28 Incident', were the most severe hindrance to the formation of a Chinese national identity, and encouraged people to imagine a Taiwanese nation.

After the incident, Taiwan was upgraded from a special military zone to a province. Immediate local elections were called. Chen Yi was replaced with a civilian governor, Wei Tao-ming. More positively, the KMT government attempted to reconstruct the cultural and ethnic unity of the mainlanders and the native Taiwanese/islanders through programmes of 're-Sinicisation'. However, much damage had already been done to the KMT government's credibility, and Taiwanese hatred of both the government and the mainland Chinese would not soon subside.<sup>6</sup> The KMT regime faced an uphill struggle building legitimacy on the island after the incident. If the sense of political legitimacy is like the faith depositors place in a bank, by the time the Republic of China (hereafter the ROC, the official name of Taiwan) regime moved its capital to Taipei on December 7, 1949, it had precious little credit left in the eyes of the native population.<sup>7</sup>

For some of the natives, there was no difference between the Japanese and mainland Chinese rulers. Both were notoriously repressive *émigré regimes*. In the third presidential election campaign in 2004, the term '*émigré regime*' was still used by the pro-independence Taiwan Solidarity Union (the TSU) to discredit the 'pro-unification

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<sup>6</sup> Copper, 1996, p. 36.

<sup>7</sup> Christopher Hughes, 1997, *Taiwan and Chinese Nationalism*, p. 26.

alliance' made up of the KMT and the People First Party (the PFP). The latter was founded by the former KMT provincial governor of Taiwan, James Soong, who left the KMT after failing to be nominated as successor to Lee as leader of the KMT.

The only benefit of 'February 28' to the KMT regime was that it drove a generation of politically conscious social elites into self-imposed political passivity, creating the conditions for the establishment of a developmental state in Taiwan. Important policies carried out by the KMT developmental state include a sweeping three-phase land reform in the early 1950s and economic strategies of export-led capitalist development in the beginning of the 1960s. The KMT initiated land reform in 1949, having learnt the lessons of its defeat against the CCP in the Chinese Civil War. The reform was intended to pre-empt communist insurgency in the countryside; it inadvertently laid the foundation for Taiwan's postwar economic reconstruction and relatively equitable economic growth.<sup>8</sup>

In late 1949, Chiang Kai-shek's forces were defeated by the CCP led by Mao Zedong on the mainland. When the KMT government fled to Taiwan, it brought with it some 2.5 million people. The population of Taiwan at the time was about 6 million. In Taiwan, the KMT hoped to regroup and counter-attack, with 'retaking the mainland and uniting the whole of China' as its ultimate goal. Many, however, including the US Truman administration, believed Chiang's regime to be on its last legs, as the Chinese Civil War was entering its final stages. In order to gain the support of the Taiwan people as well as its mainland followers and build political legitimacy and improve its international image to regain the support of the United States, the regime declared that

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<sup>8</sup> Chu & Lin, 2001, p. 113.

liberalism and democracy, together with 'retaking the mainland', were its major political goals. To show its commitment to liberal democratic reforms, the authoritarian KMT regime allowed the general public a limited political space, primarily participation in local elections, which had been held since the period of Japanese colonial rule, and provided financial support to a bimonthly liberal magazine, *Free China*. This was founded in 1950 and run by liberal intellectuals who moved to the island with the KMT in 1949.

*Free China* has been influential in the liberal movement in postwar Taiwan, intellectually if not politically: a key figure in the magazine, Lei Chen, organised the abortive 'new party' movement in collaboration with the local Taiwanese politicians in 1960. The liberal ideas promoted by the magazine were so influential that the political discourse constructed by the Dangwai (literally 'outside the party', referring to the non-KMT opposition forces) democratic opposition movement in the 1970s and 1980s still appealed to the same political values and ideals articulated within its pages. Nevertheless, liberalism initially served primarily as an ideological weapon of the KMT regime in its anti-communist propaganda. Not until one year after the foundation of *Free China* did liberalism articulated in the magazine begin to function as a dissenting ideology critical of KMT authoritarianism. This shift occurred after *Free China* liberals lost faith in the KMT, dissatisfied with its claim that liberal democratic reforms must be put on ice for national security reasons. The dramatic twist that not only suddenly extended the KMT's lease on life for another half century, but which also explains why Chiang Kai-shek 'felt free' to ignore calls for change, was the outbreak of the Korean War on June 25, 1950.

In order to contain the spread of communism, the United States, having ostensibly

abandoned Chiang Kai-shek in January (when Secretary of State Dean Acheson described Taiwan, along with Korea, as beyond the US 'defence perimeter'), sent the Seventh Fleet to the Taiwan Strait to shield the island from attack. The KMT took advantage of the respite. Learning from his disastrous defeat on the mainland, and with the United States guaranteeing the island's security, Chiang Kai-shek responded to the challenge of political reconstruction with an ambitious plan of party reorganisation, officially launched in August 1950 and centred on tightening party discipline. Steps were taken, for example, to rid the government of corrupt, lazy and incompetent officials. The end result was a better functioning, quasi-Leninist party-state.

The KMT's party reorganisation was made easier by the proclamation of a general state of siege on May 19, 1949. The imposition of martial law greatly expanded the powers of the Taiwan Garrison Command and suspended the civil rights guaranteed in the ROC Constitution, formulated at the first meeting of the National Assembly in 1947 on the mainland. The Constitution was 'frozen' rather than 'abolished' because in the eyes of the pro-KMT mainland elites, the ROC was irreplaceable. It was the quintessential legal embodiment of the 'one China' principle.<sup>9</sup> If the KMT offended the notion of '*fa tong*' – orthodox political succession – it would be unable to root its political legitimacy in Taiwan in Chinese nationalism and its nationalist mission. Martial law either replaced or superseded many important provisions of the constitution with so-called 'Temporary Provisions' and special legislation supposedly necessary 'During the Period of Mobilisation and Combating (Communist) Rebellion'.

The United States institutionalised its security commitment to Taiwan by signing the

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<sup>9</sup> Chu & Lin, 2001, p. 114, note 31.



US-ROC Mutual Defence Treaty in 1954 in the wake of the Korean War and partition of Vietnam. The KMT's one-party authoritarianism was consolidated in a new social setting, as the regime seized the historic chance created by the new Cold War security situation in East Asia. Meanwhile, the tension between liberal intellectuals involved in *Free China* and the KMT regime intensified, primarily because the magazine was increasingly critical of the government's policies. As the KMT's hopes of retaking the mainland dimmed, these liberal intellectuals rejected the regime's claim that it had no choice but to put down people's attempts to participate in political decision making because the country was still at war.

*Free China* ended up being banned by the authorities. Its leading members were arrested and imprisoned, including Lei Chen, punished for his active involvement in the abortive new party movement in 1960,<sup>10</sup> and his article claiming that there was little prospect of retaking the mainland. This was certainly a setback for Taiwan's liberal movement, particularly the fight for freedom of speech and political association. After the suspension of *Free China*, Taiwan entered a decade of political silence, though the liberal tradition was inherited by a literary magazine, *Literary Star*, in which political critique took the form of cultural criticism of KMT authoritarianism, primarily Confucianism. The KMT's views of ideal sociopolitical order and political authority have been influenced by the notions of paternalism and hierarchical social order, which are commonly set in opposition to the western modern values and thought to be the characteristics of Confucian doctrines. Western modernisation was therefore hailed by liberal intellectuals like those contributing to *Literary Star* as the model of

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<sup>10</sup> The movement was intended to found a new party, the 'China Democratic Party', which did not necessarily have to compete with the ruling KMT for political power but could function as a 'loyal opposition party' to scrutinise its performance.

cultural-political transformation that Taiwan, indeed the future united China, should follow.

To furnish the authoritarian system with a democratic veneer, and incorporate local political elites into both party-building and state-building, the KMT held local elections in 1950 and popular elections to the Taiwan Provincial Assembly in 1954. Non-KMT parties existed under martial law, such as the China Youth Party and China Democratic Socialist Party, but these were by no means influential opposition parties. Many critical commentators saw them as a mere token designed to obscure the KMT's one-party authoritarianism. Patron-client networks were constructed to control the limited popular electoral process by creating mutual dependence between the KMT and local factions, composed primarily of native Taiwanese politicians.<sup>11</sup>

While managing to rebut and contain the argument that there was little prospect of retaking the mainland, the KMT also realised that without American support it was unlikely to do so. The truth is that while the US Truman administration hardened its support for Taiwan at the time of the Korean War, in practice it had always kept Chiang Kai-shek 'on a leash'.<sup>12</sup> The US 'hands-off' policy towards Chiang's KMT government during the later stages of the Chinese Civil War on the mainland merely demonstrated the Americans' lack of confidence and trust in Chiang Kai-shek and his government.

During the 1958 Quemoy and Matsu crisis (islands just off the coast of Fujian province), Chiang Kai-shek succeeded in rejecting the American demand to give up the islands.

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<sup>11</sup> For a detailed account of how the KMT regime established and consolidated its authoritarian rule in Taiwan after 1949 by means of building 'patron-client alliances' with local factions, see Chen Ming-tong, 1995, *Factional Politics and Taiwan's Political Change*.

<sup>12</sup> Hughes, 1997, p. 30.

The international turmoil caused by this crisis between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait pushed the Eisenhower administration closer to adopting a 'two Chinas' policy, that is, one intended to avoid conflicts between the two sides that might embroil the United States. Chiang, under intense pressure from the US Kennedy administration in 1961-1962, was eventually persuaded to drop plans to invade the mainland. The KMT leadership was thus forced, if it wished to maintain its political legitimacy and indeed survive, to update its historical mission, shifting away from its anti-communist crusade towards ensuring the island's security, international standing and economic prospects.<sup>13</sup>

The KMT's political repression had badly damaged its relationship with native Taiwan society. It attempted to undo the damage by concentrating on economic reform and development. As one of its satellites in East Asia, the United States provided Taiwan with military protection and economic aid, which helped bring about the 'Taiwan miracle' and enabled the *émigré regime* to establish a relationship with the diverse social groupings on the island.<sup>14</sup>

The Taiwan economy in the 1950s was a transforming, semi-command economy supported by American guidance and resources. This was partly a reflection of the Japanese period and its aftermath, but was also congruent with the official philosophy of the KMT, that is, the Principle of the People's Livelihood found in Sun Yat-sen's 'Three Principles of the People'. Yet doubts remain among its critics about how seriously the KMT had ever thought of practising its proclaimed official ideologies, especially social equality and political democracy. In a nutshell, the Principle of the

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<sup>13</sup> Chu & Lin, 2001, p. 117.

<sup>14</sup> Hughes, 1997, p. 26.

People's Livelihood evoked the idea of a society in which economic growth was not attained at the cost of social equality. While private capital and the market mechanism were considered conducive to economic development, the state enjoyed relative autonomy from private capital and the market, enabling it to undertake social redistribution by, for example, making the public sector the strategic economic actor. Under the guidance of the government, Taiwan experienced economic take-off, expansion and finally the 'economic miracle' of the 1960s and 1970s.

The 1970s, however, was also a period when Taiwan suffered a series of diplomatic setbacks, beginning with the Diaoyutai Incident in 1971, followed by the rapprochement between the PRC and the United States, the ROC's withdrawal from the United Nations, recognition of the PRC by Japan in 1972, and culminating in the severance of Taiwan's diplomatic relations with major nations, including the United States, in 1979. The Diaoyutai Incident involved the US hand-over to Japan in 1971 of the Diaoyutai islands, an archipelago to the north of Taiwan which the Americans has occupied in the Second World War. This provoked waves of patriotic demonstrations by students in North America, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

In 1969, relations between Washington and Beijing began to change as a result of the Nixon Doctrine, US efforts to disengage from Vietnam, and an escalation of Sino-Soviet border hostilities. A rapprochement between the PRC and the US was appropriate and to the advantage of both.<sup>15</sup> The visit by the US table tennis team to the PRC and the visits of National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger and President Nixon to Beijing in 1971 not only damaged the ROC's claim to be the sole lawful government

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<sup>15</sup> Copper, 1996, p. 40.

of all China, but also raised questions over future US support.<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, largely as a result of the normalisation of Sino-American relations, the PRC was admitted to the United Nations and the ROC expelled.

The changed international situation in the PRC's favour presented a formidable challenge to the KMT regime, stripped of its status as the lawful government of China and anticipating international isolation ahead. The change in Taiwan's international status also caused a legitimacy crisis for the KMT regime in Taiwan. The official 'one China' principle, which assumed that the KMT was the sole lawful representative of all China, and based on which the KMT justified its authoritarianism in Taiwan, crumbled to dust. The PRC-US Joint Communiqué of 27 February 1972 was carefully worded to 'acknowledge' and 'not challenge' the position that 'all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain that there is but one China and that Taiwan is part of China', rather than to recognise Beijing's claim to sovereignty. Neither reunification with the mainland nor independence occurred; the international status of Taiwan remained unresolved. The passage of the Taiwan Relations Act by the US Congress effectively froze its status in an intermediate state between the two possible types of statehood. This was done not by extending recognition to Taiwan, but by treating it as a legal personality in US law.<sup>17</sup>

The diplomatic crisis provided the initial impetus for the demise of the KMT's authoritarianism. The fulfilment of basic needs, enhancement of living standards, rise in the general level of knowledge and introduction of foreign (mainly American) values

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<sup>16</sup> Hughes, 1996, p. 30.

<sup>17</sup> Hughes, 1996, p. 31.

by students who had studied abroad contributed to the growth of political consciousness. By the beginning of the 1970s, another liberal magazine, *The Intellectual*, had begun to campaign openly for democratic participation in politics, basic human rights and funded social welfare. This new, vibrant wave of liberalism, commencing with the publication of *The Intellectual* after the politically quiet 1960s, has to be understood in the context of Taiwan's international political crisis and incorporation into the global system of capitalism, and the KMT regime's response. The party's new leader, Chiang Ching-kuo, promised political liberalisation after the death of paramount political leader Chiang Kai-shek in 1975.

Following the death of Chiang Kai-shek, Vice President Yen Chia-kan automatically became president of the ROC according to the constitution. However, before Chiang died, his power had been gradually transferred to his eldest son, Chiang Ching-kuo, who was appointed premier and head of the party. The succession was relatively smooth, though it entailed an internal power struggle. Nonetheless, lacking his father's historical stature and foreseeing the legitimacy crisis of the regime, Chiang Ching-kuo tried to broaden his political support base by recruiting more native Taiwanese to the party and state leadership. This co-option of native Taiwanese is known as the indigenisation of the *émigré regime*.

In addition, to demonstrate the regime's concern for the well-being of the people in Taiwan and ensure the island's security by maintaining stable economic development, Chiang intensified industrialisation through large-scale infrastructure projects. Critical commentary on the government was encouraged, and Chiang Ching-kuo tolerated the discussions in *The Intellectual* magazine. This was welcomed as a sign of political liberalisation, but turned out to be an element in Chiang's plan to generate public

support for the regime's authoritarian rule against the backdrop of Taiwan's diplomatic crises in the 1970s. Chiang in fact continued to crack down on dissent and the organisation of new political parties until the late 1980s.

By the late 1970s, a loosely organised opposition campaign had been launched, known as the Dangwai movement. Whilst this has commonly been considered crucial to Taiwan's liberal democratic movement, it included people on both the left and right. They had different views on capitalist industrialisation and parliamentary democracy and unification and independence but were united in fighting KMT authoritarianism. The Dangwai movement established its political identity and built electoral support by emphasising democratic reform and Taiwanese identity, though its members interpreted Taiwanese identity in various ways-- unionists saw Taiwanese consciousness as a local consciousness while Taiwanese nationalists argued that it was a national consciousness.<sup>18</sup>

The Dangwai movement made considerable gains in local and Provincial Assembly elections in 1977. In the vigorously contested election for magistrate of Taoyuan County, a riot in Chungli stopped the local KMT officials from vote-rigging. In retrospect, the Chungli incident was the beginning of the end of the authoritarian regime.<sup>19</sup> The fact that the KMT was prevented from using coercive measures during the incident helped the opposition overcome its psychological barriers and convinced it that the regime was vulnerable. Attempts were made to form an island-wide alliance.

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<sup>18</sup> For instance, Su Chin-li, a pro-unification leftist whose father was a devout communist who stayed on the mainland, participated actively in the Dangwai movement. The pro-independence Taiwanese identity was exhibited primarily by those Dangwai activists around the magazine *Formosa (meili dao)*. As well as advancing the cause of establishing a new party, the DPP, they explored the links between democracy and national identity.

<sup>19</sup> Chu & Lin, 2001, p. 120.

The movement was temporarily disrupted by the arrest and imprisonment of some of its leaders in the aftermath of the Kaohsiung Incident in 1979, originally a rally organised to mark International Human Rights Day on December 10.<sup>20</sup>

Soon after the Kaohsiung Incident, the Dangwai movement regrouped and made significant gains in the 1980 supplementary elections, which had been postponed due to the international and domestic crises of December 1978. This time the Dangwai movement was bolstered by a mushrooming of social movements, representing all kinds of disadvantaged socioeconomic groups and environmentalist and consumer rights activists. The social movements of the 1980s, though they flourished partly because of political liberalisation, helped further loosen the authoritarian state's firm grip on society and, in various social settings, provided soil in which the political opposition could take root. External pressure, primarily from the United States, also contributed to the advancement of Taiwan's political liberalisation, although the US was clearly motivated by self-interest.<sup>21</sup>

In competition with the overseas Taiwanese opposition (primarily in America and Japan), and encouraged by the successes of the 'People's Power' movement in the Philippines and the popular opposition movement in South Korea, the Dangwai movement defied the law and finally announced the establishment of the first

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<sup>20</sup> A rally calling for the government to protect human rights was organised by the Formosa group within the Dangwai movement on International Human Rights Day, December 10 1979. This is why the incident was also called the Formosa Incident. An unexpected riot broke out, provoking a bloody government crackdown. Disagreement remained over whether the riot was the response of the masses to the alleged arrest of some rally organisers or a result of provocation of the security police by the masses.

<sup>21</sup> As Potter pointed out, America's support for limited democratisation along Japanese lines in the latter half of the 1980s, after decades of consistently backing the anti-communist authoritarian regime, may have been anchored in the pressure exerted by domestic economic interests. Simply put, some democratisation would mean a rise in wages, which had been kept down in Taiwan, an authoritarian developmental state, to maintain its competitive advantage in the global economy. See David Potter, 1997, 'Democratization at the same time in South Korea and Taiwan', p. 235.



influential opposition party on the island, the DPP, on September 28, 1986. About a year later, martial law was lifted. The government was acquiesced in the formation of the DPP largely because of pressure from the American House of Representatives Foreign Relations Committee, which passed a resolution urging the KMT to lift its ban on new political parties. Pressure from America also played a big role in Chiang Ching-kuo's decision to end the world's longest period of martial law in 1987. This, along with other political reforms carried out during the last few years of Chiang Ching-kuo's tenure, formed a watershed in Taiwan's political development.

To further secure the KMT's political legitimacy by indigenising or Taiwanising the party-state, Chiang Ching-kuo decided to nominate Lee Teng-hui, a native Taiwanese agronomic technocrat, as vice president in 1984. Lee grew up and was educated under Japanese rule and trained to be an expert in agronomics in the United States. This signalled the possibility of a native Taiwanese leader of Taiwan, which became a reality when Chiang died in January 1988.

By the time Lee had succeeded Chiang Ching-kuo as Taiwan's president, the 'Taiwanese consciousness vs. Chinese consciousness' debate was already underway, triggered by a debate between two prominent Taiwan writers, pro-unification Chen Ying-chen and pro-independence Chen Fang-ming. In this debate, (greater) Chinese consciousness was seen by advocates of Taiwanese consciousness as the main obstacle to Taiwan's democratic development because of its affinity to the notion of '*fa tong*' (legitimate succession), mentioned above, on which the KMT based its authoritarian rule on the island. According to this notion, the KMT regime was legal so long as representatives elected on the mainland before 1949 continued in office. Those representatives were not subject to re-election.

Under Lee's administration, the interleaved relationship between democratisation and national identity in Taiwan became more apparent than ever. Lee's project of liberal democratic reform was set to challenge the '*fa tong*' of the KMT, and therefore the 'one China' principle, which assumed that the KMT was the sole lawful representative of all China, in order to carry out constitutional reforms necessary to Taiwan's democratisation. This included full re-election to the core representative bodies. Taiwan's democratic reform, like its overall predicament since the KMT's retreat to the island in 1949, was thus tied up with the adjustment of the ROC's status and its relationship to the PRC. Given the different political system on the mainland, Taiwan's moves towards liberal democracy and the growing common consciousness of Taiwan subjectivity, which had increased in parallel with the development of Taiwan's capitalist democracy since the 1970s, made it inevitable that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait would go their separate ways: peaceful unification seems possible only if the gap between the two systems can be narrowed. The evolution of Taiwanese nationalism away from the notion of China as the nation in question towards the establishment of Taiwanese nationhood occurred precisely in this context.

Another contextual factor affecting Taiwan's dual development of democratisation and nationalist politics from the late 1970s on was the implementation of the PRC's 'reform and opening up' policy. The PRC's new approach had a considerable impact on Taiwan's mainland and foreign policy and economic development. Low production costs in China and its huge domestic market, both attractive to Taiwanese businesses, rendered unsustainable the policy pursued by the Chiang Ching-kuo administration, based on the so-called 'Three Nos' principle – no contact, no negotiation, no compromise. Long before the KMT made Taiwanese investment on the mainland legal,

Taiwanese capital was flowing to China. The policy was therefore changed to permit contact between unofficial organisations or civil groups. The implications of developing links with the mainland for Taiwan's international status were balanced by the 'flexible diplomacy' policy pursued by the Chiang administration and later the 'practical diplomacy' policy under the Lee administration. Central to these policies were the acceptance of 'dual recognition' or 'double recognition' by those countries with formal diplomatic relations with the PRC, and efforts to establish informal relations with nations for which formal diplomatic relations were impossible.

The opening up of the Chinese economy has done much to end the highly successful phase of Taiwan's economic development in the late 1980s. Taiwan has been forced to restructure its macroeconomy due to competition from the mainland. The outflow of Taiwanese capital, the transfer of local labour-intensive operations to China and Taiwan's trade surplus with the mainland are frequently mentioned examples. As a consequence, Taiwan's domestic savings began to exceed investment and unemployment increased. To ensure Taiwan's economic security, that is, prevent excessive economic dependence on China, the Taiwan government examined proposals by Taiwanese businesses to invest huge amounts of capital on the mainland and was taking steps to diversify its export markets. A rather complicated situation emerged in which increased economic integration or interdependence and political antagonism co-existed. This is, more or less, still the case at present. It was against this backdrop that Lee Teng-hui launched the 'new state movement' in the early 1990s.

Along with his democratic reforms, Lee redefined the cultural orientation of the state, moving away from cultivating Chinese identity to endorsing the burgeoning Taiwanese consciousness. A cultural movement emerged, promoting Lee's idea of a 'community

of common destiny' and attempting to bolster the sense of Taiwaneseeness. This included the revision of school text books to increase coverage of native history and Taiwanese literature, and the introduction of a mother languages/dialects curriculum (including Taiwanese, Hakka, and the languages of the aboriginal people) to primary school education. In the eyes of many Chinese nationalists, this is a cultural movement of 'de-Sinicisation' aiming to rid people of their Chinese consciousness and identity. Indeed, calls for 'Taiwan subjectivity' and the Taiwanese cultural nationalist movement, which involved native writers, poets, historians and linguists, have made primarily the first and second generations of mainlanders in Taiwan feel their Chinese cultural identity being threatened or undermined.

On March 23, 1996, the people of Taiwan had their first-ever popular presidential election. At the same time, the People's Liberation Army of the PRC gathered less than two hundred miles away across the Taiwan Strait for missile tests and military manoeuvres. These were intended to deter Taiwanese voters from going to the polling stations. For the election *per se* signified Taiwan's *de facto* sovereignty. Lee's state-building movement promoted the so-called 'ROC on Taiwan' formula, anchored in a 'two Chinas' model. His efforts culminated in his announcement in 1999 that cross-Strait relations entailed a 'special state-to-state' relation. Towards the end of the 1990s, a new consensus emerged that ROC sovereignty on Taiwan must be secured. This consensus also involves understanding 'Taiwan' as a political community which enjoys *de facto* national sovereignty, rather than a geographical unit. 'Taiwanese' no longer denotes an ethnic term for native Taiwanese (or islanders) but encompasses all

the citizens of Taiwan.<sup>22</sup> Yet it is still a much contested question, especially in the academia, as to whether Taiwanese nationalism as exemplified by Lee's 'new state movement' and his discourse of 'new Taiwanese' is not an ethnic nationalism or ethno-nationalism.

The DPP's unexpected victory in the year 2000 presidential election is significant for two reasons. Firstly, it was Taiwan's first ever democratic and peaceful regime transfer; secondly, political support for Taiwan independence among the population had grown. The DPP benefited enormously from the internal divisions in the KMT as a result of the power struggle between Lien Chan and James Soong (Soong Chu-yu), the former KMT Provincial Governor of Taiwan who ran in the presidential election as an independent candidate, taking votes from the KMT.

The 2004 presidential election ended with the incumbent Chen Shui-bian, DPP leader and standard-bearer of the pro-independence 'pan-Green camp', winning his second term.<sup>23</sup> Yet controversy raged over a dramatic incident the day before the election in which Chen was injured by a pistol shot while waving regally to his supporters aboard a jeep in his hometown of Tainan. Whether this 'last-minute drama', as Perry Anderson described it, was a near tragedy, as followers of the victor believe, or a comedy, as his opponents maintain, was not immediately clear. What is certain is that Chen's victory was narrow, and widely thought to be a result of a sympathy vote, though estimates of

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<sup>22</sup> Chu & Lin, 2001, p. 123.

<sup>23</sup> Taiwan is divided politically into two colour-coded blocs. On one side is the 'pan-Green camp', comprising two pro-independence forces: the DPP, in control of the executive since 2000, and its recently created ally, the TSU. On the other is the 'pan-Blue camp', composed of the KMT, which ruled the island for half a century after Chiang Kai-shek was driven from the mainland in 1949, and a breakaway faction of it, the PFP, both identified with a tradition, now attenuated, claiming Taiwan to be the seat of the legitimate government of the whole of China, and still opposed to the idea of Taiwanese independence. See Perry Anderson, 2004, 'Stand-Off in Taiwan', *London Review of Books*.

its scale differed.<sup>24</sup>

The pan-Blue camp refused to accept the outcome of the election in light of the shooting incident. Vast popular demonstrations were held during the following week, with student sit-downs in front of the presidential palace and indignant demands for a recount. Many commentators in Taiwan considered this a test of Taiwan's democracy. At the same time, the vote for the pro-independence pan-Green camp reached 50 per cent, a record high. A distinct Taiwanese national identity is crystallising.<sup>25</sup> While support for independence is plainly on the rise, the result of the 2004 election should not be interpreted as the final choice of the people of Taiwan on unification and independence, not least because Chen won by such a narrow margin. The picture becomes even more complicated when international political factors, in particular in East Asia, are taken into account.

### **A Brief Discussion of the Concept of Public Culture**

In addition to examining Taiwan's history, it is also illuminating to briefly discuss the concept of public culture, employed in this research to study Taiwan's political development. I here provide a definition of public culture, discussing the concept in detail in Chapter Two. Public culture is *the process of public deliberation in which public intellectuals as well as the general public are engaged, public consciousness is*

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<sup>24</sup> For an analysis of and commentary on the incident, see also Anderson, 2004, 'Stand-Off in Taiwan'.

<sup>25</sup> According to Anderson, the Green camp, committed to outright independence, started with 21 per cent of the vote in 1996. In 2000 it took 39 per cent. This year it reached 50 per cent. Even discounting the sympathy factor, and a variety of motives for not voting Blue, the trend of support is plain. A distinct Taiwanese national identity is in the process of crystallisation. The change has been relatively swift. As late as 1996, well over 50 per cent of the population, when asked, described themselves as 'Chinese and Taiwanese', over 20 per cent as 'Taiwanese' only, and under 20 per cent as 'Chinese'. Today fewer than 50 per cent define themselves as Chinese and Taiwanese, and not much more than 10 per cent as Chinese, while those who see themselves as simply Taiwanese number more than 40 per cent (ibid.).

*formed and contested, and public consensus in varying degrees is arrived at.* To study Taiwan's political development is to explore the conditions, processes, characteristics, consequences of and participants in public deliberation through a contextual analysis of the political discourses articulated in public debate.

## History and Theory

This research provides a historical analysis and theoretical interpretation of the public discourses on Taiwan's political development. It is essential that particular histories are investigated in comparative political studies as Tilly has emphasised in his critical examination of the dominant account of modernisation theories of political change. He argued that: 'The analyses should be **concrete** in having real times, places, and people. They should be **historical** in limiting their scope to an era bounded by the playing out of certain well-defined process, and in recognizing from the outset that time matters.'<sup>26</sup> Here 'history' is related to but not the same as 'culture'. Katznelson made a similar remark on what 'the best historical social science' should be like: 'a work about a particular time, setting, and choice, a perceptible narrative constituted by a story of periodization and an account of preferences.'<sup>27</sup>

Drawing on Tilly and Katznelson, 'history' includes both political-sociological macroanalyses and theoretically informed case studies.<sup>28</sup> 'After all', as Lin argued, 'any political science paradigm, with its assumptions and conceptions, must be validated, modified, or even rejected in light of historical discoveries and

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<sup>26</sup> Charles Tilly, 1984, *Big Structures, Large Processes and Huge Comparisons*, p. 14. (emphases original)

<sup>27</sup> Ira Katznelson, 2003, 'Periodization and Preferences: Reflections on Purposive Action in Comparative Historical Social Science', p. 270. See also his earlier article 'Structure and Configuration in Comparative Politics'. (1997)

interpretations, bearing in mind that the latter themselves depend on a certain theoretical framing'.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, 'alternating between the empirical and the conceptual', scholars need to ensure an '“open-ended and ongoing interaction between evidence and concept” pertaining to particular histories'.<sup>30</sup>

'Taiwanese modernity' has been described as an 'alternative modernity'<sup>31</sup> from the perspective of neo-Confucianism, that is, a 'non-individualistic version of capitalist modernity'.<sup>32</sup> Yet Taiwan's historical experience is in fact insufficiently distinct to justify such a claim. In this research, 'alternative modernity' means a developmental path different from capitalist modernisation. Taiwan is probably the best case for testing mainstream modernisation theory. Moreover, the west-east division into an individualistic versus collective ethos of culture is often overstated, as one commentator has pointed out.<sup>33</sup> The supposedly 'illiberal' or anti-individualist idea of community, as implied in Taylor's critical discussion of 'negative liberty', is just as important in the west in constituting self-understanding or self-identity.<sup>34</sup>

More relevant to our discussion here is that the state has played a significant role in creating conducive socioeconomic conditions for Taiwan's democratic transformation, as demonstrated in the literature on the 'East Asian model' and related accounts based on theories developmental state. This point is not only important in any historical

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<sup>28</sup> See Charles Tilly, 1984; I. Katznelson, 1997; 2003.

<sup>29</sup> Lin Chun, 2000, 'Introduction: The Chinese Path and the Limits of Globalism', *China* Vol. III, p. xvii.

<sup>30</sup> Lin Chun, 2000, 'Introduction: The Chinese Path and the Limits of Globalism', *China* Vol. III, p. xvii.

<sup>31</sup> For a detailed discussion of 'alternative modernity', see Charles Taylor, 1999, 'Two theories of modernity', *Public Culture*, 27.

<sup>32</sup> Peter Berger refers to the 'East Asian development model' as the 'second case' of capitalist modernity, distinct from the 'first case' of European capitalist modernity in its 'non-individualistic cultural values' (Berger, 1988). Ambrose Y. C. Kim thus argued that Taiwan's political modernity is 'democratically Confucian', valuing the sociopolitical order and individual rights from a '(collective) relational perspective' (King, 1998).

<sup>33</sup> Lin Chun, 2001, 'Defining and Defending the "Social": A Chinese Tale', p. 67.



account of Taiwan's postwar political development but also places a question mark over the core assumptions and concepts of the dominant neo-classical economics and modernisation theory. These feature 'free market utopianism or fundamentalism', 'state-market or state-society antagonism', and the associated classical liberal notion of civil society. In the light of this theoretical rethinking, any new concept or analytical framework intended to better capture Taiwan's political development thus has to reject the assumed state-market or state-society antagonism in these theories, and take into account the active role of state.

### **The Organisation of the Thesis**

The thesis is organised as follows. Chapter Two elaborates the concept of public culture, developed in this research to study Taiwan's political development, by critically examining the existing concepts and theories found in the field, primarily modernisation theory and transitology. A brief historical narrative on the evolution of Taiwan's public culture since the end of the Second World War, which has featured liberalism, nationalism and welfarism, concludes the chapter. The subsequent chapters are devoted to historical analyses of the liberal, nationalist and welfare debates in turn and the evolution of these discourses in postwar Taiwan in chronological order. Chapter Three probes liberalism and Taiwan's political imagination. Chapter Four looks at the nationalist debate, the growing Taiwanese consciousness, and Taiwan's identity predicament. Chapter Five grapples with the issue of social welfare, much neglected in the existing literature on Taiwan's political development. The conclusion, Chapter Six, summarises the research and focuses on the sociopolitical implications of

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. Charles Taylor, 1991, 'What's wrong with negative liberty?', in David Miller (ed.) *Liberty*.

**liberalism, nationalism and welfarism, as perceived by the public in Taiwan, for the country's future political development.**

## **Chapter Two**

### **Public Culture and Taiwan's Modern Development**

#### **Modernisation Theory, Transitology and Taiwan's Political Development**

The 'Taiwan Miracle' – Taiwan's rapid and relatively equitable economic development and peaceful political transformation from authoritarianism to liberal democracy – has attracted broad attention from scholars as well as policy makers in other developing countries. While we have seen an increasing number of critical studies of Taiwan's political development,<sup>1</sup> modernisation theory and 'transitology' remain the dominant approaches. The former emphasises the structural preconditions for political democratisation, such as a market economy, industrialisation, urbanisation, a high level of literacy and the emergence of a middle class as the main social force. The latter concentrates on the role of political elites in regime change and emphasises the pacts made between such elites in the power struggle that led to a negotiated transition to democracy.<sup>2</sup>

Research projects conducted within these theoretical frameworks have undoubtedly contributed to our understanding. It is however vital to scrutinise whether these mainstream approaches adequately capture the experience of Taiwan's political development. Taiwan, as many commentators have pointed out, fits the tenets of modernisation theory far better than many other countries, such as China or India.<sup>3</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Lin Shu-fen's critical analysis of the discourse of democratisation in Taiwan from the perspective of critical democracy, inspired by the Foucauldian conception of genealogy and Derridian deconstructive method (Lin, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> See Rustow, 1970; O'Donnell *et al*, 1986; Di Palma, 1990; Przeworski, 1991.

<sup>3</sup> This comment on the Taiwanese case was provided by Dr. Lin in feedback on the present author's chapter. India is a counter-example to modernisation theory, as a democratic country with immense

typical criticisms of classic modernisation theories, including the belief that there is a correlation between economic prosperity and the emergence of democracy and faith in the ‘automatic’ democratic orientation of the middle classes,<sup>4</sup> thus seem less relevant to our critical literature review here. Nonetheless, the historical fact that socioeconomic indicators for Taiwan during authoritarian rule were much higher than for liberal democratic India in the same period poses a challenge to the hypotheses of modernisation theory and its account of Taiwan’s political development.

For some critics of modernisation theory, its greatest flaw is its presupposition of a steady progression towards liberal democracy. Modernisation theory struggles to explain countries’ transformation from authoritarianism to some form of democracy. Transition theory can be seen as a correction to modernisation theory in that it criticises structure-centred approaches for marginalising the importance of politics, the role of political agency and historical contingency. In the case of Taiwan, the transition approach provides a convincing explanation of Chiang Ching-kuo’s initial political liberalisation in the 1970s and Lee Teng-hui’s democratisation in the early 1990s. The two leaders’ key contributions to Taiwan’s democratic transition are generally considered to be the lifting of martial law in 1987 and the first popular presidential election in 1996 respectively.

Transition theory’s agency-centred approach has however been criticised for its elitism and neglect of structural factors. Some commentators, while acknowledging that charismatic individuals influence the course of historical events, argue that a ‘great

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poverty.

<sup>4</sup> More ‘sophisticated’ versions of modernisation theory take into account a broader range of variables, such as political culture, colonial legacy and political parties.

man' approach falls prey to voluntarism, assuming that particular politicians determine outcomes.<sup>5</sup> As noted above, most explanations of Taiwan's political development underline the roles of Chiang Ching-kuo and Lee Teng-hui. Yet it is clear that changing structures of class, state and transnational power, driven by particular histories of capitalist development, profoundly shaped these short-term choices and actions.<sup>6</sup>

The role of Chiang Ching-kuo as party and state leader in setting Taiwan on the path to political liberalisation certainly deserves attention. It is however equally important to explain why, after several decades of authoritarian rule, 'democratic reform' made it onto the party's agenda in the 1970s, rather than earlier or later. The ruling KMT faced increasing domestic and external pressure following the normalisation of Sino-American relations and the expulsion of the ROC on Taiwan from the United Nations in the 1970s, a massive diplomatic setback. Sun Yat-sen's *Three Principles of the People*, the KMT's official ideology, meanwhile, postulated a democratic ideal, the 'Principle of Democracy'. Both factors illuminate the party's shift towards democracy. Both are bound up with the KMT's political legitimacy.

Similarly, it is crucial to investigate the context in which Lee Teng-hui initiated the project of political democratisation in the early 1990s. This includes: Lee's urgent need, following Chiang Ching-kuo's death, to consolidate his political authority as both party and national leader, achieved by means of a power struggle within the KMT in the name of democratisation;<sup>7</sup> the initiation of cross-Strait dialogue for humanitarian

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<sup>5</sup> See Katharine Adeney and Andrew Wyatt's critical literature review on existing approaches to the study of democratisation with reference to the Indian case (Adeney & Wyatt, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> David Potter, 'Democratization at the same time in South Korea and Taiwan', *Democratization*, p. 220.

<sup>7</sup> Kuo Cheng-liang (1998, 'Lee Teng-hui phenomenon: democratic transition and political leadership') and Shaw Carl K. Y. (2002, 'Modulations of nationalism across the Taiwan Strait') provide very incisive analyses of this power struggle and its impact on Taiwan's democratic transition.

reasons (such as making it legal for veterans who retreated to the island with the KMT in 1949 to visit their families and relatives on the mainland); increasingly fierce competition from China in the economic and international political field since its economic reforms in the 1980s; and finally the pressure of electoral competition with the major opposition party, the DPP.

In light of the explanatory deficiencies of both approaches, some scholars have reflected critically on oversimplified versions of modernisation theory and the accounts of transition theory. Early efforts have been made to advance a broader framework that is intended to incorporate the factors of political agency and choice into the explanations of modernisation theory's structural analysis of political change, as exemplified by Almond's essay.<sup>8</sup> In the studies of Taiwan's political development, apart from drawing attention to the power of (democratic) ideas or the human spirit and the political opposition movement's contribution to Taiwan's democratisation, they have also called for a synthesis capable of accommodating the merits of modernisation/structure-centred and transition/agency-centred approaches.<sup>9</sup>

Rather than developing a synthesis that goes beyond the structure-agency dichotomy or which incorporates useful elements from existing explanations, the public culture approach developed in this thesis provides a different perspective. The public culture

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<sup>8</sup> G. A. Almond, 1973, 'Approaches to Development Causation', in G. A. Almond et al (eds.), *Crisis, Choice, and Change: Historical Studies of Political Development*.

<sup>9</sup> For example, Wu Nai-teh, 1989, 'Searching for the Causes of Democratization: A Review Essay', *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1989 Spring, pp. 145-61; Wu Nai-teh, 1999, 'The Role of Human Spirit in Historical Change: The Formosa Incident and Taiwan's Democratisation', paper presented at the 'Towards the 21st century Taiwanese nation and state' conference in Taipei; Wu Wen-cheng, 1995, 'A theoretical discussion of the analytical frameworks for the studies of Taiwan's political transformation', *The Soochow Journal of Political Studies*, vol. 4, 1995, pp. 135-84; David Potter, 1997, 'Democratization at the same time in South Korea and Taiwan', *Democratization*.

approach rejects the economic determinism of modernisation theory and the elitism of transition theory, but retains the structural analysis typical of the former and attention to the role of elite actors in regime change and the historical contingency that characterise the latter. Central to this approach are publicly articulated ideological discourses and their sociopolitical implications for political development.

As mentioned in the Introduction, since the end of the Second World War, liberalism, nationalism and welfarism have been the key discourses imbuing the political identities and imagination of people in Taiwan and moulding the island's political evolution. Viewed from the perspective of public culture, mainstream modernisation and transition theories have failed to explain Taiwan's political development on three main fronts. Firstly, they fail to acknowledge the twin postwar development of liberalism and nationalism in Taiwan, primarily because modernisation theory sets itself up as 'universal', preventing modernisation theorists from investigating the particular history of the society in question. Scholars thus failed to grasp the importance of 'nationalism', both an obstacle to and the driving force of postwar Taiwan's democratic transformation at different historical moments over the past five decades. This persisted until the early 1990s, when the subject of 'consolidating the third wave democracies' became one of the central concerns of comparative political scientists. Here, 'ethnic cleavage' or the 'identity issue' is widely considered to be the major challenge or obstacle to the consolidation of Taiwan's liberal democracy.

Secondly and relatedly, scholars neglect the consistent concern for welfare in postwar Taiwan and its sociopolitical consequences. Critics who are suspicious of the KMT's

contribution to Taiwan's welfare development might dispute the notion that welfare has ever been an ongoing priority, given that Taiwan has been falling behind northern and western European welfare capitalist states in terms of both the comprehensiveness of provision and universality of coverage of social welfare. 'Economy first' has remained the priority within Taiwan's development programme as well as the dominant discourse in public debate. It is moreover argued that Taiwan's welfare system tends to reflect the government's desire to demonstrate its goodwill, rather than genuine concern for welfare rights.<sup>11</sup> This interpretation of the government's or politicians' motivations, namely the desire to gain legitimacy, attract votes and consolidate power, does not however change the fact that the state has invested in public health, public education and social insurance. In short, public welfare as an idea or principle of social policy, and the ideology of welfarism, have been unduly neglected in most scholarship on Taiwan's political development.

Finally, but importantly, scholars pay far too little attention to Taiwan's state-led or state-guided development in relation to the ideology of the developmental state. Although the elitist approaches in the field of comparative politics do account for the role of state, in most existing literature on Taiwan's development, the role of state, in terms of its contribution to the creation of socioeconomic conditions conducive to Taiwan's democratic development, however has been relatively neglected. This can be explained by the wide reception and popularity of neoclassic economic theories and liberal theories of society and politics that treat both realms of human activities as market places. This academic phenomenon in turn has to be appreciated in the political

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<sup>11</sup> Ku Yeun-wen, 1997, *Welfare Capitalism in Taiwan*, p. 236.



context of authoritarianism and the intellectual context of liberal capitalist democracy in Taiwan, as well as the broad historical context of the Chinese civil war and Cold War.

The accounts provided from these perspectives, which are greatly influenced by the classic liberal view of state-society antagonism, attribute Taiwan's democratic transformation almost solely to the emergence of the middle-class as Taiwan's economy has prospered, and the sociopolitical oppositional movements led by this class. The predominance of the discourse of civil society within the tradition of classical liberalism in Taiwan in the late 1980s reflects such accounts of Taiwan's political transformation.<sup>12</sup> Unsurprisingly, for liberal critics, the authoritarian KMT state is and indeed should be the prime target for transformation if Taiwan is to be democratised. Its role in creating socioeconomic conditions conducive to Taiwan's democratisation, especially the development of human capital and the existence of a relatively equitable society, has however been inadequately covered in their accounts.

While taking into consideration the importance of human capital in material and human production and reproduction – public education and medical care, relative equity and security<sup>13</sup> – and in laying a strong foundation for social capital,<sup>14</sup> they nonetheless

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<sup>12</sup> Scholars and political commentators invoked the notion of civil society in public debates to explain and evaluate Taiwan's political liberalisation and democratisation. Central to the concept, as commonly articulated in the Taiwanese context, is society-state antagonism. Accordingly, social movements are misleadingly conceived of as 'anti-state movements'. For not every demonstration or social movement is directed against the state apparatus; many protests focus on the injustice of specific public policies.

<sup>13</sup> Lin Chun, 2001, 'Defining and Defending the "Social": a Chinese Tale', *Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Studies* 33, 2001, p. 59.

<sup>14</sup> Social capital refers to the vitality of civic and associational engagement, which is crucial to democratic politics. Amongst the earliest pioneers of the term were community reformers such as Hanifan, who wrote about the importance of social capital in explaining successful schools, the urbanist Jane Jacobs, the economist Glenn Loury and the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. More recently, the popularity of the concept can be accredited to three theorists, James Coleman, Robert Putnam and F. Fukuyama. See Blakeley, 2001, 'Social Capital', pp. 198-200. Putnam has advanced the idea of social

misleadingly attribute Taiwan's remarkable achievement to the efficiency of the free market and massive economic aid from the United States. This is not to say that these two factors are of no importance in explaining Taiwan's political development, but rather to challenge the 'free market fundamentalism' of neo-classical theory and to suggest that the impact of American economic aid might have been exaggerated. The extraordinary economic and military aid from the United States in the 1950s, provided primarily as a result of the strategic relationship between Taiwan and the United States in an anti-communist context, was surely critical to initial capital formation in Taiwan.<sup>15</sup> However, contrary to common belief, the cumulative contribution of foreign capital, including foreign aid, between 1952 and 1990, amounted to less than 10 percent of total investment.<sup>16</sup> Aid and investment from overseas Chinese also helped, as well as the fact that the KMT had brought China's gold reserves along in 1949.<sup>17</sup>

The notion of the 'developmental state'<sup>18</sup> and the related 'East Asian Model' of economic development<sup>19</sup> directly challenge the market fundamentalism of neoclassical

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capital in his famous book on democracy, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (1993). His later book *Bowling Alone* (2000) critically examines the declining social capital in America. *Democracy in Flux* (2002), a collection of essays edited by Putnam, provides accounts of the evolution of contemporary society from the perspective of social capital.

<sup>15</sup> David Potter, 1997, 'Democratization at the same time in South Korea and Taiwan', *Democratization*; Gustav Ranis, 2002, 'Lessons from Taiwan's Performance: Neither Miracle nor Crisis', *Taiwan in the global economy: from an agrarian economy to an exporter of high-tech products*, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup> Gustav Ranis, 1999, 'Reflections on the Economics and the Political Economy of Development at the Turn of the Century', in Gustav Ranis et al (eds.), *The Political Economy of Taiwan's Development into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, p. 14.

<sup>17</sup> David Potter, 1997, p. 225.

<sup>18</sup> Leftwich defined a developmental state as possessing six main components: 1. A determined developmental elite; 2. A powerful, competent and insulated economic bureaucracy; 3. The effective management of non-state economic interests; 4. Relative autonomy; 5. A weak and subordinated civil society; 6. Repression, legitimacy and performance (Leftwich, 1995, 'Bringing politics back in: towards a model of the developmental state', *Journal of Development Studies*, vol. 31, no. 3, pp. 400-27)

<sup>19</sup> Both Alice Amsden (1985, 'The State and Taiwan's Economic Development', in P. Evens et al (eds.) *Bringing the State Back In*) and Robert Wade (1990, *Governing the Market*) emphasise the role of state intervention and regulation in Taiwan's remarkable economic development. Here, the explanation of the 'East Asian Model' of development is characterised by its emphasis on state involvement, as opposed to the neo-liberal orthodoxy, which acclaims the East Asian miracle as vivid proof of the virtues of market

economic theory, or in Johnson's terms, the 'market-rational economy' of orthodox capitalist theory, as extolled by the United States and the United Kingdom.<sup>20</sup> At the beginning of the 1960s, Taiwan was moving towards an economic strategy of export-oriented capitalist development under the direction of its developmental state. 'By using a battery of policy instruments covering conditionality ... screening and monitoring of foreign capital', Taiwan has 'given a virtuoso performance'<sup>21</sup> in setting terms which have attracted foreign capital while making it serve the state's domestic economic development priorities. As for private internal economic institutions, 'the state has been active in promoting, pushing, persuading and manipulating these interests in directions which conform to its development strategy'.<sup>22</sup>

While criticisms of the 'non-democratic' nature and overwhelming power of the Taiwanese developmental state, primarily from the liberal democratic perspective, are legitimate, they pay insufficient attention to the role of this interventionist state in creating socioeconomic conditions, characterised by 'growth with equity', conducive to Taiwan's political democratisation. They therefore present a partial if not biased account of Taiwan's political development. To elucidate Taiwan's rapid and equitable development, it is crucial to take into account the three-step land reform implemented

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competition.

<sup>20</sup> Chalmers Johnson expanded upon the dichotomy between so-called plan-rational and market-rational economies, which dominated Cold War ideological debate, to include another basic prototype: the plan-rational market economy, neither socialist nor Anglo-American capitalist in orientation or operation. The notion was first formulated by Johnson to describe Japan's state-guided but privately owned economic system and to explain its post-World War Two advance to the rank of the world's second most productive economy. The main principles and institutions of Japan's economic achievement were duplicated in South Korea and Taiwan. See Johnson, 2001, 'Japanese "Capitalism" Revisited', *Thesis Eleven*, No. 66, 2001.

<sup>21</sup> Chalmers Johnson, 1987, 'Political institutions and economic performance: the government-business relationship in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan' in F. Deyo (ed.), *The Political Economy of the New Asian Industrialism*, p. 163.

<sup>22</sup> Alice Amsden, 1989, cited in A. Leftwich, 1995, p. 417.

between 1949 and 1953 and steady change in industrial policy from the 1950s onwards, from the import substitution phase in the 1950s and early 1960s, to an export orientation phase, and concluding with a science and technology-orientated phase beginning in the 1980s.<sup>23</sup> Taiwan's land reforms, moreover, followed Japanese colonial land reforms in 1905. 'Together', as Ranis pointed out, 'they led to an unusually equal distribution of land and proved instrumentally helpful not only in terms of agricultural productivity increases, but also in terms of a redistribution in favor of the lower-income groups'.<sup>24</sup>

Taiwan's experience demonstrates the importance of state capacity and its 'relative autonomy'<sup>25</sup> in achieving rapid and at the same time equitable development. The fact that, unlike most other developing countries in Latin American and Eastern Europe, Taiwan's political opening was neither triggered by any major socioeconomic crisis nor accompanied by popular demands for major socioeconomic reforms,<sup>26</sup> is not only proof of the success of its 'growth with equality', but also accounts for its steady and 'less bloody' democratic transformation.

What should be noted, however, is that drawing attention to the active role of state in Taiwan's development is not intended to 'romanticise' state or make a case for any notion of 'strong state, weak society'. Rather, the implication of Taiwan's experience is

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<sup>23</sup> Gustav Ranis, 2002, p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>25</sup> The 'relative autonomy' of the developmental state is embodied in its independence of class and other interest groups. Some of these benefit more than others from state economic policies, but none controls the state (see, Potter, 1997, p. 226). The idea of 'state capacity' is emphasised to demystify the so-called 'market mythology'.

<sup>26</sup> This, along with four other aspects, is viewed by Chu Yun-han as distinguishing Taiwan's democratic transition from the experiences of other countries facing crises of authoritarianism and concurrent movement towards democracy (see Chu, 1996, 'Taiwan's Unique Challenges').

merely, yet significantly, this: the realisation of political democracy and social justice, which have alternated as the dominant themes in political philosophy yet rarely been held in joint focus over the last fifty years or so, or the achievement of freedom and equality, the central values within contemporary political theory,<sup>27</sup> are more likely in a context of 'strong state and strong society'. In this scenario, the existence of strong state is justified not by the pursuit of state interests and power *per se* but the demand of the society for realising social goods. After all, the historical trajectory of Taiwan's postwar political development is characteristic of public resistances against the repressive, authoritarian and unjust state. Indeed, as will be discussed shortly, at critical historical moments, public culture represents a resistance culture of the public that is aimed to challenge and eventually transform or conquer the state.

### **The Perspective of Public Culture**

Taiwan teaches us that comparative studies on political development can advance theoretically if they avoid the demerits of existing theories and take particular histories very seriously. The conception of public culture, elaborated in detail below, thus allows space for an open-ended and ongoing interaction between evidence and concept pertaining to particular histories. It is believed in this thesis that by undertaking a research that pays due or sufficient attention to 'the particular time, setting and choice', as Katznelson has suggested, can provide us with a better understanding of Taiwan's postwar political development.

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<sup>27</sup> See a collection of essays on the subject edited by Keith Dowding et al, *Justice and Democracy* (2004) for discussion of the conjunction, intersection and interaction of these two central values in contemporary political theory.

Public culture is indispensable to the study of political development not because it is a synthesis accommodating all the merits of mainstream modernisation and transition approaches – although it does retain the structural analysis of the former and focus on the role of elite actors in regime change as well as historical contingency of the latter. The public culture perspective draws attention to the importance of political ideology and its implications for political development and its study. Its core concerns are the conditions, characteristics, consequences of public deliberation and those who take part in it. Before discussing the concept, it is vital to underline that rather than aiming to replace all other existing approaches to explaining Taiwan's political development, the public culture approach is meant to fill the gap they create or left unbridged in accounting for that development.

### *Defining Public Culture*

Defining the conception of public culture necessarily entails a critical discussion of the existing concepts deployed to illuminate the cultural aspects of political development and social transformation, however 'cultural' may be understood within them. It is therefore essential to distinguish the concept of public culture, as defined and used in this research, from other types of culture, such as civic culture, common culture, political culture and 'public culture' used differently by other authors. Whilst civic culture and common culture are relatively easily distinguishable from public culture, political culture and public culture are different yet related concepts.

### Public Culture and Civic Culture

Civic culture, as widely understood and used in mainstream comparative political studies, refers to the 'political culture of a stable democracy'. The discourse of civic

culture in this field has been greatly influenced by Almond and Verba's empirical study on five nations in the aftermath of the Second World War, *The Civic Culture*.<sup>29</sup> Their study was intended to explore the relationship between political culture and democratic stability. Political culture was measured by investigating the political knowledge and skills of citizens and their feelings and value orientations towards political objects and processes by means of survey techniques.

The result of the survey was said to be in line with the wisdom of the ancient political philosophers: a 'mixed government/middle-class-predominant polity' characterised by the 'balanced disparities' of civic culture was claimed to be most conducive to a stable democracy. The key to attaining democratic stability, according to this mixed government model, is a mixture or balance between participant and deferential or acquiescent attitudes; between a consensus on the rules of the game and disagreement on specific issues; between commitment and pragmatism.<sup>30</sup> In short, the model is characterised by the coexistence of both active citizenship/political participation and passive citizenship/political apathy.<sup>31</sup>

The civic culture literature has been criticised from various perspectives. Some criticisms focus on the relationship between political culture and political structure presupposed in the study's structure of inference. For instance, Lijphart has questioned

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<sup>29</sup> Almond and Verba investigated the cases of Britain, America, Germany, Italy and Mexico, presenting the first two nations as the models of 'Civic Culture' (Almond and Verba, 1963, *The Civic Culture*).

<sup>30</sup> Dennis Kavanagh, 1989, 'Political Culture in Great Britain: The Decline of the Civic Culture', in G. A. Almond and Sidney Verba (eds.), *The Civic Culture Revisited*, p. 125.

<sup>31</sup> As Almond has stated: 'Indeed, by itself this participant-rationalist model of citizenship could not logically sustain a *stable* democratic government. Only when combined in some sense with its opposites of passivity, trust, and deference to authority and competence was a viable, stable democracy possible' (Almond, 1989, 'The Intellectual History of the Civic Culture Concept', *The Civic Culture Revisited*, p. 16).

whether political culture can be treated as an independent variable. Some, for example Pateman, challenge the misleading identification of existing liberal democratic systems – that is, liberal representative government plus universal suffrage – with democracy. She made this criticism from the perspective of participatory democracy, arguing that, in contrast to the idea of ‘balanced disparities’ prescribed in the ‘mixed government model’ promoted by Almond and Verba, democracy requires active participation.<sup>32</sup>

Public culture is therefore a different concept to civic culture in that, in line with Pateman’s argument, it views active participation as essential to any conception of democracy. Yet public culture, understood as the process of public deliberation, does not have to be democratic in the sense that ‘democracy’ could be one of many other social goods, such as justice, decided collectively by the public in this process. Different preoccupations of the society in question at different times in history to a large extent determine the public decision on social goods and their priorities.

### Public Culture and Common Culture

Common culture, as formulated by Raymond Williams, a prominent figure within the British New Left, refers to the culture of a community, the way of life or the tradition of a people. Central to his idea of common culture is the assertion that culture is ordinary, meaning that there is no special class, or group of people, who dominate the creation of meanings and values.<sup>33</sup> Common culture is therefore considered to be a collective

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<sup>32</sup> For these methodological and philosophical critiques, see Lijphart’s ‘The Structure of Inference’ (1989) and Carole Pateman’s ‘The Civic Culture: A Philosophic Critique’ (1989). Both appear in *The Civic Culture Revisited*.

<sup>33</sup> See Raymond Williams, 1989a, ‘Culture is Ordinary’, *Resources of Hope*, pp. 3-17.



achievement, the realisation of which would be impossible without a common historical inheritance (traditional culture). Crucial to this common culture of democratic nature is the interrelation between true communication and the community, which establish common ground for a way of life. Williams highlights common culture to problematise descriptions of 'bourgeois culture' and the manufacturing of an 'artificial working-class culture' and to challenge the economic determinist's reductionist interpretation of Marxism. In the Marxist view, culture is considered to belong to the 'ideological superstructure'. This 'superstructure' is generally believed to be directly determined by the economic base.

Public culture thus differs from Williams' idea of common culture in two ways: firstly and straightforwardly, whilst common culture refers to collectively preserved or created tradition of a community or people, central to the conception of public culture is the process of public deliberation, in which political ideas are debated. Secondly, as an analytical framework, public culture probes into both cultural and politico-economic factors and analyses political discourses in context, tracing both historical and intellectual threads. As a perspective of explaining political development, it emphasises the role of political ideas, political education and socialisation, and political economy as well in explaining historical development and change.

### Public Culture and Political Culture

Political culture, as noted above, is different from yet related to the concept of public

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<sup>34</sup> See Raymond Williams, 1989b, 'Communications and Community', *Resources of Hope*, pp. 19-31. True communication, as Williams understands it, is similar to Habermas' notion of the 'ideal speech situation', a process of public communication not distorted by economic and political power, in which equal and democratic participation is guaranteed.

<sup>35</sup> See Lin Chun, 1993, *The British New Left*, p. 41.

culture. The concept of political culture is claimed in the mainstream literature on political development to be intended to elucidate how democratic values and modern political institutions can be most readily transferred to new environments, such as the new sovereign states in the post-Second World War context.<sup>36</sup> The understanding of political culture in most existing literature on political development derives from Almond's observation that: 'Every political system is embedded in a particular pattern of orientation to political actions'.<sup>37</sup> That is, in any operative political system there is an ordered subjective realm of politics that gives meaning to the polity, discipline to institutions, and social relevance to individual acts. Almond referred to this particular pattern of orientation to political actions' as the political culture.

Based on Almond's definition, Pye and Verba developed an analytical framework of political culture to study political development. According to Pye, the concept of political culture suggests that:

[The] traditions of a society, the spirit of its public institutions, the passions and the collective reasoning of its citizenry, and the style and operating codes of its leaders are not just random products of historical experience but fit together as a part of a meaningful whole and constitute an intelligible web of relations.<sup>38</sup>

Political culture, in short, 'consists of the system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols, and values which defines the situation in which political action takes place'.<sup>39</sup>

Political beliefs constitute the core of a political culture. As indicated in Verba's discussion of the homogeneity of culture, political culture is thus seen as the

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<sup>36</sup> Lucian Pye, 1966, 'Introduction', *Political Culture and Political Development*, p. 5.

<sup>37</sup> G. A. Almond, 1956, 'Comparative Political Systems', *Journal of Politics*, 18, p. 396.

<sup>38</sup> Lucian Pye, 'Introduction', *Political Culture and Political Development*, p. 7.

<sup>39</sup> Sidney Verba, 1966, 'Comparative Political Culture', *Political Culture and Political Development*, p.

embodiment of the political beliefs shared by a people or all members of a political system.<sup>40</sup> Power holders have one set of political beliefs and the masses another. Political culture is thus divided into 'elite political culture' and 'mass political culture'.

Most relevant to our discussion is how 'political ideology' is perceived and treated in the political culture approach. The debate over the stability and changeability of political culture is central here. Almond, Pye and Verba all argue that political culture is *stable* and *durable*. Political culture, defined as a system of political beliefs, is accordingly thought to be a stabilising element of political systems. As Verba argues, 'they may motivate the actors in a political system to resist change in the name of traditional beliefs or they may lead to fundamental modification of innovative institutions so that they fit the traditional culture'.<sup>41</sup>

Verba argues that changeability is a critical question for the elites of developing nations facing the possibility of democratisation.<sup>42</sup> Contrary to the stabilising function of political culture for the operation of a political system, political ideology is said to 'arise when one wants to create a political system that is not supported by the implicit primitive beliefs of the population'.<sup>43</sup> Political culture here, implies Swidler, serves as an 'ideology' which guides the direction of change and ways of achieving it.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> 'The focus on political *culture* rather than political *attitudes*' Verba argues, 'implies a concentration upon the attitudes held by all members of a political system rather than upon the attitudes held by individuals or particular categories of individuals' (Verba, 1966, pp. 525-6, emphasis original).

<sup>41</sup> Verba, 1960, p. 519. Verba however also points out the possibility of cultural change. For although fundamental political beliefs may be closely connected with the maintenance of existing patterns of politics, not all political cultures are well integrated and consistent, and may thus generate change (ibid., p.520).

<sup>42</sup> See Verba, 1960, p. 520.

<sup>43</sup> See Verba, ibid., p. 546.

<sup>44</sup> Swidler identifies two senses of 'culture': culture during periods of 'settled lives' or ordinary periods and culture during periods of 'unsettled lives' or social transformation. The second sense of culture serves as political ideology, which guides the direction and types of change (Swidler, 1986, p. 282).

In its analysis of political development, public culture, defined primarily as the process of public deliberation in which political ideologies are articulated and debated, is in a way designed to include both the idea of 'political ideology' and the concept of 'political culture'. Political culture as understood in the perspective of public culture is similar to Taylor's notion of 'background or common understanding' in his explanation of 'modern social imaginaries'.<sup>45</sup> It is thus crucial to our understanding of public culture. This involves 'common understanding', which not only makes possible common practices and a widely shared sense of legitimacy, but also influences if not determines how the public identify and perceive problems and the action they can and should take to deal with them. More importantly, what is emphasised in the perspective of public culture is that such common understanding can only be obtained through public deliberation or 'true communication' in Williams' terms.

Public culture is therefore related to political culture because one of its conceptual elements is 'background understanding'. Yet it is distinct from political culture. They are different in that whereas political culture suggests the 'microanalysis' of the aggregation of individual political cognitions, beliefs, preferences and evaluations, public culture implies the 'macroanalysis' of a process of public deliberation in which individual opinions and preferences are transformed and refined and public consensus is achieved. This is similar to John Rawls' 'public reason' although he did not stress

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<sup>45</sup> Understanding social imaginaries requires grappling with how ordinary people imagine their social existence or surroundings, how they relate to others, how things proceed between people, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images underlying these expectations. In his book *Modern Social Imaginaries* (2004), Taylor draws heavily on Benedict Anderson's pioneering work *Imagined Communities* as well as the work of Jürgen Habermas, especially his idea of the public sphere, to develop his notion of social imaginaries, intended to explain the process of social change and its consequences. The aim of his book, however, is to sketch the forms of social imaginary that have underpinned the rise of Western modernity.

deliberation when elaborating this concept.

Public reason, as Rawls defines it, refers to the most basic moral and political values that determine a constitutional, democratic government's relationship with its citizens and the relations among these citizens. In short, it concerns how political relations are to be understood.<sup>46</sup> Such reason is public in three ways: as the reason of free and equal citizens, it is the reason of the public. Its subject is the public good, concerning questions of fundamental political justice of two kinds: constitutional essentials and matters of basic justice. Finally, its nature and content are public, expressed in public reasoning by a family of reasonable conceptions of political justice reasonably thought to satisfy the criterion of reciprocity.<sup>47</sup>

In brief, as a normative ideal, public reason is meant to apply to citizens when they engage in political advocacy in a public forum and vote on issues concerning 'constitutional essentials and matters of basic structure'.<sup>48</sup> Public reason is a 'political conception of justice'. Accordingly, it can be seen as the public norms developed or democratic consensus reached in public deliberation. It embodies the popular will. It is in this sense that public culture can be seen as a normative concept. For one essential element of public culture is public deliberation, similar to Rawls' public reasoning, without which the formation of public opinion or general will, as argued above, is impossible. However, this understanding of public culture/public reason implies that its normativity is context-bound. This is not, however, to argue for a 'provincialist' or 'particularist' as opposed to universalist conception of public culture. Rather, the

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<sup>46</sup> John Rawls, 1999, 'The Idea of Public Reason Revisited', *Law of Peoples*, p. 132.

<sup>47</sup> John Rawls, 1999, 'The Idea of Public Reason Revisited', *Law of Peoples*, p. 133.

<sup>48</sup> John Rawls, 1993, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 215-6.

conception of public culture deployed in the present work points to a ‘universal theory’ of human development sensitive to particular histories, as in Amin’s advocacy of ‘a truly universal culture’.<sup>49</sup>

### Different Conceptions of Public Culture

The conception of public culture has been formulated and applied in different disciplinary areas, including political theory, cultural studies and nationalism. Liberal political philosopher John Rawls sees ‘the fact of pluralism’, that is, the fact of ‘the diversity of comprehensive religious, philosophical and moral doctrines found in modern democratic societies’, not as a mere historical condition that may soon pass away but ‘a permanent feature of the public culture of democracy’.<sup>50</sup> Public culture as Rawls uses it thus refers to the specific political culture of (American) liberal democracy. For although Rawls abandons comprehensive liberalism as a worldview, that is, as the ideal life for individuals and communities, his theory of purely political liberalism still prescribes liberal principles of justice for the basic structure of society.<sup>51</sup>

In *Public Culture*, a journal devoted to ‘transnational cultural studies’, public culture is understood as ‘the cultural form of the public’. The term emerged not from the

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<sup>49</sup> Samir Amin, 1989, *Eurocentrism*, pp. 136-52. Amin argues that Eurocentrism is a specifically modern phenomenon, the roots of which go back only to the Renaissance and which flourished only in the nineteenth century. In this sense, he states, it constitutes one dimension of the culture and ideology of the modern capitalist world. Amin discusses a pluralist view of human development in a universal theory of culture. He claims that Eurocentrism is a culturalist phenomenon in that it assumes the existence of irreducibly distinct cultural invariants that shape the historical paths of different people. Eurocentrism is therefore anti-universalist, since it is not interested in seeking possible general laws of human evolution. But it does present itself as universalist, for it claims that imitation of the Western model by all peoples is the only solution to the challenges of our time (Amin, 1989, p. vii). To develop a truly universal culture and a theory for understanding it, Amin suggests first challenging the culturalist philosophy of history that imbues Eurocentrism (*ibid.*, p. 136).

<sup>50</sup> John Rawls, 1989, ‘The Domain of the Political and Overlapping Consensus’, *New York University Law Review*, 64, pp. 234-5. Cf. John Rawls, 1993, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 216-7.

<sup>51</sup> See John Gray, 1997, ‘Rawls’ Anti-political Liberalism’, *Endgames*, pp. 51-4.

‘contradictions of theory as did British Cultural Studies’ but grew out of ‘an impasse in area studies’ in American academia. Some scholars wished to generate a ‘post-Orientalist area studies of the present that could think broadly global cultural forms and circuits’. This was also intended to ‘unsettle’ and interrogate four then-conventionalised sets of binaries: tradition and modernity; high and low culture; the humanities and the social sciences; and (less conventionalised) area and cultural studies.<sup>52</sup> Clearly, ‘public reason’, arrived at through public discussion, is essential to the idea of public culture defined as the process of public deliberation in which ‘the public’ is a normative concept. In the journal *Public Culture* or the so-called ‘area-studies-of-the-present’, ‘the public’ is equated with ‘the local’ as opposed to ‘the global’ without much emphasis on its normative connotations.

In contrast to the cases above, the literature on nationalism, specifically the writings of Anthony Smith, a leading figure in the school of ‘ethno-symbolism’ or ethno-cultural nationalism, defines ‘the nation’ and ‘nationalism’ as a form of public culture. Nation and nationalism are therefore based on (cultural) ‘authenticity’ and are ‘open in principle to all members of the community, or all the citizens of the “national state”’.<sup>53</sup> In short, public culture here refers to ‘collective cultural identities’ essential to national identity. As far as theorising nationalism is concerned, what should be noted, as Smith has clarified, is that the demand for public culture, understood as collective cultural identity and required for the formation of national identity, should not be mistaken for the pursuit of ‘cultural homogeneity’.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> See Carol A. Breckenridge, 1999, ‘Editor’s comment on querying alternativity’, *Public Culture*, 1999, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. viii-ix.

<sup>53</sup> Anthony D. Smith, 1998, *Nationalism*, p. 35.

<sup>54</sup> Anthony D. Smith, 1995, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, p. 151.

The conception of public culture in this research is centred on the process of public deliberation, its prerequisites, consequences, participants and consequences. It can be clearly distinguished from the conception of public culture in Rawls' theory of political liberalism (the fact of pluralism as the public culture of democracies), in the journal of transnational cultural studies, *Public Culture* (public culture as the cultural forms of the public/local) and Smith's ethno-symbolism/cultural nationalism (nationalism as a form of public culture). In short, the conception of public culture here differs from these others because it refers to a discursive and communication 'process' instead of a specific 'cultural form' or 'form of culture'.

#### *The Elements/Dimensions of Public Culture*

Public culture is the process of public deliberation in which public intellectuals as well as the general public are engaged, public consciousness is formed and contested, and public consensus is arrived at. Public intellectuals, public consciousness, public education and public deliberation are therefore the chief dimensions and fundamental elements of public culture. The term 'public intellectuals' means those scholars/intellectuals who are concerned with pressing public issues and speak beyond the academy to the general public by participating in public deliberation. The engagement of public intellectuals in public deliberation primarily involves the generation of new ideas, initiating public debate and arousing public consciousness or awareness.

It should be noted that 'intellectuals' can be seen as agents for change IF such changes do happen and can be attributed to their work, as the case of Taiwan's political development demonstrates. For the term 'historical agents' makes sense only in a



moving 'history' of significant events. Therefore not all the cultural giants can/should be seen as agents of history. Crucial to the role of public intellectuals as the agents of historical change is their concern to build and strengthen self-cultivating publics. As Mills has argued, the power elite may be persuaded, but only through the active deliberation of a critical public.<sup>55</sup> Public consciousness-raising is thus a process of democratic education by means of public deliberation. The very process of public discussion encourages sensitivity to the public interest. For those anxious about the elitism involved in making public intellectuals the bearers of public culture, Mills' idea of the democratic public shifts the intellectual away from a vanguard role.

Studies of Taiwan's political development have tended to neglect the role of the public intellectual. Too much emphasis has been placed on the middle classes and political elites. Yet, as the discussion in the following chapters brings out, it was intellectuals' public articulation, debating and promotion of the ideas central to liberalism, nationalism and welfarism – freedom, democracy, constitutionalism, human rights and social justice – that ultimately raised public consciousness, initiated 'movement of ideas' and forged the social forces that brought pressure to bear upon the government. In the history of the Taiwanese liberal movement for example, the *Free China* bimonthly in the 1950s, the *Literature Star* in the 1960s, *The Intellectual* in the 1970s and dissident political magazines published by the Dangwai group in the 1980s all contributed to political liberalisation and democratisation in Taiwan. In short, important and influential journals/debates did collectively make contribution to Taiwan's political development.

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<sup>55</sup> See C. Wright Mills, 1959, *The Sociological Imagination*, pp. 180-1.

Related to the aforementioned notion of the 'democratic public' is the idea of 'public deliberation as public education', referring to the potential of public debate to transform the preferences of individual participants. The potential of rational public deliberation to 'transform preferences' and the importance of this process to arriving at a meaningful democratic consensus have been the primary concerns of deliberative democrats. The practices of liberal democracies that focus on voting or electoral politics have been criticised for creating 'civic privatism', associated with widespread political apathy and political alienation. For Offe and Preuss, the worrying result of civic privatism in the American tradition is the emergence of a polity built around the ideal of the free pursuit of 'individual happiness'.<sup>56</sup> The term 'civic privatism' thus attempts to capture how escalating appeals to conflicting private interests in the voting ritual of the 'secret ballot' have slowly eroded the very idea that citizens should be trying to regulate fractional interests for the common good.<sup>57</sup> Mills once said: 'If we accept the Greek's definition of the idiot as an altogether private man, then we must conclude that many citizens of many societies are indeed idiots'.<sup>58</sup>

In light of the negative sociopolitical consequences of 'civic privatism', public deliberation has been seen as significant in transforming the uninformed and self-interested into more active citizens with greater sensitivity to the collective

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<sup>56</sup> Claus Offe & Ulrich K. Preuss, 1991, 'Democratic Institutions and Moral Resources', in David Held (ed.), *Political Theory Today*, p. 152. They argue that: 'Whatever collective notions of happiness, salvation, or the realisation of any particular group's destiny or potential may prevail, they are neither defined nor implemented through the political process, but through the associative action within civil society. The public interest or collective good is thus no more than the secure enjoyment of individual good by each and every citizen'. 'Political process' means a public process in which individual interests and political preferences are negotiated and contested by citizens through discussion and debate. According to this understanding of political process, secret ballots per se, unless practised in a 'social context' that encourages public discussion on the part of every voter, cannot be considered a political process.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*, p. 7.

well-being. As Ackerman and Fishkin rightly point out, good government does not require a hyperactive citizenry, but neither can it thrive in a narrowly privatistic world.<sup>59</sup> The key to this transforming process, *qua* public deliberation, is that citizens adopt a multi-perspectival mode of forming, defending and thereby refining their preferences, which in the liberal democratic model are regarded as predetermined or fixed. In contrast to the notion of 'fixed preferences', deliberative democratic theories stress the formulation of carefully considered, consistent, socially validated and justifiable preferences. Preference here is characterised by its reflexivity.<sup>60</sup> As far as the relationship between public deliberation and democracy is concerned, what is fundamental yet more important, according to Habermas, is that the formation of public opinion or general will is simply not possible without public deliberation.<sup>61</sup>

Having recognised the importance of public deliberation for a well-functioning democracy, empirical democratic theorists have undertaken extensive experimental studies which have established that public discussions do indeed influence the formation and transformation of individual preference.<sup>62</sup> In Taiwan, experiments

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<sup>58</sup> C. Wright Mills, 1959, *The Sociological Imagination*, p. 41.

<sup>59</sup> Ackerman and Fishkin, 2001, 'Deliberation Day', James S. Fishkin and Peter Laslett (eds.), *Debating Deliberative Democracy*, p. 8.

<sup>60</sup> Seyla Benhabib, 1996, 'Toward a Deliberative Model of Democratic Legitimacy', *Democracy and Difference*, Seyla Benhabib (ed.), pp. 71-2. In this article Benhabib describes what is involved in articulating a view in public: 'The very procedure of articulating a view in public imposes a certain reflexivity on individual preferences and opinions. When presenting their point of view and position to others, individuals must support them by articulating good reasons in a public context to their co-deliberators. This process of articulating good reasons in public forces the individual to think of what would count as a good reason' (Benhabib, 1996, pp. 71-2).

<sup>61</sup> See Habermas' works on public sphere and its implications for the theory of democracy, primarily *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989), *Legitimation Crisis* (1975), *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action* (1990) and 'Towards a Communication Concept of Rational Collective Will-Formation' (1989).

<sup>62</sup> For example, Sheri Frost and Denis Makarov present the result of their experiment on public deliberation in the article 'Changing Post-Totalitarian Values in Russia through Public Deliberation Methodology' (1998, *PSOnline: December 1998*, [www.apsanet.org](http://www.apsanet.org)), making several important points.

inspired by the idea of deliberative democracy have been carried out in recent years with a view both to encouraging mutual understanding through dialogue among people with clashing views on the issue of national identity, that is, reunification versus independence, and to engaging the general public in debates on policy.<sup>63</sup> Public deliberation thus implies ‘a learning process that aims not at some preconceived standard of rationality, but at an open-ended and continuous learning process in which the roles of both “teacher” and “curriculum” are missing’. That is, ‘what is to be learned is a matter that we must settle in the process of learning itself’.<sup>64</sup> Public deliberation is in this sense a process of public education.

From a normative perspective, public deliberation, as many deliberative democratic

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First, typically participants had not contemplated the issue of public participation prior to attending the forum; once they were asked to consider it, their awareness of many political issues developed rapidly. Secondly, generally participants expressed their political views, sympathies, and preferences with more clarity and sophistication as the forum proceeded. Finally, participants’ discussions ranged far beyond the general categories of totalitarian, transitional, and democratic provided as examples of political cultural orientations. Bruce Ackerman and James S. Fishkin proposed a research project on ‘Deliberative Polling’ (Ackerman and Fishkin, 2001, ‘Deliberation Day’, *Debating Deliberative Democracy*). This project imagined a new national holiday – Deliberation Day, held one week before major national elections. Registered voters would be called together in neighbourhood meeting places, in small groups of 15, and larger groups of 500, to discuss the central issues raised by the campaign. Each deliberator would be paid \$150 for the day’s work of citizenship, on condition that he or she shows up at the polls the next week. All other work, except the most essential, would be prohibited by law (Ackerman and Fishkin, 2001, p. 7). John Dryzek, in his article ‘Pluralism and consensus in political deliberation’ (presented to the Political Theory Workshop at LSE, October 2004), explores the issue of political legitimacy by investigating the relationship between pluralism and consensus in political deliberation. He conducted an experiment on public deliberation relating to the Bloomfield Track project in the World Heritage Rainforest in northern Australia. The results show that although no causal relationships can be established between consensus and political deliberation, deliberation does transform individual opinions and preferences. See also the newly published work by Fishkin et al, *Deliberation Day* (2004).

<sup>63</sup> Group discussions have been organised by a Taiwanese NGO, the Peacetime Foundation of Taiwan, primarily to advance ‘ethnic reconciliation’ and a peaceful solution to cross-Strait problems. Inspired by the institutionalised ‘Consensus Conference’ first established in Denmark, a conference of the same kind was organised in 2005. The ‘lay public’ was invited to debate a controversial tax policy. A report was written and published on behalf of all participants.

<sup>64</sup> Offe & Pruess, 1991, ‘Democratic Institutions and Moral Resources’, David Held (ed.), *Political Theory Today*, p. 168.

<sup>65</sup> For example, Hannah Arendt used the terms ‘public space’ or ‘public realm’, referring both to the *space of appearance* and to *the world we hold in common* (or ‘*the common world*’). See Maurizio Passerin d’Entrèves, 2000, ‘Public and private in Hannah Arendt’s conception of citizenship’, Maurizio Passerin d’Entrèves and Ursula Vogel (eds.), *Public and Private: legal, political and philosophical*

theorists have stated, provides the moral resources of democratic institutions. The notion of 'discourse ethics', a term used by Habermas to summarise his arguments in *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action* (1992) and *Justification and Application* (1993), implies that: 'publicly binding norms can only make a legitimate claim to rationality, and thus a claim to rational legitimacy, insofar as they emerge out of open discourse and free argument between all parties affected by them; that is, insofar as they emerge out of contexts corresponding in all crucial respects to a public sphere'.<sup>69</sup> Discourse ethics emphasises 'communicative reason' in the process of 'general will' formation, that is, public deliberation. Communicative reason, as opposed to the subject-centred conception of reason, is therefore characterised by its 'intersubjectiveness'.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Jürgen Habermas, 1997, 'Further Reflections on the Public Sphere', Craig Calhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere*.

<sup>67</sup> Jürgen Habermas, 1989, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, p. 27.

<sup>68</sup> The private sphere here simply means the familiar liberal concept of a realm of thought and action protected from the coercive power of the state. It entails the concepts of limited government, liberty of conscience and the separation of church and state (Evens Charney, 1998, 'Political Liberalism, Deliberative Democracy, and the Public Sphere', *American Political Science Review*, vol. 92, no. 1, March 1998, pp. 97-110).

<sup>69</sup> Roberts & Crossley, 2004, *After Habermas*, p. 6.

<sup>70</sup> Jürgen Habermas developed the concept of 'communicative reason' in his critical discussion of subject-centred paradigms in the essay 'An alternative way out of the philosophy of the subject: communicative versus subject-centred reason' (1990), which appears in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, pp. 295-326.

<sup>71</sup> John Rawls, 1999, 'The Idea of Public Reason Revisited', *Law of Peoples*, p. 132.

<sup>72</sup> John Rawls, 1999, 'The Idea of Public Reason Revisited', *Law of Peoples*, p. 133.

<sup>73</sup> John Rawls, 1993, *Political Liberalism*, pp. 215-6.

<sup>74</sup> Samir Amin, 1989, *Eurocentrism*, pp. 136-52. Amin argues that Eurocentrism is a specifically modern phenomenon, the roots of which go back only to the Renaissance and which flourished only in the nineteenth century. In this sense, he states, it constitutes one dimension of the culture and ideology of the modern capitalist world. Amin discusses a pluralist view of human development in a universal theory of culture. He claims that Eurocentrism is a culturalist phenomenon in that it assumes the existence of irreducibly distinct cultural invariants that shape the historical paths of different people. Eurocentrism is therefore anti-universalist, since it is not interested in seeking possible general laws of human evolution. But it does present itself as universalist, for it claims that imitation of the Western model by all peoples is the only solution to the challenges of our time (Amin, 1989, p. vii). To develop a truly universal culture

### *Political Development: the Evolution of Public Culture*

Understanding political development as the evolution of public culture suggests a view of human development different from the 'progressive view' of the Enlightenment tradition. Historical contingency rather than historical teleology is inherent in the conception of public culture. Political development is therefore a historical process that can move forwards and backwards. Also relevant and indeed more important to our discussion of political development and public culture is the issue of state and public culture. Public culture is a resistance culture that is intended to transform and eventually conquer state in the sense that public culture changes the cultural aspect of state. The cultural aspect of state refers to the ideology of state or 'official ideology'.

Never the less, public culture should not be accordingly seen as or equated with 'ideological struggle'. For whilst public culture is a continuous process of public deliberation, any particular ideological struggle in the sense of battling for ideas comes and goes. In other words, public culture is a broader conception than ideological struggle in that at certain or critical historical moments public culture can function as a particular ideological struggle, representing a resistance culture. But at the time when public culture has transformed or conquered state, that is, when we witness the occurrence of political change, public culture has advanced and institutionalised, and become the dominant culture instead of resistance culture. The relationship between political development and public culture— political development is the process in which public culture evolves— in this research is therefore established through aforementioned understanding of the relationship between state and public culture.

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and a theory for understanding it, Amin suggests first challenging the culturalist philosophy of history that imbues Eurocentrism (ibid., p. 136).

To explain and understand political development thus requires us to investigate the evolution of public culture, that is, the process of public deliberation in which public intellectuals as well as the general public are engaged, public consciousness is formed and contested, and public consensus to various degrees is arrived at. Analysis of public culture, hence political development, entails contextual analysis of political discourses and assessment of their sociopolitical consequences.

The content of a particular political discourse, which emerges in a society at a particular stage of development, reflects both domestic and external contexts. By analysing political discourses articulated in public deliberation, we can identify and clarify the specific problems confronting that society and which issues its members are most concerned about. The articulation of political discourses in a public forum not only helps the members of the society to comprehend and debate them and the political values upon which they are based, but also forges public consciousness and helps people reach a consensus on public norms. The origins, evolution, and accumulation of these public political discourses thus constitute the history of the collective political consciousness of the society in question. Public culture can be understood as collective historical-political consciousness, a 'repertoire' revealing the possible paths of political development.

### **Public Culture and Taiwan's Political Development – Liberalism, Nationalism and Welfarism as Social Justice**

#### *Liberalism in Taiwan: the Negative Sense of Freedom*

Liberalism and nationalism, two chronically consequential and intellectually related yet non-overlapping, even competing movements, have dominated public political

discourse in Taiwan since the end of the Second World War. The discourse of liberalism emerged in a historical context marked by two key aspects. The first was the Chinese civil war on the mainland, featuring the Nationalist Party or the KMT and the CCP as the main protagonists. The second was the Cold War, the power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union, and the ideological struggle between the liberalism and communism that the two societies represented.

The KMT's long-term reliance on the United States in its struggle against the Chinese communists on the mainland during the civil war and on subsequent military and economic aid from the United States throughout the Cold War period accounts for the incorporation of Taiwan into the US-led liberal camp. Ironically, however, while Taiwan was considered to belong to the liberal camp, the KMT claimed that its 'historical mission' to fight for liberal democracy justified its authoritarianism. Civil liberties were curbed until the removal of martial law in 1987. Until then, the official ideology of liberalism was nothing more than political rhetoric or 'tokenism', invoked to gain support from other 'liberal' countries and bolster the party's power.

Within this context of political authoritarianism, liberalism in fact functioned as the major 'dissenting ideology' in Taiwan following the KMT's retreat to the island in 1949, following its defeat by the CCP on the mainland. The most influential intellectual grouping within the liberal movement was made up of those liberals involved in the magazine *Free China* bimonthly. This was first published in Taiwan in 1949 under the 'spiritual leadership' of Hu Shih, a leading figure of the New Cultural Movement on the mainland in the early twentieth century. Lei Chen was in charge of publishing and editing the magazine. Lei later became one of the leading lights of a failed attempt to form an opposition party in 1960. The magazine was banned in the end as a result of



this failed movement and criticising the policy and leader of the KMT. The magazine, whilst having friendly relationship with the regime initially, fought against the communist forces as well as propelling party reform inside the KMT and political change within society as a whole.

The KMT asserted that making Taiwan a liberal democratic society and thus a 'model province', to be emulated on the mainland in future, was a national goal. This makes it less surprising that the magazine was furnished with a limited degree of official financial support and that its dissenting voices were tolerated to a limited degree. Many critics of the KMT saw this as social control however. Liberal intellectuals writing for *Free China* supported the KMT regime for its proclaimed commitment to liberal democracy and taking back the mainland. Tensions began to emerge within this originally cooperative or friendly relationship when the KMT tightened its control over Taiwanese society for reasons of national security, against the background of the outbreak of the Korean War. The magazine was ultimately banned in 1960.

As a dissenting ideological discourse, Taiwanese liberalism was characterised by its prominent 'political character': liberal discourse publicly criticised the totalitarian KMT state.<sup>75</sup> The theoretical coherence or depth of the discourse was not therefore the chief concern of these liberal intellectuals. In the face of authoritarian state control, liberalism, unsurprisingly, was commonly considered to be all about 'individual freedom' in the negative sense, as defined by Berlin.<sup>76</sup> Because individual freedom is of

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<sup>75</sup> Chien Sechin Y. S., 1988, 'Liberalism and Political Order – Reflections on the Experience of Free China', *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly of Social Studies*, vol. 1, no. 4, 1988.

<sup>76</sup> Isaiah Berlin distinguishes two senses of freedom: negative and positive. Negative freedom is said to consist in the absence of obstruction of or interference in one's activity by others. Political liberty in this sense is simply the area within which a person can act unobstructed by others. The wider the area of non-interference, the greater the freedom. See Isaiah Berlin, 1958, *Two Concepts of Liberty*, pp. 7-8. For

such great value, liberals argued, governments must be prohibited from interfering with it, no matter how worthy their intentions.<sup>77</sup> Limited government is thus the ideal form of government. The ideas of negative freedom and limited government have been the core feature of the public understanding of liberalism in Taiwan from the Free China movement to the present.

In an effort to clarify the idea of 'freedom', Chang Fo-chuan published a book entitled *Freedom and Human Rights* in 1954. This provided a useful intellectual resource for liberals, probing the question 'what is the essence of freedom?' and guiding the emergent democratic movement. Individual freedom is defined by Chang as basic human rights, the preservation of which depends on realising democratic constitutionalism. Understanding individual freedom as human rights thus establishes a link between the ideals of liberalism and the democratic demand to preserve the constitution, theoretically as well as strategically.<sup>78</sup>

The liberal ideas of individual freedom, human rights, democracy and constitutionalism advocated by the *Free China* group have deeply influenced the political imagination of generations of liberal intellectuals and opposition activists since the 1960s. 'Human rights' is a good example to hand. This concept is so influential that all opposition campaigns used to be launched in its name. Moreover, in

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a detailed discussion of Berlin's 'positive liberty', see David Miller, 1991, *Liberty*, p. 10. Miller points out that three different doctrines of freedom may usefully be isolated: 1. Freedom as the power or capacity to act in certain ways as contrasted with the mere absence of interference; 2. Freedom as rational self-direction, the condition in which a person's life is governed by rational desires as opposed to random, non-rational ones; 3. Freedom as collective self-determination, the condition in which each person plays his or her part in controlling the social environment through democratic institutions.

<sup>77</sup> David Miller, 2003, *Political Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 56.

<sup>78</sup> Chien Sechin Y. S., 1988, 'Liberalism and Political Order – Reflections on the Experience of Free China', *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly of Social Studies*, vol. 1, no. 4, 1988.

March 2000, about five decades after the publication of Chang's book, when the then major opposition party, the DPP, won the presidential election for the first time, the protection of human rights was proclaimed to be the paramount principle of all state policies, though it is quite another issue whether this was merely political rhetoric. More importantly, however, the ascendance of negative liberty in Taiwan and the state's retreat from its role in economic re/production and social redistribution has increased relative socioeconomic inequality, which had underpinned the country's social capital formation and democratic development.

### *Crafting a Civic Nation in Taiwan*

Nationalism is another influential political discourse that emerged in public debate in the early 1970s, though historical events long before had sown the seeds of the nationalist debate. The two major nationalist discourses are pro-unification Chinese nationalism and pro-independence Taiwanese nationalism. Pre-1949 historical events, specifically the 1947 'February 28th' incident, explain the 'ethnic element' of these two nationalisms: the (ethnic) distinction between mainlanders and Taiwanese (or islanders). 'Mainlanders' refers to those people who came to the island after 1945 from all over China, especially the group that retreated along with the KMT in 1949, and their offspring. 'Taiwanese' refers mainly to those who came to the island, for the most part from the southern part of Fujian province, prior to or during the 1895-1945 Japanese occupation and who speak the Hokkien dialect.

The tensions between mainlander officials and Taiwanese before the 'February 28<sup>th</sup>' incident were rooted in the fact that the war-weary mainlanders came to Taiwan as an occupying army, with greedy officials and merchants treating the local Taiwanese as second-class citizens. The incident turned Taiwanese frustration and hostility towards

mainlanders into violence in the cities. The uprising was brutally suppressed by the KMT regime and followed by several months of state-imposed terror, which cowed prominent Taiwanese into submission. Memories of this incident provided a rallying point for subsequent Taiwanese nationalism.<sup>79</sup>

### The KMT's Official Nationalism versus Taiwanese Nationalism

After its retreat to Taiwan in 1949, the KMT made 'retaking the mainland' from the Chinese communists or 'national unity' its ultimate goal. The island was regarded as nothing more than a 'base for regeneration', from which the grand historical mission of recovering the mainland and repelling the communists would be carried out. Appealing to the Chinese idea of '(dynastic) orthodoxy' (正統, *cheng tong*), the KMT attempted to relegitimise its defeat by the communists. Its official nationalism, consequently, was a metamorphosis of this idea of 'orthodoxy', which consisted of three elements: '*dao tong*' (道統, cultural orthodoxy), '*fa tong*' (法統, legitimate succession) and the ideology of liberalism. Liberalism, as noted above, was utilised by the KMT in the Cold War context as an ideological weapon to contrast itself with communist rule on the mainland. These three elements not only relegitimised the defeated KMT but also laid the ground for its policy of 'unification', which resonated with the Chinese value of unity (一統, *yi tong*).<sup>80</sup>

The cultural hegemony and political authoritarianism resulting from the KMT's Chinese nationalist policies not only alienated the native Taiwanese but also aroused

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<sup>79</sup> David Potter, 1997, 'Democratization at the same time in South Korea and Taiwan', David Potter et al (eds.), *Democratization*, p. 219.

<sup>80</sup> 'Orthodoxy' (*cheng tong*) *per se* in the dynastic tradition consisted of '*daotong*' and '*fatong*'. For a detailed discussion of this point, see Shaw Carl K. Y., 2002, 'Modulations of Nationalism Across the

Taiwanese nationalist sentiment. This was so strong that some scholars eagerly sought anthropological 'proof' that the native Taiwanese were not Han Chinese, while others constructed historical genealogies subverting the 'China-oriented' historiography. Ming Shih, a left-wing historian who is commonly regarded as 'the father of Taiwan independence', for instance, is best known for his narrative of Taiwan's 'four-hundred-year' history, commencing during the Min dynasty, instead of the standard history textbook narrative that traces the island's history back to the common genesis of the Chinese nation five thousand years ago.

The KMT's official nationalist discourse was clearly constructed on the basis of both political and cultural nationalism.<sup>81</sup> While it primarily appealed to national unity, viewing the Chinese communists as national enemies and the Soviet Union as an imperialist country, the common historical link and traditional culture shared by the island and mainland were also emphasised. Moreover, as noted above, vigorous attempts were made to generate a Chinese/China-centred cultural and historical identity among the native Taiwanese, through comprehensive and indeed discriminative cultural and language policies. From this perspective, the KMT's official Chinese nationalism was arguably a cultural nationalism in pursuit of cultural homogeneity,

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Taiwan Strait', *Issues and Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 2, June 2002, pp. 125-6.

<sup>81</sup>Hans Kohn's classification of nationalism was popularised by Plamenatz. Nationalism was classified into two types: Western/liberal/civic nationalism and Eastern/cultural nationalism. The former was thought to be more desirable and acceptable primarily on the basis of a political belief in individualist liberal democracy. For these scholars, liberal nationalism is more acceptable because it is premised on the Enlightenment values of reason and universalist humanism, linked to democracy, liberalism and constitutional rule and aiming to liberate the individual and create a more open, plural, outward-looking society. Cultural nationalism, on the other hand, is thought to be more overtly authoritarian, closed, inward-looking, particularist, pathological, bellicose and xenophobic. See Andrew Vincent's critical article on liberal nationalism 'Liberal Nationalism: an Irresponsible Compound?' For a detailed discussion of Hans Kohn's work, see 'Idea of Nationalism: a Study in its Origins and Background' and John Plamenatz's 'Two Types of Nationalism' (Andrew Vincent, 1997, 'Liberal Nationalism: an Irresponsible Compound?', *Political Studies*, vol. 45, pp. 275-95).

rather than merely demanding a single public culture as Smith stated in his defence of nationalism.<sup>82</sup>

Efforts were made to construct an ethnic Taiwanese nationalism in response to the KMT's official Chinese nationalism. The most influential discourse of Taiwanese nationalism, however, was anchored in the 'Declaration of Taiwanese Self-Salvation' drafted by Peng Ming-min in 1964. Given that the KMT was regarded as an '*émigré regime*', which gained jurisdiction over the island only in 1945 and paid lip service to its proclaimed goal of building a liberal democracy, this Taiwanese nationalism naturally combined national and democratic discourses. It is thus no surprise that 'democratisation' and 'localisation' or 'Taiwanisation' became the central components of the discourse generated by the political opposition movement. This subtle discursive convergence elucidates the immense emotive power and mass mobilisation of Taiwanese nationalism under KMT authoritarian rule.<sup>83</sup>

It was only in the early 1980s that humanist intellectuals, primarily writers and historians, made major, systematic efforts to construct a Taiwanese cultural nationalism, which focused on the uniqueness of native Taiwanese culture as opposed to the Han Chinese (high) culture promoted by the KMT regime.<sup>84</sup> Crafting a Taiwanese national literature, national language and national history thus became the core features of the discourse and practice of this cultural nationalist movement. The invention of the Hoklo writing system is an illuminating example. What should be noted here, as discussed in detail in Chapter Four on nationalism, is that some leading

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<sup>82</sup> See Smith, 1995, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, p. 151.

<sup>83</sup> Shaw Carl K. Y., 2002, 'Modulations of Nationalism Across the Taiwan Strait', p. 127.

<sup>84</sup> See Hsiao A-chin's book *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism*, which is perhaps the first

figures involved in this Taiwanese cultural nationalist movement were participants in the Nativist Literary debate in the early 1970s, part of a literary movement of anti-western modernism and anti-American imperialism led primarily by pro-China left-wing writers.

### The Nativist Literary Debate in the Wake of the Diaoyutai Incident

The 'February 28<sup>th</sup>' incident in 1947 had a deep impact upon the nationalist public debate in Taiwan. The historical events of most direct relevance to the emergence of the 'Chinese nationalism versus Taiwanese nationalism' debate are however the 'Diaoyutai Incident', the controversial return of the Diaoyutai Islands to Japan by the United States, and the subsequent severance of diplomatic relations between Taiwan and the United States as a result of the normalisation of Sino-American relations.

Central to the Diaoyutai Incident were several waves of student demonstrations against the secret deal between America and Japan (the so-called 'Baodiao' movement, literally, 'preserve the Diaoyutai Islands'). These began in North America then spread to Taiwan through contact primarily between overseas Chinese students from Hong Kong in Taiwan and Taiwanese students at American universities. In Taiwan at the time, information was tightly controlled and censored and free travel was banned. A message like this was likely to arouse anti-American nationalist sentiment and therefore to cause tension between the KMT government and the US, the regime's long-term supporter and ally. It could only be transmitted to students in Taiwan by these overseas Chinese students, who were able to receive information freely while

outside of the island.

Within this movement, left-leaning students, moved and mobilised by the American student movement specifically, and influenced by the 1968 intellectual and political ferment generally, gradually tended to identify themselves with communist China. Ideologically, this was rooted in attraction to socialism. Politically, the driving force was the CCP's strong and critical response to the Diaoyutai Incident, its determination to 'preserve the national territory' and its condemnation of American and Japanese imperialism. The right-wing KMT thus lost the confidence of this section of the population. Yet the KMT continued to enjoy a certain amount of support from other Taiwanese students in North America. These defended the government's position, accusing left-leaning students of being 'travellers with the Chinese communists'. At a time when the latter were viewed as the national enemy, these students were in real danger of being charged with treason and imprisonment.

In the Nativist Literary debate, (Chinese) national and socialist discourses appeared to converge. Socialist humanism was expressed in the tendency towards social realism typical of the leading figures of the nativist literary movement. The 'Others' perceived by these nationalist/nativist writers and alluded to in their works were America and Japan. The nationalist debate in the aftermath of the Diaoyutai Incident in the early 1970s, unlike that which emerged in the early 1980s, was thus not centred on the division between Chinese and Taiwanese national identities. It was primarily a debate between Chinese nationalists and pro-West modernists.

The US Nixon administration's decision to normalise Sino-American relations and the ROC's expulsion from the United Nations as a result of the American government's policy change plunged the KMT into a crisis of legitimacy. In the context of Taiwan's



diplomatic setback, 'Taiwan independence' was perceived, primarily by those political activists blacklisted by the KMT regime, as a sensible response to Taiwan's 'crisis of survival', that is, the risk that communist China might take over the island. It was also viewed as a viable alternative to the notion of Taiwan as 'representative of all China'.

For this group, only by relinquishing this claim within the international community and asserting that Taiwan was a political entity separate and independent from the mainland could it survive this crisis of international status. The unification-independence issue thus entered and subsequently became the core of the public debate between Chinese nationalism and Taiwanese nationalism, despite the fact that the term 'Taiwanese nationalism' was first widely used in the early 1990s.

#### Taiwanese Consciousness and the Taiwanese Nationalist Movement

The 'Chinese consciousness vs. Taiwanese consciousness' debate published in various Dangwai political magazines in the early 1980s, and the 'Chinese complex vs. Taiwanese complex' debate, carried out by the pro-China liberal magazine *China Tribune* about a decade later, marked the commencement of an all-out public debate between Chinese nationalists and Taiwanese nationalists in Taiwan. The changed political situation, domestic and international, laid the ground for this debate in general and public talk about Taiwanese nationalism in particular. Very briefly, the KMT came under immense pressure to embark on political reforms, to liberalise and democratise in order to maintain its political legitimacy.

'Taiwanese consciousness' was aroused not only in the aforementioned debates but also within the political movement campaigning against KMT authoritarianism. The evolution of this consciousness reached its climax when Lee Teng-hui, a native

Taiwanese educated under Japanese rule and trained in the United States, was anointed by Chiang Ching-kuo as successor, becoming the (first Taiwanese) president of the ROC (Taiwan) in the late 1980s.

Under the Lee government, a series of cultural and educational policies were carried out under the banner of 'localisation' or 'Taiwanisation'. The aim here was to cultivate and strengthen Taiwanese consciousness, emphasising the 'subjectivity of Taiwan', primarily in opposition to China. The notion of 'Taiwan's subjectivity' is best exemplified in the 'Taiwan-centred' principle of official historical education: 'gaining a foothold in Taiwan, having the whole mainland in mind, and bringing the whole world into view' (*li-tsu t'ai-wan, hsiung-huai ta-lu, fang-yen t'ien-hsia*).<sup>85</sup> The election in 2000 of the pro-independence Chen Shui-bian of the DPP, the major opposition party, further consolidated the island's turn towards independence despite the lack of international support. Since the late 1970s, the elusive ideal of 'self-determination for the residents of Taiwan', rather than a more direct appeal for 'national self-determination', had been central to the nationalist-democratic discourse generated by the opposition party, legalised only in 1986.

The emergence of Taiwanese civic nationalism has to be understood in the context of the island's political democratisation, which aimed to establish a liberal/ representative democracy. For civic nationalists, the process of democratisation itself is that of nation formation.<sup>86</sup> The civic republican tradition understood Taiwanese autonomy as

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<sup>85</sup> See Ministry of Education, 1994, p. 829, quoted in Hsiao, *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism*, 2000, p. 155.

<sup>86</sup> See Lin Chia-lung, 2002, 'The Political Formation of Taiwanese Nationalism', *Memories of the Future*, pp. 219-41; and Wu Rwei-ren, 2002, 'Toward a Pragmatic Nationalism: Democratization and Taiwan's Passive Revolution', *Memories of the Future*, pp. 197-218.

collective autonomy and citizens' self-government, aimed at realising the common good of the political community.<sup>87</sup> The very fact that Taiwan has enjoyed such autonomy as a *de facto* independent political entity however renders inadequate the nationalist appeal to the principle of national self-determination as the 'condition' for collective self-government.

Taiwanese nationalism has transformed itself, initially viewing 'China' as the nation in question, then shifting focus to Taiwanese nation building. Taiwanese national identity is in the process of crystallisation. As late as 1996, well over 50 per cent of the population, when asked, described themselves as 'Chinese and Taiwanese', and just over 20 per cent as 'Chinese'. Today fewer than 50 per cent define themselves as Chinese and Taiwanese, and not much more than 10 per cent as Chinese, while those who see themselves as simply Taiwanese number more than 40 per cent.<sup>88</sup> A more recent figure published by a Taiwanese national newspaper in February 2005 showed the number of those describing themselves as Taiwanese peaking at 63 per cent.<sup>89</sup> Crafting a civic nation in Taiwan has become an important part of Taiwan's public culture, despite the fact that reunification with the mainland remains the other major, though less popular, construct within the public political imagination. Some commentators even argued that unification is in actuality 'out of the map'.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> See Iseult Honohan, 2002, *Civic Republicanism*, pp. 88-9.

<sup>88</sup> Anderson, 2004, 'Stand-Off in Taiwan', *London Review of Books*, 2004, Vol. 26, No. 11, p.4. ([http://www.lrb.co.uk/v26/n11/ande01\\_.html](http://www.lrb.co.uk/v26/n11/ande01_.html).)

<sup>89</sup> The survey was carried out and published by the *United Daily Newspaper*, on February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2005. (<http://www.udn.com/NEWS/NATIONAL/NATS2/2531807.shtml>).

<sup>90</sup> This remark was made by Christopher Hughes, an International Relations and China scholar, in his public talk on Taiwan and Chinese nationalism on 11 November, 2005, at School of African and Oriental Studies, London.

### *The Development of Welfare Capitalism in Taiwan*

Compared to the debate over liberalism and nationalism, public welfare has attracted relatively less public discussion. Taiwan, however, is widely considered to have been tremendously successful at improving basic living conditions over the past four decades. This remarkable human development, notably the public provision of education and basic health care, reflects the government's consistent concern for welfare. The active role of the state is as central to grasping the history of welfare in Taiwan as it is to understanding Taiwan's rapid and equitable economic development. It is sufficient here to note that until the late 1980s, unlike most European welfare states, its role was that of 'regulator' and 'coordinator' rather than 'provider'. State intervention thus tends to mean imposing rules and coordinating available resources provided by local as well as international communities.

The Japanese legacy undoubtedly contributed to the establishment of welfare capitalism in Taiwan. Apart from this factor, if we wish to understand historically why the state focused on welfare and how it evolved, we must take into account the Chinese civil war on the mainland, with the capitalist KMT and the socialist CCP the main protagonists, including the period following the KMT's flight to Taiwan. Crucial too is the party competition between the KMT and the DPP during political democratisation in Taiwan. The KMT's defeat by the CCP on the mainland was attributed primarily to corruption within the party and the appeal of social equality to ordinary Chinese, who had suffered during the war and were unhappy with their lot under KMT rule. Learning from its defeat on the mainland, the KMT government prioritised socioeconomic equality after it fled to Taiwan.

The 'freedom vs. equality' issue was also hotly debated among *Free China* intellectuals

until Hayek's free market theory took on such force that freedom in the negative sense, including the idea of limited government, was widely considered most crucial to the pursuit of liberal democracy. Accordingly, state intervention came to be seen as an obstacle, even if it might be necessary for social justice. The KMT, however, was faced with the pressing need to gain the political support of the farmers and workers. It thus hoped to prevent challenges to its rule, like those which had caused its defeat on the mainland, through a 'pre-emptive strike against the left-wing movement'.<sup>91</sup>

The Labour Insurance programme, already part of the social policy manifesto of a KMT government keen to outmanoeuvre the Communists in 1945 and the first social insurance scheme in Taiwan, was therefore introduced in 1950, shortly after the KMT was forced to cross the Taiwan Straits. This scheme included the outlines of a national nursery policy, labour policy, farming policy and postwar primary social security policy.<sup>92</sup> This plan was claimed to reflect the philosophy of Sun Yat-sen, the founding father of the Republic of China, and his 'Principle of the People's Livelihood'. After the introduction of the Labour Insurance Programme, the Government Employees' Insurance and Retired Government Employees' Insurance Programmes were introduced in 1958 and 1965 respectively.

Social welfare emerged at the centre of public debate in the 1970s, in the wake of a whole range of socioeconomic changes brought about by two decades of capitalist

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<sup>91</sup> This is often used to describe cases in which social policy is used by politicians to gain power or stay in power. The oft-cited example is Bismarck's social policy in Germany, which was not only a pre-emptive strike against left-wing movements but also a nation building effort to assert the authority of central government over local governments. See Huck-ju Kwon, 1998, 'A comparison of East Asian welfare systems', in Roger Goodman et al (eds.), *The East Asian Welfare Model – Welfare Orientalism and the State*, p. 30.

<sup>92</sup> Ku Yeun-wen, 1997, *Welfare Capitalism in Taiwan*, p. 32.

industrialisation. Rising quality of life expectations among the new middle classes and increasing discontent among labours and farmers, who lost out in this process, account for the emergence of public welfare consciousness. Social class was the major concern of the left-wing intellectuals initiating and participating in the Nativist Literary debate. The articles and stories published in the representative magazine of the Nativist Literary movement, *China Tide*, were concerned with social issues. Liberals, greatly influenced by the ideals of *Free China*, who saw liberal democracy as the core of their intellectual and political movement, also drew public attention to the issue of social justice. Liberal-oriented magazines, such as *The Intellectual* and *Taiwan Political Review*, and the centre-left magazine *Movement* published during the period of Dangwai movement, did collectively help raise the consciousness of public welfare. Nonetheless, the government failed to come up with a specific welfare programme despite increasing public pressure.

The general public viewed existing public education, basic health care and very limited social insurance programmes as inadequate. Demand for better provision was incorporated into the opposition's calls for political reform in the 1980s, forcing the government to respond. It launched a pilot Farmer's Health Insurance scheme in 1985 and in 1995, five years ahead of the schedule, implemented a National Health Insurance programme. Political democratisation and party competition thus largely drove new social policy initiatives in Taiwan, for better or worse. On the positive side of the balance sheet, the government has had to respond to public demands for social protection. Less pleasing is the fact that to attract votes parties tend to ignore the crucial matter of fiscal discipline, irresponsibly overselling a vision of social welfare in which the state is the main if not only financial provider.

The public welfare debate in Taiwan has for long centred on the thorny question of whether public expenditure on social welfare is necessarily detrimental to economic growth. A related yet no less important debate revolves around the state's role. Should it primarily provide or regulate? For libertarians, the state should be barred from interfering in economic activities, as this only disturbs the operation of the free market and the 'spontaneous [Hayekian] order' of society. For economic technocrats, economic growth is the priority. Too much public expenditure on social welfare results in economic slowdown. Welfare scholars and advocates argue that continuous economic growth relies on public investment in social welfare. Moreover, taking the Nordic welfare states, in which public welfare is financed by the state, as exemplary, welfare scholars have endeavoured to clarify the distinction between social welfare and social insurance, urging governments to take more financial responsibility for social welfare.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Liberalism and Taiwan's Political Development**

#### **The Chinese Civil War, Cold War and the Liberal Movement in Postwar Taiwan**

Defeated by the Chinese Communists in the Civil War on the mainland, the Nationalist forces, mainly in the shape of the KMT, were forced to retreat to Taiwan in 1949. The outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 not only marked the beginning of the four-decade long Cold War, but also consolidated the antagonism between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. The Cold War pitched the United States, leader of the 'Free World', against the Soviet Union, lynchpin of the 'Communist Bloc'. KMT-ruled Taiwan, unsurprisingly, was incorporated into the former camp. The island became an important ally of the United States in the region, primarily due to its strategic geopolitical value, while Mainland China was under the control of the CCP. Taiwan's strategic value explains why America abandoned its 'hands-off' or disengagement policy in the Chinese Civil War prior to the Korean War.<sup>1</sup> The Korean War and subsequent Cold War are crucial to understanding the emergence of the Taiwanese authoritarian developmental state, and the evolution of the liberal movement, led by intellectuals, revolving around the *Free China* bimonthly.

America's decision to resume formal relations with the PRC in the early 1970s, in the wake of the Sino-Soviet border clashes of 1969, ushered in a series of diplomatic setbacks for Taiwan and contributed to a KMT legitimacy crisis on the island. In 1971, Nixon's historic visit to China was announced. In the same year, the ROC's place at the United Nations, including its permanent membership of the Security Council, was

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<sup>1</sup> For an excellent, detailed historical analysis of American foreign policy in the Far East between 1941 and 1950, see Tsou Tang, 1963, *America's Failure in China: 1941-50*.



taken over by the PRC, which was accordingly recognised by the international community as the sole representative government of all China. America's new China policy culminated in January 1979 with the severance of formal relations with Taiwan.

The Korean War, the Cold War and the United States' newly minted 'China policy' help elucidate why liberalism has become an important element of Taiwan's public culture. All imbued the liberal movement in Taiwan in different ways and with different consequences. Very briefly, whilst the first two 'justified' the KMT's increasingly authoritarian rule as vital to national security, the latter generated an acute legitimacy crisis, heaping pressure upon the regime to initiate political liberalisation. Also liberalism is in line with anti-communism. It was not until 1987, when martial law was revoked after four decades, that Taiwan began to democratise. The opening move was the legalisation of the first opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party. After the first popular presidential election in March 1996, Taiwan was said, along with other 'Third Wave Democracies', to have completed the democratic transition stage and entered that of democratic consolidation.

The aforementioned historical events also informed the context in which liberalism and nationalism developed alongside one another. To a great extent, liberal discourses have been bound up with the pursuit of different and indeed, since the late 1970s, competing nationalist discourses: Chinese nationalism and Taiwanese nationalism. Most scholars working on Taiwan's political development tend to treat the concern with national identity as the inevitable result of Taiwan's democratisation, given the tragic 'February 28<sup>th</sup>' incident in 1947 and native Taiwanese' perception of the KMT as a foreign regime. This research, however, brings out nationalism's close relation not only with the intellectual construction of liberal discourse, but also the liberal democratic movement in Taiwan. Nationalism, as this chapter lays bare, thus constitutes another important

element of Taiwan's public culture. We shall scrutinise the origin, evolution, consequences and prospects of liberalism, as both an intellectual and political movement, since the end of the Second World War in Taiwan.

### **A Liberal Seed in Illiberal Soil: The Aftermath of the KMT's Defeat and the 'Free China Movement' from 1949 to 1960**

Seeking to grasp why it was defeated by the CCP in the civil war and how the CCP was able to gain control of the mainland, the KMT focused on corruption within the party and its failure to resolve economic problems, notoriously inflation. People suffered enormously from economic chaos and bureaucratic corruption, which eventually resulted in almost universal dissatisfaction with the KMT's rule on the mainland.<sup>2</sup> This to a large extent explains why the CCP managed to defeat the KMT, which enjoyed military and economic support from the United States, despite having far less military equipment and logistical wherewithal. The key factor was popular support for the CCP's social programmes and the general public's loss of confidence in the KMT, apart from landlords and capitalists who had been benefiting from the regime's corrupt rule. Having established the causes of its humiliating defeat on the mainland, the party carried out internal reforms, focusing on tightening party discipline, to stamp out political corruption. At the same time, the regime implemented land reforms restricting individual land holdings, abolishing absentee ownership of land and reducing land rent. These reforms, as noted above, have had far-reaching economic and sociopolitical implications for Taiwan's development.

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<sup>2</sup> Maurice Meisner, 1999, *Mao's China and After*, p.38

*In Pursuit of Liberal Democracy: the Foundation of the Free China Bimonthly*

Among the social groups that fled with the KMT to the island in 1949 were the liberal intellectuals who founded the *Free China* bimonthly. The intellectual and political movement spearheaded by the leading lights of the magazine from 1949 to 1960 is commonly dubbed the 'Free China movement', 'Free China' referring to 'the ROC on Taiwan'. Initially, the *Free China* group had a rather friendly relationship with the KMT. It was critical of the regime's authoritarianism while at the same time expressing understanding for its difficulty in striking a balance between ensuring national security and protecting civil liberties. Indeed, the magazine received financial support from the Ministry of Education. The acknowledged common goals of anti-communism and liberal democracy<sup>3</sup> also drew the two parties together although clearly the KMT never wholeheartedly pursued the latter goal.

It is fair to say that the KMT supported the magazine and tolerated its critical opinions mainly because it needed the liberal-leaning magazine to 'window dress' its *de facto* authoritarian rule. After all, the regime relied on the ideology of liberal democracy to establish its political legitimacy on the island and gain the support of the 'Free World'. It also lent on this ideology to reinforce its vision of national unity, quite different from that of the Chinese communists. As one leading opposition activist, Fu Cheng, has pointed out:

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<sup>3</sup> The aim of the magazine was outlined in its opening statement: '*Free China* bimonthly aims to elucidate the disaster the Soviet Union has caused to the world, especially to China, and the evil the Chinese Communist Party has brought to the Chinese people and their country. We discuss this issue and contemplate how to end the disaster and the evil. The arguments in this magazine are based on the principle of freedom of thought...We denounce totalitarianism and believe in democracy; we pursue the freedom of our country and our nation and the peace of the world...' (*FC*, Vol. 1, No. 1). In short, the magazine intended to promote the values of liberty and democracy, and keep an eye on the government's progress with political and economic reforms and its endeavours to build a free and democratic society; to support and prompt the government in the fight against communist totalitarianism and prevent its influence spreading; to help fellow Chinese trapped on the communist mainland regain their freedoms; and achieve freedom for all of China (*ibid.*).

‘A different ideology was needed to deal with both the domestic and international situations and that was liberalism. The KMT regime also realised that the names of the KMT and the People’s Three Principles therefore were not appealing and could not change the situation, so the Free China movement emerged... In other words, from the very beginning, the Free China movement was launched to meet the political needs of the KMT regime.<sup>4</sup> At a time when freedom of speech was curbed, the KMT’s tolerant attitude towards the magazine was also regarded as one of several ways of carrying out social and political control’.

Hu Shih, as noted above, was the spiritual leader of the *Free China* group. It was Lei Chen who actually took charge of the magazine. Other regular contributors included Yin Hai-guang, Hsia Dao-ping, Dai Du-heng, Fu Cheng, and Hsu Dao-lin. Of these, Yin probably did most to systematically introduce and elaborate western liberalism. He is commonly regarded as an important representative of the *Free China* generation influential in the construction of liberal discourse in Taiwan. A memorial foundation was set up to commemorate his contribution.

### The Legacies of Liberalism in Taiwan and *Free China*’s Conception of Liberalism

Liberal intellectuals around the *Free China* magazine lent support to the KMT not only because of their liberal convictions but also because they, unlike the members of the so-called ‘Third Forces’ (officially named the ‘Democratic Alliance of China’), who fled to Hong Kong instead of Taiwan with the KMT,<sup>5</sup> believed the party was the only

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<sup>4</sup> Lei Chen, 1989, in Fu Cheng (ed.), *Lei Chen Collection Vol. II*, p.340. The original plan was to publish *Free China* in Shanghai. The change of political situation on the mainland, i.e. the defeat of the KMT in 1949, caused the liberal intellectuals involved to change their plan and publish the magazine shortly after their arrival on the island.

<sup>5</sup> The ‘Third Force’ was a political group set up in 1941 by Chang Chiun-mai and others, originally aiming to arbitrate between the CCP and the KMT and avoid causing divisions in the resistance war against Japan. The group was later renamed the ‘Democratic Alliance of China’ in 1944 and took part in the postwar Political Consultative Conference. In 1947, the Democratic Alliance was outlawed and dismissed by the KMT government and fled to Hong Kong the following year, announcing its decision to side with the CCP. The intellectual orientation of the Democratic Alliance is close to democratic

alternative to the CCP. They felt it represented the best hope of liberal democracy being established throughout China at some point in the future. As its spiritual leader Hu Shih was a leading figure in the 1919 May Fourth movement on the mainland, the liberal thought of the *Free China* group was, unsurprisingly, deeply influenced by this intellectual tradition.

It would be misleading, nonetheless, to think of the democratic legacy of the May Fourth movement as 'monolithic', for there were heated debates about the idea of 'democracy', an essentially contested concept.<sup>6</sup> What has been missing in most studies in Taiwan on the liberal tradition of May Fourth is the idea of economic democracy, which was debated in the early issues of *Free China* but dropped later after Hayekian economic theory prevailed. Taiwan's liberal legacy was also moulded by the liberal democratic movement in Japan, which influenced the Taiwanese intellectual and political scene before 1945 through Taiwanese students in Japan.<sup>7</sup> Taiwanese elites' periodic petitions for a meaningful role in their own governance were for example inspired and encouraged by the Japanese liberal democratic movement.

This liberal tradition in Taiwan, however, came to an abrupt halt due to the Japanese government's brutal repression of liberal democratic thought as Japanese militarism surged and preparations were made for war; later, the Taiwanese liberal and leftist elites

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socialism. Its leading figures felt that the western idea of liberal democracy was more capable of establishing political institutions, whilst the Soviet Union's socialism was better able to build economic institutions. See Yi-chen Chen, 1997, *Modern Chinese Political Thought – from the Opium War to the Foundation of the People's Republic*, pp. 135-7.

<sup>6</sup> Although the idea of democracy promoted by May Fourth intellectuals is generally interpreted from the liberal perspective, some commentators have contended that it was more complicated than this. For instance, Gu claims that socialism and 'popularistic democracy' are 'major theme(s) in modern Chinese ideologies since 1910 and by 1919 they had obtained cultural hegemony in Chinese intellectual life'. Gu, 2001, p. 620.

<sup>7</sup> As Winckler has pointed out, 'Taiwanese students in Japan witnessed the flourishing of political parties and the expansion of the electorate there. With some encouragement from progressive Japanese in Japan, elite Taiwanese demanded the extension of participation to Taiwan, either through the Japanese parliament or through home rule'. Edwin A. Winckler, 1988, 'Mass Political Incorporation, 1500-2000', in *Contending Approaches to the Political Economy of Taiwan*, p. 57.

were eliminated when the KMT cracked down on the February 28<sup>th</sup> uprising in 1947 and subsequently enforced the 'White Terror' policies of 'Cleansing the Countryside' and 'Wiping out the Red'.<sup>8</sup> This explains why liberalism in Taiwan was almost exclusively moulded by the liberal tradition within May Fourth and why Chinese intellectuals involved with or sympathetic to the *Free China* bimonthly played a significant part in Taiwan's liberal movement.

The Taiwanese political context was dominated by the enmity between the KMT regime and the CCP, while the KMT and *Free China* shared an anti-communist stance. The public culture of 1950s Taiwan was thus characterised by the prevalence of political discourses repudiating communism, promoting liberal democracy, the rule of law and patriotism, and pursuing national unity.<sup>9</sup> Given the complete lack of 'ideal speech situations', public deliberation was confined to internal debate among liberals and critiques of communism, rather than debates between different ideologies. A left-wing movement had however been active in Taiwan during Japanese rule.<sup>10</sup>

The liberal *Free China* intellectuals focussed on the negative sense of liberty. Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* and *The Constitution of Liberty* were the main intellectual sources of *Free China*'s liberal discourse. Chinese political philosopher Fo-chuan Chang's *Freedom and Human Rights*, discussed later, was seen as a further attempt to convert a

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<sup>8</sup> See Hsiue Hua-yuan, 1998, '*Free China*' and Democratic Constitutionalism – An Investigation Into the History of 1950s Taiwanese Political Thought, pp. 2-3; 51-2; also Wu Nai-teh, 2000, 'Reactionary Discourse and Social Science: the reactionary discourse in Taiwan during the period of authoritarian rule', unpublished conference paper, p. 16

<sup>9</sup> Chen Ruei-chung, 1996, 'Discourse as a Way of Viewing: a Re-construction of the Field of Political Discourse of *Free China Bimonthly*'. *Soochow Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 5, p.163.

<sup>10</sup> Prior to 1925, Taiwanese students in Mainland China and Japan introduced anarchism, socialism and Marxism-Leninism to Taiwan. Anti-Japanese imperialism, Taiwan independence and proletarian class revolution were advocated. Many Taiwanese intellectuals were engrossed in the success of the Bolsheviks in Russia and hence keen to stage a socialist revolution in Taiwan. The farmers' and workers' movements had flourished since 1924 and the Taiwanese Communist Party was established in 1928 as part of the programme of the Third International to reorganise communist movements in Asia. The first historical discontinuity of the leftwing movement in Taiwan emerged when the Japanese government began to purge Taiwanese communists through military action. See Hua-yuan Hsiue, 1996, p. 52; Chien

liberal intellectual discourse into a political strategy for democratic constitutional reform, by defining the realisation of individual freedom as the protection of human rights. Yin, as noted above, played a crucial part in the Free China movement and the construction of liberal discourse in Taiwan. Any discussion of *Free China* liberalism thus demands investigation of his ideas, along with those of other important figures.

Hu Shih, in his article 'What is liberalism?', defined freedom as acting 'out of one's own will' as opposed to 'out of external force'. This implied freedom from external constraints. Hu saw liberal movements in human history as a series of efforts to liberate human beings from all sorts of constraints: freedom of religion aimed to liberate people from a particular religious authority; freedom of thought meant liberation from control by orthodox opinion.<sup>11</sup> He attributed the liberal movement's failure to evolve into a democratic movement in East Asian societies, as it had in their Western counterparts, to a failure to grasp the central importance of political freedom to the protection of fundamental human liberties. Hu thus concluded that the political meaning of liberalism is the establishment of representative democracy.<sup>12</sup> Hu's argument is within the tradition of classical liberal democracy, which emphasised the liberal value of toleration and the democratic institutions of majority rule and opposition parties. Hu's emphasis on these values has to be understood in the context of KMT authoritarianism during the Cold War.

Hu Shih's short article on liberalism laid the ground, in a sense, for *Free China's* liberal discourse. It was however the philosophically trained Yin Hai-guang who realised the urgent need to produce a consistent and solid argument for liberalism. His article 'The meanings of liberalism' was written in 1950. It was an attempt to inform people about

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Chiung-ren, 1996, 142; Kuo Chi-chou, 1999, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Hu Shih, 1999, 'What is liberalism?', in Chang Chung-dong et al (eds.), *What is Liberalism?*, p. 215.

liberalism; he felt that most were far better acquainted with and attracted to the ideals of socialism, communism, Marxism and Leninism, particularly the value of equality, given the acute social problems on the mainland caused by the KMT's misrule.

People had doubts about and indeed distrusted 'liberalism', according to Yin, mainly because they mistook it for libertarianism or laissez faire, which ignored socioeconomic equality. He claimed, 'whenever liberalism is mentioned, it seems that many people immediately associate it with laissez faire and tend to think that liberalism is synonymous with laissez faire'. This was, in his view, the 'economic interpretation of liberalism'.<sup>13</sup> He repudiated this comprehensive 'economic causation' perspective, which was deeply influenced by historical materialism.<sup>14</sup>

It was not Yin's intention to deny the contribution of political economy to human development or to reject socialism altogether. Yin and Lei Chen had in fact been influenced by the Fabian Society's idea of democratic socialism. Yin's concern about social (in)equality is apparent in his view of the nature of the Chinese Civil War, which he considered at once a 'national war (aiming to preserve the nation)' and a 'social war (aiming to build an equal and progressive society)'.<sup>15</sup> Democratic socialism thus held an appeal for *Free China* intellectuals, although they labelled themselves liberals and understood liberalism in its classic sense. Social equality and economic democracy were the subject of early debates in *Free China* before Yin introduced Hayek's theory, specifically *The Road to Serfdom*, which settled the debate and laid down the parameters of *Free China*'s liberal discourse.

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<sup>12</sup> „, pp. 216-7

<sup>13</sup> Yin, 1950, 'The content of liberalism', *Free China*, 1950, Vol. 3, No. 3 & No. 4.

<sup>14</sup> Yin said that he understood that anyone who had been trained as a communist, directly or indirectly, would interpret the history of human society and the development and essence of any thought or theory, including liberalism, from the perspective of 'economic causation'. (ibid.)

<sup>15</sup> Yin, 'National war or social war?', *Free China*, 1950, Vol. 2, No. 1.



### The Debate over Individual Freedom, Political Liberalism and Social Equality

In his article 'The content of liberalism', Yin stated that liberalism fundamentally opposed 'any form of unreasonable constraints on human nature, all shackles on human intelligence and any unreasonable regulations on human action'.<sup>16</sup> The conception implied here is negative freedom, understood as freedom from external interference. Hence liberalism signified a 'resistant attitude towards authority'. In line with the negative sense of freedom and interpreting liberalism as an 'actively resistant spirit', Yin equated political liberalism, or the 'political dimension of liberalism' as he termed it, with (liberal) democratic politics. This, he thought, was the only political institution that could prevent the exercise of unjust power and ensure that human beings were treated with dignity.<sup>17</sup>

In another related article, 'Individual freedom and political organisation', Yin responded to anxieties about the possible or intrinsic contradiction in the relationship between the individual and the collective, arguing that the type of political organisation, democratic or non-democratic, was the crucial factor here.<sup>18</sup> The classical liberal ideas of limited government and the distinction between public and private spheres were clearly implied in Yin's discussion of democratic political organisation. Later, inspired by Chang Fo-chuan's argument on 'freedom as human rights', Yin replaced individual freedom with human rights and claimed that 'true democracies' were those political systems that existed to protect fundamental human rights. This is a negative view of democracy: it is needed in order to resist state intervention, rather than encourage

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<sup>16</sup> Yin, 1950, 'The content of liberalism', *Free China*, 1950, Vol. 3, No. 3.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Consistent with his early argument about individual freedom, political liberalism and democracy, Yin took Locke's idea of 'political organisation' as representative of democratic political organisation because it was designed to fulfil individual political will and guarantee that all individuals were equal before the law. Those political organisations set up according to Lenin's theory were non-democratic mainly because they were intended to serve the collective will at the cost of individual freedom. See Yin,

public participation by citizens.

The initial debate over individual freedom and social equality among *Free China* intellectuals, as noted above, is best understood in the global context of the ideological antagonism between communism and liberalism and the local context of the aftermath of Chinese civil war. Having recognised that the defeat of the KMT by the CCP on the mainland was due to socioeconomic polarisation and political corruption, it was widely agreed among the *Free China* intellectuals that the core value of socialism, i.e. equality, must be taken into account. This inspired a debate on whether freedom and equality, or in present terms, democracy and justice, were difficult if not impossible to obtain at the same time.

Tseng Hsu-bai, a much-respected postwar Taiwanese journalist, argued that democracy and socialism, which respectively meet the political and material needs of individuals, were indispensable to achieving a truly liberal society. His argument rooted in democratic socialism, he criticised the inhuman treatment suffered by the working people in a capitalist society which saw them merely as the machinery of production. He cast doubt on communism's capacity to deliver an equal and at the same time democratic society.

He assailed the notion of individual freedom in a capitalist class society, arguing that: 'It seems that everyone enjoys political freedom, economic freedom, freedom of education, freedom of religion, freedom of movement, freedom of association, and freedom of speech, et cetera, in a capitalist society. However, the fact is that the rich enjoy far more freedom than the poor ... as poor people have to work most of their time to earn a living... Under the capitalist system, wages for labour are actually regarded as

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1950, 'Political organisation and individual freedom', *Free China*, 1950, Vol. 10, No. 2.

the benevolence of employers rather than human rights to which the labourers are entitled... In such a class society, in which most people are working slaves and few are masters... freedom, equality, and fraternity are only meaningful for the bourgeoisie, and the principle that democracy is of the people, by the people and for the people is only applied to the bourgeoisie'.<sup>19</sup>

The repressive, bureaucratic regimes exercising tutelage over the proletariat in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe<sup>20</sup> caused Tseng to doubt whether socialism could do a better job than capitalism of establishing social welfare and political democracy. Indeed, from a global perspective, Stalinism had done permanent damage to the world communist movement by the mid-twentieth century.<sup>21</sup> In the context of demoralised world communism, tainted by Stalinism, Tseng critically examined the sociopolitical situation on the mainland a year or so after the CCP's take-over. He concluded that: '[T]he labourers and peasants are still suffering... Although communism has triumphed over capitalism and the capitalist regime has been replaced by the proletarian regime, yet human rights are not being protected and the achievement of social revolution is still out of sight'.<sup>22</sup>

In an article entitled 'On planning and freedom', Hsi-he Wang expressed a similar but more radical view of the importance of economic equality to realising individual freedom and political democracy. It was an attempt to make a case for a planned economy, at a time when most intellectuals, especially liberals, tended to associate this with totalitarianism. Wang's argument, simply put, was that no truly 'free economy' had ever existed. He asserted that since the end of the Second World War, all economies

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<sup>19</sup> Tseng Hsu-bai, 1950, 'On liberalism, democracy, and socialism', *Free China*, 1950, Vol. 2, No. 6.

<sup>20</sup> See Perry Anderson, 1976, *Considerations on Western Marxism*, p. 25.

<sup>21</sup> See Chun Lin, 1993, *The British New Left*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>22</sup> Tseng Hsu-bai, 1950, 'On liberalism, democracy and socialism', *Free China*, 1950, Vol. 2, No. 6.

had been planned in one way or another. While planning was the order of the day in socialist countries, even the most capitalist societies planned their economies to a certain degree. At the same time, Wang was not unaware of the problem of low productivity that blighted most socialist societies. He argued that the idea of equality would be meaningless if the end result of the socialist experiment was that everyone was equally poor. In making a case for a meaningful conception of freedom very much in the Marxian fashion, Wang urged people to reconsider and even relinquish the ideas of individualistic economic freedom and the free market altogether.<sup>23</sup>

Around the same time that the 'freedom vs. equality' debate was exercising the minds of *Free China intellectuals*, a comprehensive land reform programme was launched by the KMT. This was in part a pre-emptive strike intended to prevent the emergence of a labour movement which might one day topple the regime, inspired by the bitter experience of defeat by the communists not long ago. It was also a response, however reluctant, to pressure from the United States, whose primary aim was to incorporate Taiwan into the postwar global political economy of capitalism.<sup>24</sup> The debate seems not

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<sup>23</sup> Wang identified two main goals of socialism: ending exploitation and achieving fair distribution of social wealth, and the effective and reasonable utilisation of national resources to prevent economic panic. He saw common ownership of the means of production as the only way to achieve these social goals. Yet he argued that enhancement of productivity to raise people's living standards was indispensable for building an ideal socialist society. Wang argued that as long as social justice and economic equality were considered social goods to be pursued with vigour, the ideas of individualistic economic freedom and the free market should be reconsidered and even relinquished. He argued that the idea of individualistic economic freedom, which consisted of individual freedom of consumption, of investment, and free choice of occupation, et cetera, had lost its meaning in contemporary capitalism due to the increasing monopoly of private enterprises in the market, the increasingly imperfect competition in production, and the malfunctioning of trade unions, which were more and more concerned about their own interests rather than the welfare of workers. See Wang Hsi-he, 'On planning and freedom', *Free China*, 1950, Vol. 3, No. 1.

<sup>24</sup> It may appear contrary to common belief to argue that the KMT responded reluctantly to American pressure in embarking on land reforms. However, 'nationalist sensitivities about American interference applied particularly to land reform' and 'became particularly acute with regard to the critical third phase of land reform'. Very briefly, the dispute over the last phase of land reform between the United States and Taiwan involved problems related particularly to the transfer of Government enterprises. America's primary concern was to secure a private sector and to guarantee Taiwanese participation in it. See Denis Fred Simon, 1988, 'External Incorporation and Internal Reform', in Winckler and Greenhalgh (eds.), *Contending Approaches to the Political Economy of Taiwan*, pp. 149-48.

have affected the strategies pursued by the authoritarian KMT developmental state. Although some liberal intellectuals vehemently advocated the value of economic freedom at home and the United States intervened to install economically liberal institutions, public sector economic activity still made up a large chunk of Taiwan's industrial economy at the time. It remained central to the island's economy until the idea of privatisation, with its appeals to efficiency and competitiveness, came to dominate the public imagination regarding economic institutional design in the 1980s. Calls for privatisation of state-own-enterprises were incorporated into the opposition movement's political discourse, thus 'moralising' privatisation in Taiwan's political context.

#### Setting the Tone of Liberal Discourse: Freedom over Equality

Wang's article questioned the individualistic conception of economic freedom in contemporary capitalist societies, arguing that a planned economy could help bring about a more meaningful freedom that could be enjoyed by all members of society, rich and poor. After its publication, Yin defended liberalism in general and his notion of 'economic freedom', which constituted one aspect of individual freedom, in particular, by pointing out the major failure of planned economies: low productivity. Having recognised that no existing economy was truly free and that capitalism did cause acute sociopolitical and international-political problems,<sup>25</sup> Yin suggested that it was important to figure out whether the problems of existing societies since the Second World War were theoretical or practical in nature.<sup>26</sup> Their deep belief in the negative

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<sup>25</sup> Yin mentioned that both economic inequality and social polarisation had occurred as a result of the capitalist industrialisation. He also alluded to Lenin's theory that 'imperialism is the highest stage of capitalist development' and the related issue of anti-colonial nationalism. See Yin, 1950, 'The content of liberalism', *Free China*, 1950, Vol. 3, No. 3

<sup>26</sup> Although Yin did not answer his question concerning the 'theory and practice' problem, throughout his discussion, the Soviet model of socialist industrialisation was equated with 'state capitalism' and 'economic paternalism', about which he commented critically (ibid.).

sense of liberty convinced Yin and his fellow liberals that it would be very difficult if not impossible for people to obtain political freedom if their 'stomachs' were controlled by the state.<sup>27</sup>

In a political context in which most people in China longed for freedom and equality, or democracy and justice, and given the different conceptions of freedom, socialism and liberalism, Yin eschewed glib answers. It was not until he was led to read Hayek's works, particularly *The Road to Serfdom*, by renowned postwar liberal economist Hsia Dao-pin, that Yin finally overcame his confusion about the complex relationship between political freedom and economic freedom. From this point forward he stood firm in his defence of a free economy, which, he was convinced, was indispensable for individual freedom.<sup>28</sup>

Unlike Yin and other liberal intellectuals involved in *Free China*, convinced by the socialist theory of economy, Hsia Dao-ping was a died-in-the-wool economic liberal. Hsia was a trained economist who actively engaged in the 'freedom vs. equality' debate during the latter days of *Free China*. Unsurprisingly, he argued strongly against economic regulation. He wrote an editorial for the magazine entitled 'The government

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<sup>27</sup> Yin took the situation of tigers in a zoo to illustrate this point: 'the reason why ferocious tigers in the zoo have to listen to the animal tamer's orders is because they cannot search for food freely in the woods'. (ibid.)

<sup>28</sup> In the foreword to the Chinese version of *The Road to Serfdom* translated by himself, Yin said: 'I am a liberal. Like most liberal-leaning young men influenced by the May Fourth movement, I am not self-conscious of my exclusive attention [confusing/meaningless] to the political dimension of liberalism. There is also an economic dimension of liberalism, which has been the target of the socialist critics. Liberals, including Jeremy Bentham, amended the classical idea of the free economy in response to criticisms made from the socialist perspective.... Faced with the serious challenge from the communists and propelled by the motive of alleviating the urgent situation, many Chinese liberal intellectuals are arguing for "political democracy and economic equality". Such arguments actually ask people to be "masters in the political domain and slaves in the economic domain". I personally feel this argument is problematic. However, I am neither a political scientist nor an economist. All I can express, therefore, is my feeling that there is something wrong with the argument. My thoughts have been trapped for a long time due to my confusion. Suddenly my confusion was overcome when I read Professor Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom*. Hayek drew liberalism back on the right track, away from the attraction of the economic theory of socialism.... If a person's rice bowl is controlled by a strong person, how can he or she obtain any freedom?'. Yin, 1990, 'Foreword', pp. 1-2.

should not induce people to commit crimes'<sup>29</sup> and another unpublished editorial, 'A few questions related to the death of Sun Yuan-chin',<sup>30</sup> often cited to illustrate the magazine's free economy stance, which was coloured by an emphasis on 'freedom over equality'. Here, Hsia fiercely criticised the government's policy of financial regulation, commenting on two incidents involving the corruption of financial inspectors and police officers. Later, Hsia shifted the focus of his criticisms to state-owned enterprises and the broader issue of the party-state capitalist regime in postwar Taiwan.<sup>31</sup>

From the mid-1950s onwards, against the background of the authoritarian rule of the KMT developmental state and the broader historical context of the Cold War, Hayek's work exercised a pervasive influence on public discourse in Taiwan, especially his distinction between 'spontaneous order' and 'designed order', anchored in classic liberal rationalism. Liberalism of the kind propagated by the New Right in the 1970s and 1980s seems to have dominated Taiwanese public culture at the time. Indeed, despite challenges, intellectual as well as political, from various perspectives, adherence to an abstract and rationalistic conception of *homo economicus*, the pursuit of a general theory of minimal government, an individualist and legalist conception of contractual relationships as the basis of economic and social order and the utopian

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<sup>29</sup> Hsia, 1951, 'The government should not induce people to commit crimes', *Free China*, 1951, Editorial II, Vol. 4, No. 11. In this incident, police officers, attracted to the money reward offered by the authorities for fighting economic crimes, induced a man to break the related financial regulations.

<sup>30</sup> This article was written in 1955 but not published because the magazine's editor was afraid that it might get the publication into trouble. The case involved the death of a businessman who committed suicide due to the unbearable pressure from corrupt officials who falsely accused him of receiving money from the mainland (all forms of interaction were prohibited at that time) and threatened to report him if he failed to give them money. See Hsia, 1989, 'A few questions related to the death of Sun Yuan-chin', *A Collection of Hsia's Works* (Volume I: My Time in *Free China*).

<sup>31</sup> See Hsia, 1955, 'The mission of private enterprises' (*Free China*, 1955, Vol. No. ) and 1958, 'On the drawbacks of foreign exchange controls' (*Free China*, 1958, Vol. 18, No. 5). In the former, Hsia bluntly opposed the monopoly of state-owned enterprises, arguing that these should be confined to those industries involving scarce natural resources with a view to preventing private monopoly, which would result in market failure. Moreover, Hsia made a simple association between the scale of state-owned enterprises and regime type – the larger the scale, the less democratic. In the latter article, Hsia pointed out that the KMT party benefited from the state's policy of regulating foreign exchange.

preoccupation with constitutional devices<sup>32</sup> remain key features of liberal discourse in present-day Taiwanese society.

### The Abortive New Party Movement and the End of the *Free China* Era

The *Free China* era ended after the publication of a special issue in 1956 to celebrate Chiang Kai-shek's seventieth birthday,<sup>33</sup> a series of articles in 1957 criticising the KMT's state corporatist policies<sup>34</sup> and numerous contributions between 1959 and 1960 arguing for the legalisation of opposition parties.<sup>35</sup> Prior to the publication of these critical articles, tension between the magazine and the authorities had already intensified because of the call by *Free China* liberals for freedom of speech. In the anti-communist context, any criticisms of the KMT's authoritarian rule were almost always distorted and claimed to be communist propaganda.

For instance, following publication of the aforementioned editorial, 'The government should not induce people to commit crimes', The Public Security Police Headquarters involved in the incident issued a warning to editor-in-chief Lei Chen, accusing him of discrediting them. They kept the Lei residence under surveillance. An official report was authored to make a case of arresting other editors. This was not however carried

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<sup>32</sup> These are the distinctive features of the British New Right, as John Gray pointed out in his polemic article 'The Strange Death of Tory England' (collected in Gray, 1997, *Endgames*). Yet, Taiwanese liberal discourse since the mid-1950s has also featured these elements, apart from the emergence of egalitarian liberal discourse, which has challenged but is nowhere near replacing classic liberal discourse in public fora.

<sup>33</sup> The advice given by the contributors to this 'Special Anniversary Issue' on, for example, the parliamentary system, the professionalisation of the army, etc., was considered by the authorities to 'pave the way for communist propaganda' and was attacked by all official propaganda organs. A pamphlet titled *Comprehensive Attack on Poisonous Thoughts* was later handed out to soldiers and officers in the army. These 'poisonous thoughts' include: freedom of speech, the professionalisation of the army, free education and personal criticism of the President. See Lee Hsiao-feng, 1987, *Forty-year Democratic Movement in Taiwan*, p. 61.

<sup>34</sup> This series of articles was published under the title 'Today's Problems' and was published in the magazine over seven months from August 1957. It began with the issue of 'Retaking the mainland' and ended with that of 'opposition party', raising fifteen problems in total.

<sup>35</sup> Apart from the issue of an opposition party, *Free China* also urged Chiang Kai-shek not to run for a third term as ROC president as it would be unconstitutional.



out. The government issued a statement emphasising the need for financial regulations and calling upon the press to support it.<sup>36</sup> The seemingly positive response to this statement, the editorial 'On economic regulations (II)' in the following issue, inspired Hu Shih to protest against both the magazine's caving in and the government's interference, triggering a heated debate.<sup>38</sup>

The campaign for the legalisation of opposition parties in the 1960s, commonly dubbed the 'New Party Movement', marked the most radical phase of the whole *Free China* era.<sup>39</sup> This campaign tested the limits of KMT tolerance of the dissenting voices of *Free China* intellectuals, ultimately causing the publication's demise. Based on the argument of 'freedom as human rights' developed by Chang Fo-chuan, *Free China*, in collaboration with local Taiwanese elites, attempted to found an opposition party that fused movements pursuing both civil rights and political rights.<sup>40</sup> A non-adversarial

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<sup>36</sup> In its defence, the government emphasised the necessity for financial regulations to prevent illegal financial activities, possibly organised and manipulated by Chinese Communist agents. The press was called upon to support the policy. In response, the editors held a board meeting and decided to write another editorial 'On economic regulations (II)'. Pressurised to respond to the government's statement positively, the article recognised that financial controls were vital to maintaining a stable economy. It also expressed appreciation for the labour, integrity, and achievement of the officials responsible for such tasks.

<sup>37</sup> The editorial, *Free China*, 1951, Vol. 5, No.4.

<sup>38</sup> Hu Shih however considered this response a retreat from the magazine's fight for freedom of speech. He then threatened to resign as its publisher. In the following issue (*Free China*, 1951, Vol. 5, No. 6), the response by the then Premier Chen Cheng was published, stating that the government was determined to protect freedom of speech and the publication of Hu's letter proved that the government did not interfere. From that point on, numerous articles contributed to the debate on freedom of speech, including, for instance, Yin's editorial 'Knowledge and the basic conditions for freedom of speech' (*Free China*, Vol. 5, No. 7), Lei's 'Democratic politics and public opinion (I), (II), (III), (IV)', a lengthy text published successively in several issues as serial articles (*Free China*, 1951, Vol. 5, No. 9; Vol. 5, No. 10; Vol. 6, No. 1; Vol. 6, No. 2) and 'On the nature of public opinion (I) and (II)' (*Free China*, 1954, Vol. 12, No. 10; Vol. 12, No. 11).

<sup>39</sup> The magazine, however, featured advocacy of new parties as early as 1950, when a draft outline of the organisation of a new party, the China Liberal Party, was published (*Free China*, 1950, Vol. 2, No. 1 & Vol. 2, No. 2). Nonetheless, the new party was expected to be supportive of the KMT rather than an opposition party. This explains the emergence of the 'Free China Alliance', aiming to recover the mainland. Hu Shih was considered its leader. Lei Chen's article 'How to protect the freedom of the opposition party', published the same year, was the first to discuss the issue (Lei, 1950, *Free China*, Vol. 2, No. 7).

<sup>40</sup> Local elections in Taiwan were already held under Japanese rule in 1935 as the result of the 'home rule' movement led by the liberal Taiwanese elites. During its later years, some members of *Free China* began to express concern about local elections and wrote reports and commentaries on the campaigns and the results of the elections. Chen Lei was invited to a review meeting after the Taiwan Provincial Assembly,

multi-party system existed in Taiwan at the time, including the KMT, the China Democratic Socialist Party (the CDSP) and the Young China Party (the YCP), but competitive party politics was entirely absent since only the KMT wielded power. Because of the dominance of the issue within public debate, *Free China* had published a considerable number of articles on the idea of an opposition party, most notably those by Chu Ban-yun, published between 1955 and 1958.<sup>41</sup>

The *Free China* era ended with the imprisonment of Lei Chen and Fu Cheng, two key *Free China* figures involved in the abortive New Party movement, and the banning of the magazine. A decade of political silence followed before the liberal democratic movement was rejuvenated in the 1970s.

### **The Silenced Liberal Voice and Its Re-emergence, 1961-1975**

Politics stagnated for a decade or so after the banning of *Free China* and the arrest of Lei Chen and other *Free China* figures involved in the New Party movement in September 1960. The already limited space for public political critique was further reduced. The prospects for liberalism in Taiwan looked bleak in light of the continued political repression. Yet the political silence of the general public in 1960s Taiwan was partly a result of unprecedented economic expansion, which provided the KMT with legitimacy.

The 1970s witnessed remarkably rapid and at the same time equitable economic development, a key component of the 'Taiwan miracle'. As Taiwan was incorporated into the global capitalist system as a result of internal and external initiatives, primarily

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mayoral and county leader elections in 1957. The idea of founding an opposition party emerged from the subsequent meetings.

<sup>41</sup> See Chu, from 1957 to 1958, *Free China*, Vol. 16, No. 7; Vol. 17, No. 6; Vol. 18, No. 4; Vol. 18, No. 9; Vol. 19, No. 5; Vol. 20, No. 10; Vol. 23, No. 5. Mo Li-fei's 'On the difficult aspect of the opposition party problem' (1957, *Free China*, Vol. 16, No. 3) appeared earlier.

by America and Japan, it confronted a series of diplomatic setbacks, beginning with the Diaoyutai Incident in the early 1970s and ending with the normalisation of Sino-US relations in 1979. Nationalist discourse of an anti-imperialist tenor began to compete with liberal discourse for attention within public debate, as represented by the Nativist literary debate; it came to constitute part of Taiwanese public culture.

*Literature Star (1957-1965): from cultural critique to political criticism*

After *Free China* was banned, *Literature Star* emerged as the main conduit of liberal thought in the 1960s. Originally, *Literature Star* was not a political but a literary magazine, publishing articles on art, literature and lifestyle. Later on, articles including more social and political commentary began to occupy a considerable proportion of the magazine. It then took a 'political turn' in 1961 after Lee Ao,<sup>42</sup> an iconoclastic liberal modernist, and other like-minded young men joined the magazine. Based on a firm belief in modernisation and western values such as democracy and science, the main elements of the so-called 'May Fourth spirit' as understood by liberal intellectuals in Taiwan, *Literature Star* confronted Chinese traditionalists in the 'Chinese Culture vs. Western Culture' debate. At the heart of this debate were arguments over the compatibility of western values and Chinese culture and the need for another 'new culture movement', i.e. a comprehensive cultural transformation, to modernise the country.

A liberal cultural discourse like this was especially radical and politically sensitive in light of the 'Chinese cultural renaissance movement', a cultural campaign launched by the authorities to spread political propaganda. It was intended to show the Chinese

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<sup>42</sup> Lee is a well-known historian, writer and political critic of liberal orientation. He was a 'cultural hero' in the eyes of many university students who were deeply influenced by Lee's cultural critiques on traditional Chinese culture and his argument for modernisation in the western style. Lee's iconoclastic

people, on the mainland and on the island, that the KMT represented the cultural orthodoxy of China in the wake of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. From 1962 onwards, political criticisms began to appear in the magazine in addition to cultural critiques. Unsolved political issues close to the hearts of *Free China* liberal intellectuals were addressed. In 1965, at a time when no sign of political liberalisation was to be seen, *Literature Star* suffered the same fate for criticising the KMT's political repression as had *Free China* – it was banned.

*The Intellectual Magazine (1968- 1973): electoral politics and social welfare*

Changed domestic and external situations in the 1970s consolidated the political trend towards liberalisation and democratisation. At the same time, the discourse of liberal capitalist modernisation was being challenged in the early 1970s as leftists incorporated social welfare into public debate. Internally, apart from concern about political reform, public attention shifted from Taiwan's economic success, primarily the improvement of its human capital, to the lives of those who had benefited less if not totally lost out in the process of Taiwan's incorporation into the global capitalist system. The leftwing ideas 'smuggled' into Taiwan by overseas Chinese students, the student demonstrations in the wake of the Diaoyutai Incident and the Nativist Literary movement that followed all played an important part in raising public awareness of the issue.

Externally, as American relations with the PRC improved, the United States began a protracted process of diplomatic and military disengagement from Taiwan. Meanwhile, Taiwan became more deeply enmeshed in both the American and Japanese economies as they used Taiwan's cheap and skilled labour to compete with each other. Politically and economically, Taiwan, like its regional neighbour South Korea, moved from the

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book *Monologue Under the Tradition* was enormously popular among students at the time.

periphery to the semiperiphery within the world system.

*The Intellectual*, originally a literary magazine founded in 1968, turned into a political magazine in the mid-1970s, when Taiwan faced an uncertain future. Its international status changed dramatically as a result of America's new China policy and the ensuing domestic political situation, as Chiang Ching-kuo was groomed to succeed his father Chiang Kai-shek as the president of Taiwan. Inheriting the liberal tradition of *Free China*, modernisation, human rights and democratic constitutionalism continued to be central to the concerns of the liberals involved in *The Intellectual*. Social welfare and farmers' welfare/agriculture policy, however, emerged as two of nine issues addressed in a co-authored article on national affairs published in 1972 after Taiwan (ROC) was expelled from the United Nations.<sup>43</sup>

From the beginning, the KMT's agricultural reform policy had two faces. On the one hand, state action was the key to increasing agricultural growth; on the other, agriculture was consistently squeezed to provide the surplus necessary to finance the growth of other sectors. This included a labour surplus drawn from the rural areas. The cornerstone of both sides of state policy was the three-stage land reform initiated in 1949 and completed in 1953. Land previously owned by landlords under Japanese rule was distributed to a peasant majority that had not struggled to attain it. Landlords were given land bonds in kind and stocks in the four main state-owned enterprises in exchange for the compulsory divestiture of their holdings.<sup>44</sup> The land reform ended landlordism in Taiwan and, together with the Green Revolution, contributed to the high growth of Taiwan's agricultural production. It transformed the life of almost every peasant, narrowing the gap between industrial income and agricultural income and preventing extremes of inequality. Agricultural decline and outflow of population from

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<sup>43</sup> See *The Intellectual*, 'Nine issues of national affairs', 1972, Vol. 49.

the countryside nonetheless remained serious problems.

Crucially, while *The Intellectual* was commonly regarded as a liberal magazine which aimed to disseminate liberal democracy, it attracted some intellectuals more preoccupied with social justice than political liberalism. Wang Hsin-ching (otherwise known as Nanfanshou), for example, was one of those who actively participated in the Baodiao movement. He was also deeply involved in mobilising the students' movement. When Wang dubbed *The Intellectual* the 'last fortress of Chinese liberalism', he meant Sun Yat-sen's 'Three Principles of the People' (nationalism, democracy and the livelihood of the people),<sup>45</sup> though this was certainly not how the doctrine was commonly interpreted.<sup>46</sup> The later rupture in *The Intellectual* group can be attributed to the differing priorities of its participants; it emerged as the result of an internal 'left-right' debate.<sup>47</sup>

The liberal democratic movement took advantage of successive external political and economic shocks<sup>48</sup> to challenge the Establishment, while generational and leadership transitions primed the ruling elite for change. International recognition of Beijing rather than Taipei as the lawful representative of all China sparked off a serious crisis for the KMT regime, whose legitimacy had been built primarily on two related bases: the

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<sup>44</sup> See Alice Amsden, 1985, pp.84-5.

<sup>45</sup> Wang, 1978, *The Last Fortress of Chinese Liberalism*, pp. 189-90. He fiercely criticised the dominant liberal idea of the group for being influenced by western liberalism in the utilitarian tradition. He then claimed that: 'Liberalism cannot indicate the proper direction of China's development because of its hypocrisy and powerlessness, and its highly compromising attitude towards international affairs.... On the contrary, Sun Yat-sen bequeathed to us sufficient wisdom on the issue.... However, most of the group has ignored the instructions of the Three Principles of the People. Some ignore the importance of nationalism in the current stage; some are poisoned by (western) liberalism and thus oppose the Principle of the People's Livelihood. In fact, without the Principle of the People's Livelihood as its prop, we cannot realise the Principle of Democracy. The only way out for China's development is to unite with all nations who treat us as equal to fight against all forms of imperialism'.

<sup>46</sup> The Three Principles of the People are commonly regarded, as Bergère commented, as 'a work of propaganda, a long political tract designed to win followers rather than to instil conviction, an appeal to action rather than to thought'. See Bergère, 1994, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 353.

<sup>47</sup> It was a 'right-left' conflict in that whilst most involved were liberal democrats, some who were deeply influenced by the 'radical liberalism' of the 1970s and involved in the student Baodiao movement tended to incorporate nationalism and socialism into their 'liberal discourse'.

<sup>48</sup> The economic shock here referred primarily to the oil crisis in 1974.

ideology of retaking the mainland and internationally recognised status. To maintain its legitimacy, stable economic development and political liberalisation became the two main tasks of Taiwan's new leader, Chiang Ching-kuo. The so-called 'nativisation' or 'Taiwanisation' policy was initiated to bring more local Taiwanese into the political elite and establish a popular base among the Taiwanese masses. Supplementary elections were held to this end and in response to *The Intellectual's* call for comprehensive re-election of representatives at central government level.<sup>49</sup> This remained the main theme of the liberal democratic movement in Taiwan until it was realised in the early 1990s.

In 1973, *The Intellectual* disintegrated into four groupings, represented respectively by four magazines with different orientations and preoccupations: *Man and Society* and *China Forum*, led by American-trained liberal Yang Kuo-shu, who had studied psychology; *The Intellectual* led by Chen Shao-ting; *Taiwan Political Review* and *This Generation* led by Huang Hsin-chieh and Chang Chun-hung; and the leftwing *China Tide* led by Chen Yin-chen, a realist novelist and leading figure in the Nativist literary debate. The politically quiet period from the 1960s to mid-1975 was followed by the vibrant Dangwai era, culminating in the end of KMT authoritarianism.

### **The Dangwai Era: the Turn towards Democratisation, 1975-1987**

The Dangwai era witnessed waves of political opposition and the mushrooming of dissenting political magazines. Yet this was by no means a united movement, its participants differing particularly on the unification-independence issue. They were

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<sup>49</sup> Chen Shao-ting was the first person to question the 'representativeness' of the central representatives. He pointed out that 'only 27 out of a total of 2000 central representatives were elected from the region of Taiwan in the supplementary election of December 1969; the others were either elected in 1947 and 1948 or took over the seats of those who for various reasons were no longer able to do their jobs'. See Chen, 1971, 'The question of the re-election of central representatives', *The Intellectual*, No. 46.

united primarily under the banner of the 'democratic movement', joining forces in the manner of a 'democratic alliance' to fight the KMT's authoritarianism. Intellectually, the Dangwai movement's liberal-democratic discourse remained much the same as *Free China's* in the 1950s, though the feminist intervention in the liberal debate in the later stages of the Dangwai era broadened the parameters of liberal discourse. Politically, however, Taiwan's liberal-democratic movement gained momentum during this period, its most notable achievement being the removal of martial law in 1987 after four decades.

#### *Taiwan Political Review* and the 1977 Chungli Incident

*Taiwan Political Review*, published in 1975, was a key component of the movement in its early stages. Most of its contributors later became leading figures in the foundation of the first opposition party, the DPP, in the late 1980s. Their liberal discourse was deeply influenced by that of *Free China*, with democratic constitutionalism and human rights as its core ideals. *Taiwan Political Review* was the first publication to shed substantial light on the unbalanced distribution of sociopolitical resources or sociopolitical capital between the local Taiwanese and the mainlanders as the result of KMT policies, the 'quota regime' which skewed national examinations for would-be civil servants in favour of the mainlanders and discriminatory cultural and language policies. The so-called 'provincial-origins issue' began to emerge as a subject of public debate. People's awareness of this issue was, unsurprisingly, closely related to their Taiwanese background.

*Taiwan Political Review* was short-lived, publishing only five issues. It was soon banned because of an article by Chiou Chui-liang touching upon the sensitive issues of the relationship between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait and the future of Taiwan,



specifically the implications of Taiwanese independence. Shortly after the magazine was banned, occurred the Chungli Incident, the first large-scale mass protest against the authorities in postwar Taiwan during the martial order period, triggered by the rigged election for the Chief of Taoyuan County in northern Taiwan in 1977.<sup>50</sup> The KMT's dirty tricks in the election and subsequent crackdown on the protest proved counterproductive. Dangwai candidates later gained considerable seats from the KMT in various local elections at county chief, mayoral and Taiwan Provincial Assembly level. A quasi-opposition party was taking shape and the political landscape in Taiwan was changing.

#### Formosa Magazine and the 1979 Kaohsiung Incident

The 1978 supplementary election for legislators was called off in December of that year when the Carter administration announced that the United States intended to sever formal relations with Taiwan and abolish the ROC-US Mutual Defence Treaty on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1979. The Dangwai movement, however, went on, primarily in the form of mass rallies. *Formosa* was founded two months after the publication of a relatively moderate political magazine, *The Eighties*, in August 1979.<sup>51</sup> The magazine served as a base for Dangwai political dissidents and as its propaganda organ. Local branches were set up around the island and a series of rallies were organised, partly in preparation for future election campaigns.

The Dangwai movement put 'human rights' at the heart of its political discourse, which

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<sup>50</sup> It was widely believed that the KMT decided to cheat because it was aware that the Dangwai movement might mount a successful challenge to KMT candidates in light of its active participation in five local elections, including the election in Chungli.

<sup>51</sup> Two magazines represented two different strands of the Dangwai movement. *The Eighties* led by Kang Ning-hsian adopted a more moderate form of political participation in the opposition movement by writing articles and initiating public debate. A more radical line, privileging mass mobilisation, was adopted by the *Formosa* group. Its activities centred on public speeches.

embraced political, economic and social rights. On December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1979, an illegal mass rally was organised in Kaohsiung to mark 'International Human Rights Day'. The rally turned into a violent confrontation between the participants and the riot police and was crushed with considerable force. The leaders of the rally were jailed and local expressions of dissent by Dangwai leaders were suppressed throughout Taiwan. The Kaohsiung Incident effectively and abruptly halted the intellectual and political movement led by *Formosa*, but it certainly did not end the demand for reform. The elections originally scheduled for December 1979, but called off due to the severance of Taiwan-US relations, were eventually held one year later, in December 1980.

Perhaps to the surprise of the KMT, the arrest and imprisonment of the most prominent figures involved in the Kaohsiung incident and their military trial attracted so much sympathy and support for their attorneys and relatives that they were elected to office. This made a deep impression on Chiang Ching-kuo, causing him to review the party's repressive policies and practices. Overall, while the incident muted the expression of dissident views and indeed mere public discussion of politics, it ultimately strengthened rather than weakened the opposition movement, as the second generation of leaders emerged to fill the roles of the senior figures now behind bars.<sup>52</sup>

Chiang Ching-kuo then became receptive to political liberalisation. In September 1986, the Dangwai movement declared the establishment of the DPP on the eve of the parliamentary elections in 1986. The government not only allowed it but also began formal negotiations with its leaders. Martial law was lifted and democratisation, aimed at establishing representative political institutions, commenced.<sup>53</sup> Pressure from the United States also figured in the KMT's decision to embark on political reform. Yet

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<sup>52</sup> Alan A Wachman, 1994, *Taiwan: National Identity and Democratization*, pp. 140-1.

<sup>53</sup> David Potter, 1997, 'Democratization at the same time in South Korea and Taiwan', p. 233.

America's support for limited democratisation along Japanese lines in the latter half of the 1980s, after decades of consistently backing the anti-communist authoritarian regime, may have been anchored in the pressure exerted by domestic economic interests. Simply put, some democratisation would mean a rise in wages, which had been kept down in Taiwan, an authoritarian developmental state, to maintain its competitive advantage in the global economy.<sup>54</sup>

### **Liberalism Challenged: Confronting Egalitarianism,<sup>55</sup> Nationalism and Postmodernism,<sup>56</sup> 1987 to the present**

The Dangwai movement, which united social activists with different priorities, thus successfully challenged KMT authoritarianism, leading both commentators and scholars to produce a society-centred account of Taiwan's political development. According to this, social power, as demonstrated in the general public's active participation in mass rallies and public meetings during the Dangwai period, was the main and indeed indispensable driving force behind Taiwan's democratisation.

'Civil society' was at the core of this society-centred explanation and came to dominate public debate shortly after the end of martial law in 1987. Indeed, it is even more popular now with the public and academics in Taiwan, following the introduction to the island of cosmopolitanism and a plethora of discourses revolving around the idea of 'globalisation'. The emergence of civil society discourse in post-1987 Taiwan was certainly related to the remarkable, broad-based revival of civil society from the late

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<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*, p. 235.

<sup>55</sup> Egalitarianism refers to the discourse of the liberal left that emphasised social justice in addition to the classic liberal concern with individual freedom.

<sup>56</sup> Postmodernism is undoubtedly a heavily loaded notion and far from easy to define. As Perry Anderson described it, the history of ideas of the postmodern was a 'complicated story of anticipations, displacements and inversions, that can at times look arbitrary or enigmatic, yet possesses its own underlying logic'. Anderson, 'Foreword', in Fredric Jameson, 1998, *The Cultural Turn*. In the Taiwanese context, it refers primarily to those discourses that overwhelmingly value individuality and oppose the

1970s onwards, which took place against the backdrop of totalitarianism in Europe, dictatorship in Latin America and communism in Asia.<sup>57</sup> Post-1987 liberal discourse is dominated by the concept and theory of civil society.

### *China Tribune and the 'Civil Society' Debate*

Two years after martial law was revoked, a liberal organisation, Chengshe, was set up by intellectuals involved with the liberal magazine *China Tribune*. The leading figures were scholars, mainly from the most prestigious university in Taiwan, the National Taiwan University, including the psychologist Yang Kuo-shu, the political scientist Hu Fu, and the legal scholar Lee Hung-hsee. A debate on civil society was organised by *China Tribune* in 1989, with the title 'How to locate civil society'.<sup>58</sup>

Nanfanshou (real name: Wang Hsing-ching) saw civil society as under constant threat from all manner of state intervention. For him, the KMT's bureaucratic managerialism had made its power so pervasive that the contemporary Taiwanese state exhibited a species of 'traditional despotism'. He drew upon the theory of liberal economy, specifically the idea of the 'free market', to present a solution to this problem based on weakening state power. This argument had negative implications for social equality, which began to emerge as an issue after Taiwan's economy entered a science and technology-oriented phase in the 1980s.

The neo-liberal or *laissez-faire* approach proposed by Nanfanshou to counter the state, which he viewed as the only menace to democracy, certainly surprised those aware of his persuasive argument, made in the 1970s, stressing the urgent importance of Sun

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idea of 'authority', most notably, the nation state.

<sup>57</sup> John A Hall and Frank Trentmann, 2005, *Civil Society: A Reader in History, Theory and Global Politics*, p. 3.

<sup>58</sup> The debate was published in the magazine afterwards. See 'How to Locate Civil Society', 1989, *China Tribune*, Vol. 28, No. 12.

Yat-sen's Principles of Nationalism and the People's Livelihood.<sup>59</sup> This neo-liberal discourse sat very uneasily with the domestic and external contexts in which the 'civil society vs. the state' debate took place in the late 1980s. The growing concern about social inequality at home and the dominance of 'American economic-cultural imperialism' globally, the prime target of Nanfanshou's Chinese nationalism in the 1970s, made his new position unpalatable.

Nanfanshou's argument was criticised by Karweipo (Ning Ying-bin) from a radical pluralist perspective.<sup>60</sup> He assailed the idea that the state is the sole source of domination and coercion and the notion of a 'civil society' without internal inequality or hierarchy. In short, Karweipo criticised the perception of civil society as a social entity featuring 'normative consensus about or hegemony of fundamental ideas among social forces, even among contending groups'.<sup>61</sup> As far as the internal contradiction within civil society is concerned, much empirical research on Taiwan's social movements, which got off the ground on a large scale in the late 1980s, has indicated that not all demonstrations or protests were directed against state intervention.<sup>62</sup> On the contrary, many demanded that the state take a more active role in social redistribution, particularly those calling for more comprehensive provision of public welfare.

Related to the 'civil society vs. the state' debate was the introduction by Hun-tzu (Chen Chung-hsin) to public debate of Habermas' idea of a public sphere.<sup>63</sup> Rather than

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<sup>59</sup> See Note 45 in this chapter.

<sup>60</sup> Simply put, radical pluralists argue that antagonism not only marks the relationship between state and society but also characterises society itself. They also claim that it is not only crucial to tolerate adversaries, but that the multiplication of antagonisms is fundamental for democracy to retain its vitality. See for example, Chantal Mouffe, 1999, 'Carl Schmitt and the Paradox of Liberal Democracy', in Chantal Mouffe (ed.), *The Challenge of Carl Schmitt*; 2000, *The Democratic Paradox*.

<sup>61</sup> Joel S. Migdal, 1994, 'The State in Society: an Approach to Struggles for Domination', in Joel S. Migdal et al (eds.), *State Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third World*.

<sup>62</sup> For a detailed account of the development of social movements in Taiwan and its relationship to Taiwan's political transformation, see Chang Mau-kuei, 1989, *Social Movements and Political Transformation*.

<sup>63</sup> See Hun-tzu, 1990, *Towards a Post-Formosa Civil Society*, Vol. 2.

assuming an antagonism between civil society and the state, he stressed the role of the public sphere as an intermediate space in which democratic citizens participate in public affairs through deliberation. For Hun-tzu, a well-functioning public sphere capable of maintaining a critical balance between civil society and the state, or between life world and system, was vital to democracy.

### *Classical Liberalism vs. Egalitarian Liberalism: Individual Freedom vs. Social Justice*

The mission statement of the liberal organisation Chengshe, written by its leader Yang to clarify its intellectual stance, confused some of its readers, such as liberal political philosopher Chiang Yi-hua.<sup>65</sup> On the one hand, Yang claimed that Chengshe would *not* adhere to Fabian reformist socialism, though it was set up to perform the same function as the Fabian Society. On the other hand, he argued that some moderate and effective socialist measures should be taken seriously and implemented to achieve social justice. Whether there is an insoluble contradiction, theoretically as well as practically, between freedom and justice, depends on which liberalism is under discussion: libertarianism (in the tradition of Friedrich A. Hayek and Robert Nozick or in American sense) or the so-called 'new liberalism' or egalitarian liberalism (referring to liberal theories of John Rawls and Ronald Dworkin).

These two liberalisms are distinguished primarily by the differing degree of emphasis they place on equality. Both talk about equality, and how it is perceived. Related to this distinction are the different senses of liberty postulated by Berlin. Whilst individualism, spontaneous social order, rule of law, limited government and the free market constitute

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<sup>64</sup> See Perry Anderson's critical discussion of Habermas' theory of the public sphere in his *A Zone of Engagement*.

<sup>65</sup> Chiang pointed out that, at least in theory, there might exist potential conflict between the ideals of individual freedom and social justice in that the realisation of social justice, involving social redistribution through taxation, inevitably impinges upon individual economic freedom. Chiang, 2001, p. 302.

the core of libertarianism, egalitarian liberalism is mainly concerned with how best to strike a balance between freedom and equality, and to examine which basic principles might underlie a just society, in order to make individual rights more meaningful in the contemporary context. What is at issue here is thus the question: 'equality of what?' From this perspective, what distinguishes libertarianism and egalitarian liberalism is the difference between '(formal) equality of opportunity' and 'fair equality of opportunity'.

In Taiwan generally, and among liberal intellectuals involved in Chengshe specifically, public policy disagreements, primarily in relation to the role of government, stem from contrasting liberal stances. Views on social welfare and media policy<sup>67</sup> are good examples. Libertarians in Taiwan, most of whom are economists, regard the 'free market' as the basic principle of all policy. Accordingly, 'social welfare' should be provided by the private sector in the form of individual insurance, and the less government regulates the mass media the better. Their liberal left counterparts, leaving aside the question as to whether the state should be the only or main provider of social welfare, reject the notion that the market should be the key mechanism of welfare provision. Privatisation of welfare is thus undesirable. In light of the scarcity of airwaves and radio frequencies, they stress the public role and social responsibility of the mass media. The mass media is thus not merely a 'free market of opinions'. It is a

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<sup>67</sup> The KMT had monopolised and controlled the mass media for more than fifty years. Until the late 1980s and early 1990s, the mass media performed the role of 'ideological state apparatus' in Gramsci's terms. Criticisms of the authoritarian media policy focused on the role of three terrestrial television companies, including Taiwan Television Enterprise (TTV), China Television Company (CTV) and Chinese Television System (CTS), which were accused of acting as the party's mouthpiece and attacked for being state-owned. TTV was owned by the Taiwan Provincial Government, CTS by the Ministry of Defence and CTV by the KMT. Given the dominance of free market discourse, privatisation has been the most popular suggestion for media reform. However, a number of organisations have been set up, primarily by media scholars, most notably the Union for the Democratic Reform of Terrestrial Television and the Students' Struggle for Communication, to promote the idea of 'public media'. The Public Broadcasting Group, similar to the BBC in the UK and the NHK in Japan, has been at the heart of their campaign.

public sphere and important to the practice of deliberative democracy.

Libertarianism, unfortunately, is still a distinctive feature of Taiwanese public culture. The first of Chengshe's reports on various issues invoked neo-liberal doctrine, viewing de-regulation as the solution to almost every problem: *Disintegrating KMT-State Capitalism – A Closer Look at Privatising Taiwan's State- and Party-Owned Enterprises*.<sup>68</sup> This libertarian view has been criticised from two perspectives. Firstly, as noted in the discussion of the 'East Asian model' in Chapter Two, government intervention in 'governing the market' should be given the credit for Taiwan's rapid economic growth. It is therefore misleading to argue that economic efficiency can only be achieved through the invisible hand of the free market. Secondly, the contribution of state-owned enterprises or the public sector to Taiwan's 'growth with equality' is ignored in the libertarian view.<sup>69</sup> In short, these critiques are imbued by the market myth and neglect the social responsibility of the public sector.

The prevailing libertarian ideology, and the idea of negative liberty so central to Taiwanese public culture, are best understood in the context of Taiwan's long history of political authoritarianism. Wu Chuan-yuan analyses the historical-political context of liberal development in Taiwan from a social democratic perspective and with a specific concern for the autonomous development of local social movements in post-1987 Taiwan. Wu finds that anti-communism and rejection of KMT authoritarianism explain

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<sup>68</sup> 'Efficiency' underpinned these economists' attraction to a policy of privatisation. It was stated in the conclusion: 'Generally speaking, the purpose of privatisation is to decrease the range of government intervention in pursuit of the full functioning of the price mechanism. Hence private economic activities are instructed and regulated by an invisible hand by means of which .... the highest level of efficiency can be achieved .... Government intervention must only be allowed when the market fails to prevent the natural monopoly of resources, economic externalities such as industrial pollution and income inequality with a view to maintaining a stable economy'. See Chen et al, 1991, *Disintegrating the Party-State Capitalist Regime*, p.267.

<sup>69</sup> See Chu Wan-wen, 1995, 'The Role of the State in the Development of Capitalism in Taiwan – A Review of Party-State Capitalism', *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Sciences*, August 1995, No. 20; Chin-fen Chang, 2001, *The Privatization of State-Owned Enterprises in Taiwan: A Critique of the Economic Myth*.



the appeal of Hayek's capitalist democracy anchored in libertarianism to the Taiwanese public and intellectuals. Hayek's theory could namely be deployed to counter the communist ideal of 'economic equality' and demand liberal democracy from the KMT.<sup>70</sup>

In a setting dominated by libertarian discourse, a group of egalitarian liberals deeply influenced by Rawls' theory of justice and originally members of Chengshe, notably Chien Sechin Y. S. and Chang Shih-hsiung, advocated the idea of social justice within public deliberation in the late 1990s. In his articles 'The Political Character of Liberalism – the Contrast between Yin Hai-guang and John Rawls',<sup>71</sup> and 'Why Liberalism is Concerned with Equality – a Contemporary View',<sup>72</sup> Chien, whilst viewing the focus on negative freedom within the liberal discourse of *Free China* in the 1950s as understandable, stressed the importance of making individual freedom meaningful in the contemporary context of capitalist modernity by taking social justice seriously. Chang Shih-hsiung's 'The Evolution of Taiwanese Liberalism and the Challenge of the New Century' expressed concerns similar to those of Wu Chuan-yuan and Chien Sechin Y. S. and claimed that a critical rethinking of Taiwan's predominant libertarianism is crucial, especially in the context of globalisation, to ensure social justice.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Wu Chuan-yuan, 1997, 'Oppositional Movements and the Formation of A New Political Culture: A Social Democratic Perspective', in You Ying-long (ed.), *Democratic Consolidation or Consolidation: the Challenges to Taiwan in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*.

<sup>71</sup> It was originally presented as a paper to a cross-Strait academic conference on Yin Hai-kuang's thought in Hubei, China in 1998, with the title 'The Character of Yin Hai-kuang's Thoughts and Reflections on the Political Character of Liberalism'. It was later collected in *Beyond Absolutism and Nihilism: Political Ethics in the Modern Context* (2001).

<sup>72</sup> It was originally presented to several conferences in 1999 and later collected in *Beyond Absolutism and Nihilism* (2001)

<sup>73</sup> Chang Shih-hsiung, 2004, 'The Evolution of Taiwanese Liberalism and the Challenge of the New Century', in *Social Justice and Globalisation – Welfare and Reflections on Liberalism*.

### *The 'Liberal Democracy vs. Radical Democracy' Debate*

Related to, yet intellectually distinct from, the debate between classic liberalism and egalitarian liberalism are the critiques on the practice of liberal democracy in post-1987 Taiwan from the perspective of radical democracy. Due to their different understandings of democracy, liberal democrats celebrated the entry of Taiwan into the phase of 'democratic consolidation' after the first popular presidential election in March 1996 and the historic power transfer from the KMT to the DPP in the 2000 presidential election, while radical democrats argued that Taiwan had merely entered a 'post-authoritarian' era and was far from being a (genuine) democracy.

Sub-groupings within the camp of radical democracy can be differentiated by the different intellectual sources and orientations of their democratic discourses. To simplify somewhat, they include those who advocate the idea of people's democracy as understood in Dewey's pragmatism and those deeply influenced by the theory of radical pluralism found in postmodernism.<sup>74</sup> These two groupings revolve around a radical journal, *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, and claim to represent a common political stance, that of the 'democratic left', which also includes some egalitarian liberals like Chien Sechin Y. S.

Chao Kang's essay on Dewey's critiques and reconstruction of liberalism can be seen as representative of the first grouping. Against the backdrop of the dominance of libertarianism in Taiwanese culture and the emergence of nationalist discourses at the centre of public debate, Chao questions whether the libertarian concept of individualism was a helpful and desirable theory to counter the arguably increasingly

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<sup>74</sup> Again, it is hard to define a heavily loaded concept like 'postmodernism'.

influential reactionary collectivism, such as ethnic nationalism.<sup>75</sup> The aim of the essay was to formulate a non-statist theory of public/private spheres as the foundation of the project of radical democracy. Based on Dewey's concept of 'the public',<sup>76</sup> and critiques of Richard Rorty's 'postmodern bourgeois liberalism'<sup>77</sup> and Jürgen Habermas's 'quasi-transcendentalism',<sup>78</sup> Chao criticised the liberal discourse in Taiwan for its inability to perform any 'mediating function' because an active public was impossible in an intellectual context dominated by the concept of negative liberty. Later Chao incorporated the idea of 'the social' into his project of radical participatory democracy, but without differentiating it from 'the public'.<sup>79</sup>

The other radical democratic discourse is represented by the *Con-temporary* magazine and other magazines associated with it, for example, *Off The Island*. Theories of postmodernism have been introduced systematically by the magazine. The English title suggests its postmodern orientation, mainly characterised by anti-foundationalism.<sup>80</sup> The thoughts and theories of leading figures in the tradition of postmodernism have

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<sup>75</sup> Chao's concern about this issue has to be understood in the context of early 1990s Taiwan, when a 'state/nation-building movement' was underway. His criticism was directed against Taiwanese nationalism. Four essays out of eight in the same volume were devoted to critical discussions of Taiwanese nationalism, the origin of which, according to Chao, was 'resentment', a term he borrowed from Nietzsche. See Chao, 1998, 'Power, Resentment, Vanguard: an Examination of the Identity Politics of Ethnic Nationalism', p. 98.

<sup>76</sup> In contrast to the isolated individuals in a liberal democratic society who are powerless and easily 'guided', the public, in the view of Dewey, refers to those people who can grasp and utilise their 'freed intelligence' and actively engage in public affairs. Chao Kang, 1998, 'What is "Democracy"? What is "the Public"?: Dewey's Criticisms and Reconstruction of Liberalism', p. 233.

<sup>77</sup> It is argued in such criticism that Rorty's anti-foundationalism and anti-essentialism, inspired by Dewey, are used to endorse the ideas of classic liberalism: a strictly defined distinction between public and private spheres and the negative sense of individual liberty. Chao, 1998, 'What is "Democracy"? What is "the Public"?: Dewey's Criticisms and Reconstruction of Liberalism', note. 2, p. 194.

<sup>78</sup> Habermas was criticised for misplacing the radical historicism of Dewey's pragmatism within his framework of ethical universalism.

<sup>79</sup> See Chao Kang, 2001, 'Against Neoliberal Globalization, Why and How', *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, December 2001, No. 44. See Lin Chun, 2001, for a definition of 'the social'.

<sup>80</sup> It was stated: 'The English title of this magazine, "Con-temporary", fully expresses our purpose in founding it. "Con" as opposed to "pro" signifies the meaning of "against", thus stressing that "contemporary" does not equate with a "sole temporal unit". It is full of tensions and complexity. "Temporary" signifies the meaning of "time". The term "con-temporary" thus signifies both the notions of "contemporary" and "temporary" and indicates *Con-temporary's* rejection of any transcendental truth and its emphasis on temporality'. *Con-temporary*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1989.

appeared in its articles, including, Heidegger, Jameson, Benjamin, Bourdieu, Lyotard, Barthes, Rorty, and Foucault. *Off The Island* was published two years later.<sup>81</sup>

Postmodern ideas, still largely confined to university students,<sup>82</sup> have impacted upon the public discussion of political democracy in Taiwan by 'radicalising' the idea of democracy, criticising and indeed rubbishing the mainstream discourse of liberal democratic constitutionalism and its practice in post-1987 Taiwan. Instead, radical democracy, a concept interchangeable with 'popular democracy' or 'people's democracy' in this radical discourse, was claimed to be a more effective strategy than the competitive elections of representative democracy in the political struggle against all forms of domination.<sup>83</sup>

The two main sub-groupings of radical democrats discussed above share the same strategy of political struggle, inspired by the idea of new social movements, a legacy of the New Left.<sup>84</sup> They differ, however, in their views of the role of the state and the concept of individual freedom. Very briefly put, the discourse of the second group, deeply influenced by the theory of postmodernism, was criticised by the first group,

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<sup>81</sup> The idea of a 'non-mainstream', 'marginal' or 'de-centring' position is signified in the title *Off The Island*. 'Island' refers to Taiwan.

<sup>82</sup> It was not until the campaign calling on Taiwanese voters to spoil their ballot papers in the presidential election, together with the first referendum in Taiwan in 2004, that the impact of this radical view of democracy on Taiwanese politics was seen by the general public.

<sup>83</sup> 'Many people have argued that there is a causal relationship between the establishment of parliamentary democracy and the ability of the people to throw off domination. Here, empowerment is attributed to the institutions of parliamentary democracy. However, we wish to point out that the reason why people have such tremendous capacity to reject domination in the western countries is not because they have parliamentary democracy but because of the legacy of the labour movements since the 19<sup>th</sup> century and various new social movements in the 1960s. It has nothing to do with parliamentary democracy. There has in point of fact been naked, cruel, and bloody oppression of labour movements and other anti-domination movements in these parliamentary democratic countries... Parliamentary democracy therefore does not necessarily bring about more space for popular democratic participation unless the dominated continuously struggle' (Shen, 1993, pp. 367-8).

<sup>84</sup> For a detailed discussion of developments from the New Left to the New Social Movements, see Lin Chun, 1993, *The British New Left*, pp. 190-5. In the Taiwanese context, 'new social movements' have been invoked to criticise the 'CENI (competitive-elitist neo-institutional) model' of democracy and democratisation. See Lin Shu-fen, 2000, *Democratization in Taiwan Revisited: In a Pursuit of Radical Democracy*, pp. 8-14.

inspired by Dewey's 'radical liberalism', for neglecting the importance of political economy in their analysis of and strategy for sociopolitical emancipation. This is bound up with their outright hostility to the state and the libertarian view of individual freedom which it underpins.

### *Liberalism's Encounter with Nationalism: Liberal Nationalism and Its Critics*

The emergence of radical democratic discourse in Taiwan was linked with discontent with the practice of liberal democracy, but also with the emergent nationalist politics of the early 1990s. While public debates related to the issue of national identity appeared much earlier, for instance, the 'Chinese consciousness vs. Taiwanese consciousness' debate in the early 1980s, over-arching nationalist politics first became central to Taiwanese politics following the programme of 'Taiwanising' or 'localising' the KMT carried out under the leadership of Lee Teng-hui, successor of Chiang Ching-kuo as Taiwan's president until 2000. Lee's main concern was to consolidate his own power and maintain his party's ruling status in the face of the challenge represented by the opposition party's convergent discourse of democratisation and Taiwanese nationalism.

Yet Taiwan's public culture began to shift away from liberalism towards nationalism as early as the late 1970s. Since then, local Taiwanese politicians had gradually replaced Chinese liberal intellectuals of the *Free China* generation as the main participants in public fora. The politics of the Dangwai era, discussed earlier, presented an opportunity structure for these local Taiwanese politicians, who had been deeply involved in the opposition movements. As noted above, one of the distinctive features of opposition discourse was the convergence of democratisation and Taiwanese nationalism. Liberal discourse was thus connected to the issue of national identity in an attempt to construct a discourse of liberal nationalism. Central to this liberal nationalist discourse was the

view that Taiwan's democratisation was at the same time '(Taiwan) nation-building' by means of periodic elections.<sup>85</sup> *Ethnic Relations and National Identity*,<sup>86</sup> a widely cited book on the issue, has been commonly considered the first attempt by scholars to examine the relationship between nationalism and Taiwan's democratisation from various perspectives.

The critics of liberal nationalism include liberals, radical democrats and Chinese nationalists. The debate between Taiwanese nationalism and Chinese nationalism is discussed in detail in the following chapter. The discussion here therefore focuses on the critiques by liberals and radical democrats. Drawing on the theories of S. Mill, H. Beran, Y. Tamir and H. Kohn, which argued that liberalism and nationalism are compatible, Wu Nai-teh conducted an empirical survey to explore the political value(s) or ideology underpinning Taiwanese national identity. Attitudes towards 'cession', which was taken to embody the liberal value of 'self-determination' or 'autonomy', were at the heart of this research. The conclusion lent support to the aforementioned liberal nationalist theories, which claimed that Taiwanese national identity and liberal belief were interconnected.<sup>87</sup>

Wu's research has been discussed thoroughly and critically by Chiang Yi-hua from a liberal perspective. Chiang argued that it was misleading to see 'political cession or independence' as the key strategy extolled by western theorists of liberal nationalism. He pointed out that what Taiwanese demanded was space to pursue 'cultural autonomy' within the same liberal state. Chiang also reminds us of the core of classical liberal

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<sup>85</sup> See Lin Chia-lung, 2001, 'Taiwan's democratisation and nation formation', in *Nationalism and Cross-Strait Relationship*, pp. 217-66 and 2002, 'The Political Formation of Taiwanese Nationalism', in *Memories of the Future*, 219-41; Wu Rwei-ren, 2002, 'Toward a Pragmatic Nationalism', in *Memories of the Future*, pp. 197-217.

<sup>86</sup> *Ethnic Relations and National Identity*, 1993, Mau-kuei Chang (ed.). Taipei: National Policy Centre.

<sup>87</sup> Wu Nai-teh, 1996, 'Nationalism and Ethnic Identity: the search for the ideological base of Taiwanese nationalism', *Taiwanese Political Science Review*, Opening Issue.

values – individual rights, limited government, checks and balances, division of power, etc.<sup>88</sup> A standard liberal critique has also been provided by Chien Sechin Y. S., focusing on the particularism of nationalism from the perspective of liberal ‘universalism’. He criticises the concept of ‘national’ as opposed to ‘citizen’.<sup>89</sup>

The critiques produced by radical democrats, which were as diverse as the different strands of liberalism and nationalism, were directed against nationalism in general, primarily from the perspective of ‘radical pluralism’ and ‘internationalism’. The influences of various ‘post-isms’ can be discerned in these discourses, including postmodernism, post-colonialism and post-structuralism. A discussion of these intricate theories and their histories is beyond the scope of this research. I thus limit myself to highlighting a few salient points. Based on their anti-essentialism, postmodern and post-structural discourses in Taiwan question any attempt to establish a link between individual subjectivity and national identity. They underline the multiplication and complexity of identity.<sup>90</sup> The pre-eminent figure producing post-colonial critiques on nationalism is cultural studies scholar Chen Kuan-hsiung, whose ‘international localism’ is representative of post-colonial discourse. Central to this discourse are the ideologies of anti-imperialism, anti-hegemony and anti-capitalism. The practice of bourgeois democracy is called into question while the political imagination of a ‘post-national’ world takes centre stage.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Chiang Yi-hua, 1998, ‘The theoretical types of national identity discourses in contemporary Taiwan’, in *Liberalism, Nationalism and National Identity*, pp. 170-76.

<sup>89</sup> Chien, 2001, ‘Liberalism and Nationalism: a Reflection on Two Political Values’, in Chien, *Beyond Absolutism and Nihilism*, pp. 371-80. Originally collected in the proceedings of the ‘Towards a fair and just society: arguments for the regenerative development of 21st century Taiwan’ conference in 2000, with the title ‘The debate between mainstream political values: liberalism vs. nationalism’. See Huang Rong-tsun (ed.), *Towards a fair and just society: arguments for the regenerative development of 21st century Taiwan*.

<sup>90</sup> See for instance, Lin Shu-fen (2000).

<sup>91</sup> The representative article is Chen’s ‘The Imperialist Eye’ published first in Chinese in *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, in 1994, and later translated into English and published in a cultural studies journal, *positions*, in 2000.

## **Feminist Interventions: The Debate Between Liberal and Lesbian Feminists**

Most existing literature on Taiwan's political development has, unfortunately, failed to investigate the liberation and empowerment of women. Yet feminist critiques have not only enriched Taiwanese liberal discourse but, more importantly, have raised the general public's consciousness of the importance of feminist contribution. Difficult though this awareness-raising is, it is indispensable to the liberation of women in a society deeply influenced by the traditional culture and norms of Confucianism.

Compared to other East Asian capitalist industrial societies greatly influenced by Confucian values, such as Japan and South Korea, Taiwanese women have in fact enjoyed relatively equal and autonomous status in society, politics and economy.<sup>92</sup> However, as Farris notes, in Taiwan, 'rapid industrialisation significantly altered women's roles without necessarily "liberating" them from the Confucian patriarchal family; and the terms of Taiwan's incorporation into the world capitalist system unevenly exploited women, depending on their economic and social positions'.<sup>93</sup> Farris' comparison of capitalist Taiwan with socialist China is particularly stimulating. Taiwan scores lower in terms of gender equality in almost every aspect except individual freedom and privacy, the latter failings of China's 'state feminism' a product

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<sup>92</sup> Christensen noted at the beginning of his article on the impact of electoral rules in Japan that: 'Among the advanced industrial democracies, Japan is widely seen as a hostile environment for women in politics. Its business and bureaucratic elites are extremely male dominated. This characterization carried over into the electoral realm, where Japan is notorious for the low representation of women in the Diet (Japan's national legislature)' (Christensen, 2000, p. 25). Comparing electoral reform and the empowerment of women in Taiwan and South Korea, focusing on women in the national legislative bodies, Lee pointed out that 'the situation concerning women's representation in Taiwan is quite different from that in South Korea, and much more positive' (Lee, 2000, p. 52).

<sup>93</sup> Of the articles collected in the same book, all of which compare women's status in capitalist democracies in the region, Farris' comparative analysis of the impacts of socialism and capitalism on women's social existence and political participation in China and Taiwan is particularly stimulating. Farris also draws attention to the importance of class analysis in women's studies, which is central to the debate between socialist feminism and liberal feminism, and which has been and remains a neglected perspective in Taiwan's public debate.



of its 'equality through sameness' doctrine.<sup>94</sup>

In the 1970s, the newly bourgeois culture of urban Taiwan witnessed the beginning of a women's movement, commonly regarded as the first wave of the Taiwanese feminist movement (1972-1982),<sup>95</sup> led by Lu Annette Hsiu-lien among others. Lu is a Harvard-trained scholar and an active participant in the democratic movement. She currently serves as the vice-president of Taiwan. Lu wrote the feminist book *New Feminism* which criticised gender inequalities in educational level, the feminisation of low-status, low-paying jobs, a sexual double standard, and the continued denigration of women within a Confucian value system.<sup>96</sup>

The intellectual influence of the second wave of western feminism on Taiwanese feminists, specifically that of the United States, was obvious. Many of them studied in America and read Simone de Beauvoir's *Second Sex* (1961) and Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique* (1963), both of which had been translated into Chinese and published in a Taiwanese national newspaper, the *China Times*, by overseas Taiwanese feminist Yang Mei-hui.<sup>97</sup> Whilst recognising the influence of western feminism, Lu also drew on Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People to argue that a movement for women's liberation was essential. She applied its popular formula to define feminism as:

'a *thought* that emerged from the demands of the society along with the tide of history; a *belief*

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<sup>94</sup> See Lin, 2001, p. 63. Lin, however, rightly emphasises that China's state feminism 'was liberating and empowering, especially initially, as a task of transforming a deeply patriarchal and repressive traditional society' (ibid.).

<sup>95</sup> The history of the feminist movement in Taiwan is roughly divided into three periods: the first wave, from 1972-1982; the second wave, from 1982-1993; and the third wave, from 1993 to date. See Ku, 1998. Ku's historical periodisation was based mainly on the transformation of the nature of Taiwanese 'women's studies' from a value-free or value-neutral discipline to one inspired and guided by female/gender consciousness, i.e. feminist studies. Corresponding to the evolution of feminist-oriented women's studies in academia, all kinds of female consciousness-raising institutions and movements emerged in society.

<sup>96</sup> See Lu, *New Feminism*, 1986.

<sup>97</sup> See, Lu, 1994, p. 298; Farris, 2000, p. 150.

that the prosperity and harmony of androgynous society shall be founded on the basis of substantial equality between men and women; and a *power* that will abolish the traditional prejudice against women, reconstruct a new and sensible value system, create independence and dignity for women, and foster the realisation of the true equality of sexes'.<sup>98</sup>

The lengthy quotation of Lu's definition of feminism is vital to understanding the core ideas of Taiwanese liberal and state feminists and to grasping what is at issue in their debate with lesbian feminists two decades later in the 1990s, the third wave movement according to Ku's periodisation.

Lu asserted that she was 'critical yet compromising' when promoting gender consciousness in 1970s Taiwan. She emphasised the need to take into account commonly accepted social ethics. Accordingly, she intentionally set aside some gender issues that she reckoned were less urgent for Taiwanese women's liberation and empowerment and those too sensitive to be advocated openly in a still conservative society like Taiwan, such as sexual freedom and homosexuality. She also expressed moderate views on the validity or value of marriage and the feminine nature of women.<sup>99</sup> All these issues were at the heart of feminist debate in 1990s Taiwan. Lesbian feminists considered them crucial to women's liberation.

Lu's book *New Feminism* was an effort to combine liberal feminism and traditional femininity.<sup>100</sup> Central to the liberal feminist discourse was its concern with equal rights for women in education, in every kind of occupation, in key positions in society. George and Wilding note:

'Liberal feminists see the welfare state as an approach to organising economic and social relations which can be, and has been, used by women to reduce inequalities and contribute to

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<sup>98</sup> Lu, 1994, p. 297; emphasis added.

<sup>99</sup> *ibid.*, p. 298.

the development of a more sympathetic public opinion. They see the development of equal pay and sex discrimination legislation and of a social security system marginally more sensitive to women's needs as a sign that the political system can respond to women's needs. The welfare state offers both a possibility and place for the extension of women's *social and political rights*.<sup>101</sup>

The emphasis on the state as the major institution responsible for the improvement of women's socioeconomic existence and extension of social and political rights explains why liberal feminists in Taiwan were called 'state feminists' by their lesbian counterparts.<sup>102</sup> Lesbian feminism in the Taiwanese context refers primarily to the discourse of 'sex rights feminism', discussed later in detail in the section on the liberal movement in post-authoritarian Taiwan.

In the 1980s, a plurality of public discourses began to flourish. Women's groups, religious groups, environmental groups and others began to agitate for reform. A slow political transformation from one-party authoritarianism to more democratic rule began. Martial law was lifted in 1987, opposition parties were legalised and the autonomy of society vis-à-vis the state increased. The role and status of women in Taiwan have clearly been transformed in the modernisation process although certain patriarchal values and practices remain.<sup>103</sup> Throughout the 1980s, Taiwanese liberal feminists continued their consciousness raising campaign and advocated various 'women-friendly' policies. For example, a segment of the women's movement led by the only openly 'feminist' organisation, the Awakening Group (Fu-nu hsin-chih,

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<sup>100</sup> Ku, 1998, p. 116.

<sup>101</sup> George and Wilding, 1994, p. 136; emphasis added.

<sup>102</sup> What should be noted is that state feminism can refer to both the 'liberal feminism' of the Nordic welfare states as well as 'state feminism' in socialist societies, as implied in Lin Chun's discussion of welfare capitalism and state socialism. She argues that although they are very different systems and also differ in their respective sub-systems, they nevertheless resemble each other in their state welfarism (Lin, 2001, p. 58).

literally ‘the awakening of women’) has been active in promoting changes in public policy and legislation to give women equal rights under the law. Ku has analysed the processes by which the feminist movement effected changes in two areas: the legislation of abortion and equal employment opportunities.<sup>104</sup> Taiwan’s feminists also urge legal change to tackle sexual harassment at work and domestic violence or spousal abuse.

A substantial intellectual debate among Taiwanese feminists first emerged in the 1990s when Taiwan entered the third wave of the women’s movement (from 1993 onwards). Taiwan’s women’s movement has been a multifaceted phenomenon. In the early years of the movement, not all women’s leaders appreciated and supported the values of gender equality espoused by Western-educated liberal feminists, anchored in the arguments of mainstream white feminists in the United States. Some women’s studies scholars were keen to identify indigenous sources of ‘women’s consciousness’, such as nineteenth-century anti-foot-binding societies, or the May Fourth movement.<sup>105</sup>

Yet the leaders of the movement tended to agree on the importance of gender equality and women’s liberation and empowerment and regard these as common goals for women’s movement although they hold different perceptions of these values and suggest different approaches to realising them. Liberal feminism has been influential in Taiwan’s public culture, unsurprisingly, because it has formed part of the human rights discourse of the democratic movement. The 1990s feminist debate is thus more substantial intellectually in that lesbian feminism, greatly influenced by postmodernism

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<sup>103</sup> See Farris, 2000 and 2004 for detailed discussions.

<sup>104</sup> See Ku, 1995 and 1996. In both articles, Ku argued that although abortion is now legal, patriarchal constraints remain, as a woman must obtain the consent of her husband or legal guardian to have an abortion. In contrast, the fight for equal employment opportunities, especially the outlawing of the de facto rule that women must quit after marriage or the birth of their first child, was more successful in advancing the feminist agenda and in rallying women to the cause.

<sup>105</sup> Farris, 2004, p. 364.

and poststructuralism, has posed a strong challenge to the dominant liberal feminist discourse. Politically, in contrast to the 'reformism within Establishment politics' pursued by liberal feminists, lesbian feminists suggest a more radical strategy. This revolves around 'popular vandalism', which is also central to the Taiwanese 'new opposition movement' emerging in the early 1990s.<sup>106</sup>

The Taiwanese feminist movement split into two groups in the 1990s: liberal feminists of the Awakening group and lesbian feminists dedicated to the sex liberation movement. Lesbian feminism is thus commonly known as sex rights feminism in Taiwan. Two incidents triggered this split: the publication of a controversial book *The Gallant Women: Feminism and Sexual Emancipation* in 1994 by an outspoken feminist sex radical, Josephine Ho; and the dismissal of gay and lesbian activist Wang Ping and others from the Awakening Foundation in 1997.<sup>107</sup> In the book, Ho advocated the sexual liberation of Taiwanese women, an end to the cult of virginity for unmarried women and to a lifetime of frigid love to one, probably unfaithful man followed by enforced celibacy in widowhood or divorce for married women.<sup>108</sup> Ho created a rhyming slogan to promote her radical idea of sexual emancipation in a public demonstration against sexual harassment and abuse in 1994: 'I don't want sexual harassment; I want sexual climax!'<sup>109</sup> which afterwards became a trademark of sex

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<sup>106</sup> The 'old' and 'new' Taiwanese oppositions differ mainly in their view of the role of the state, the relation between social movements and the opposition party and the source of power domination. The new opposition's imaginary of ideal democracy revolves around the notion of a very 'strong society', whilst traditional liberals still hold that the 'state is a necessary evil'.

<sup>107</sup> For discussions of the development of Taiwanese lesbian feminism/activism and the split in the feminist movement in Taiwan in the 1990s, see Sang, 1999, Farris, 2000, Ning, 2001, Chang and Chang, 2003, and Farris, 2004. Lesbian feminism has played an important part in the development of identity politics in Taiwan. For example, the so-called *tongchih* movement initially emerged in large part from Taiwan's nascent feminist movement and was spearheaded in the first instance by lesbians. The term *tongchih*, literally meaning 'comrade' but appropriated as a politicised marker of sexual identity, arrived in Taiwan from Hong Kong in 1992.

<sup>108</sup> Farris, 2004, p. 365.

<sup>109</sup> They are rhyming couplets as 'sexual harassment' is pronounced '*hsing sao-rao*' in Mandarin, while 'sexual climax' is '*hsing kao-chao*'.

rights feminism in Taiwan.

The most thorough debate between women's rights and sex rights feminists is perhaps that published in the journal of the Awakening Foundation under the title 'Exploding Feminism' in 1995. The debate was ostensibly ignited by the editor of the lesbian magazine *Girlfriend* who, in an article simultaneously published in *Girlfriend* and *Women's Awakening Journal*, attacked the Awakening Foundation for reinforcing compulsory heterosexuality and neglecting lesbian and gay human rights. In response, *Women's Awakening* put out a special issue on the relationship between feminism and lesbian activism titled 'Heterosexuality/Homosexuality: Both/Neither', defending itself by claiming that it was just as dedicated to challenging conventional family values as lesbian and gay activists were. A consensus was reached in a later roundtable discussion that the women's movement needs lesbian feminists and that it should do more for lesbians and promote more lesbian perspectives.<sup>110</sup> In spite of the consensus, the tension between the two sides remained. The Centre for the Study of Sexuality was founded at a national university in 1995 as a response to 'a growing woman's movement that was beginning to ostracise elements standing in the way of its upward mobility'.<sup>111</sup>

The sex rights/liberation discourse of Ho and her colleagues is primarily based on Freud's theory. Ho and her husband Kaweipo co-authored a book entitled *Why Don't They Tell You? – An Introduction to Sexual Politics*, published in 1990. It begins with Freud's hypothesis that the progression of civilisation is accompanied by sexual oppression. They then explore various forms and myths of sexual oppression and how they function as a means of social control in Taiwan. They also critique the view of

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<sup>110</sup> For a detailed and obviously sympathetic analysis of the debate, see Sang, 1998, pp. 143-9.

<sup>111</sup> See Ning, 2001, or the English version of the purpose for setting up The Sex Centre at National

sexual activities within the heterosexual marriage that restricts their meaning to reproduction and wealth inheritance, suggesting that it is responsible for the creation of a cult of virginity and the myth of fidelity. Heterosexual marriage is thus seen as an institution based on an oppressive ideology of gender and the source of oppression of 'sexual minorities', meaning anyone whose sexual practices do not conform to the married, heterosexual ideal. Sex emancipation is in this sense *essential* for women's liberation and for making civilisation a process of 'non-oppressive distillation'.<sup>112</sup>

In contrast to the 'politics of sexuality' promoted by the lesbian/sex rights feminists, liberal/women's rights feminists believe that the 'politics of gender' should be at the centre of the women's movement. Ku, a leading liberal feminist in Taiwan, states that 'the subjective perception of sexual subjects cannot substitute for the real social condition of women as victims of sexual objectification. Only the success of a politics of gender can bring us a safe and equal environment for multiple erotic choices'.<sup>113</sup> For liberal feminists, like Ku, 'our [women's] sexualities may be many, but our gender is only one'.

The different ideological and political orientations of the two Taiwanese women's movements is manifest in another heated debate on prostitution in the wake of the Taipei City Government's decision to abolish legal prostitution in 1997. The idea of 'prostitutes' rights' was introduced into Taiwan for the first time. The debate is typified by the discourses of 'banning prostitution vs. prostitutes' rights' and 'anti-pornography vs. anti-anti-pornography', and generally named the 'sex critique vs. sex liberation' debate. While liberal feminists, drawing on studies of Taiwan's adult films, criticised the reproduction of patriarchal logic in pornography, primarily the objectification of

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Central University at <http://sex.ncu.edu.tw>.

<sup>112</sup> See Ho and Kaweipo, 1990. Kaweipo is the pseudonym of Ho's husband Ning Ying-bin.

women's bodies, lesbian feminists advocated the idea of 'lewd woman' and argued that only through 'actively engaging, appropriating, enjoying and moreover creating pornography' could women realise their 'subjectivities'.<sup>114</sup> Taiwanese feminists were divided on whether prostitution was inherently oppressive to women or merely a legitimate and sometimes lucrative form of labour in which they may voluntarily choose to engage. In the discourse of 'prostitutes' rights', prostitutes or 'sex workers' were perceived as occupying 'subject positions' as both women and labourers.

Given lesbian feminists' inherent hostility towards the state (seen as a 'legal yet violent apparatus'), mainstream ideology and culture, and Establishment politics, it is no surprise that they have assailed the state feminism espoused by liberal/women rights feminists. Undoubtedly, the lesbian feminist movement as a form of *identity politics* or *cultural politics* has contributed enormously to broadening the scope of feminist debate in Taiwan through the introduction of such concepts as lesbianism, body politics, and Third World feminism. It has also challenged the technology of gender at a deeper level, highlighting the structuring of gender norms through sexuality at a time when the traditional agenda of the women's movement in Taiwan – equal rights between men and women in the public realm – had already entered the mainstream.

Yet the state feminist movement as a form of *social politics* seems to have made a more substantial contribution to improving women's socioeconomic condition on the whole. This it has done by engaging in the formation of public policies which, for example, make women's reproduction a public rather than private concern (maternity leave and day care) and helping formulate progressive status laws that guarantee women's equality with men. It is important to acknowledge the achievement of state feminists in

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<sup>113</sup> Ning, 2001.

<sup>114</sup> See Ho, 1998, *The Lewd Woman*.



advancing the civil law movement, which has helped amend legal codes on family and marriage of a patriarchal nature. They have in addition tackled the 'feminisation of poverty', a result of the social security system's failure to take into account women's special needs in balancing home and work, and promoted community development and the public health care system.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Nationalism, Taiwanese Consciousness and Taiwan's Identity Predicament**

#### **The 'Nationalistic Turn' in Taiwan's Public Culture**

Around the time when the Lee Teng-hui administration adopted 'nation state-building' or the creation of a 'new state' as its core task in the early 1990s, nationalism appeared to take the place of liberalism in public fora, becoming perhaps the most distinctive feature of Taiwanese public culture. The launch of the nationalist movement has to be understood in light of the trajectory of Taiwan's democratisation, local party competition, the power struggle within the ruling KMT and the Chinese developmental state's emergence on the world stage as a regional power, primarily as the result of its astonishing economic performance.

While the origin of Taiwanese identity can be traced back to the period of Japanese occupation, embodied in the Taiwan independence movement, led by leftwing Taiwanese nationalists fighting against Japanese imperialism, geographical separation and the different historical experiences of the island and mainland account for the formation of the Taiwanese nationalism that evolved after retrocession in 1945. The half-century of Japanese colonial rule was deeply formative, ensuring that the island's fate would differ from that of the mainland, as expressed in the film *The Puppet-Master* by distinguished Taiwanese director Hou Hsiao-hsien.<sup>1</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> As Anderson interpreted the film, '[F]ew viewers of Hou Hsiao-hsien's film *The Puppet-Master*, a landmark of world cinema, are likely to forget the beauty and dignity of one of its greatest scenes, the funerary theatre of a Taiwanese soldier killed in Guadalcanal, with Japanese officers at attention. The

separation was reinforced by the Chinese Civil War and further consolidated by the Cold War.

Nationalist debate can however be said to have emerged in Taiwan as early as the 1950s in the 'Free China movement', if the debate between national security and individual freedom may be counted, though this debate was settled rather swiftly after liberal democracy rose to pre-eminence.<sup>2</sup> The Soviet Union and the Chinese communists were constructed as the national enemy of free China. In the early 1970s, when Taiwan suffered a series of diplomatic setbacks as a result of the normalisation of Sino-American relations, another nationalist debate emerged, commonly known as the Nativist Literary debate. With the Vietnam War and the 1968 revolt making up the broader historical context, anti-imperialism, primarily focused on America and Japan, played a central role in nationalist rhetoric. Elements typical of Third World literature appeared in the nationalist discourse put forward by the Nativist Literary movement, which originated in the early student demonstrations in the wake of the Diaoyutai Incident. The radical dependency theory of development, which gained wide popularity in the 1970s, was later introduced into the debate. The Nativist literary debate can be analysed from various related perspectives, including literary 'modernism vs. realism', and 'capitalism vs. socialism' from the perspective of local

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ambiguity of this experience, utterly unlike that of the mainland at the hands of Japan, remains a basic element in island life to this day'. Anderson explains: '[F]or whereas Japanese imperialism was a ruthlessly destructive force once launched against China itself, responsible for millions of deaths and massive devastation, in Taiwan, it established a relatively orderly, peaceful and productive system of rule: authoritarian as all European colonial regimes were, but in a more "backward" rural society with, eventually, less repression than in Korea or Manchuria, and a record of economic and educational development superior to any area of Republican China'. Perry Anderson, 2004, 'Stand-Off in Taiwan', *London Book Review*, Vol. 26, No. 11, June 2004.

<sup>2</sup> 'National struggle', however, still constituted an important framework of liberal debate as the Chinese Civil War was thought to be a 'social war' as well as 'national war'. The nationalist debate was settled in the sense that liberal democracy was considered crucial to winning this national war and founding a free

as well as global political economy. As far as the nationalist debate is concerned, while the Soviet Union and the CCP were still regarded as the prime national enemy within the KMT's rightwing official nationalism, the United States became the target of the campaign launched by the leftwing Nativist literary movement. Yet these discourses called for Chinese nationalism.

The debate between Taiwanese nationalists and Chinese nationalists emerged only in the 1980s, but Taiwanese nationalism was still in the process of formation. Instead of 'nationalism' or 'national identity', the term 'consciousness' or 'complex' was used. We can thus talk of the 'Chinese consciousness vs. Taiwanese consciousness' debate and the 'Chinese complex vs. Taiwanese complex' debate. Nevertheless, the idea of 'Taiwan independence' had been entertained before: first during the radical leftwing movement active when the island was still under Japanese colonial rule, and then in the early 1970s when Taiwan (or the ROC) was no longer recognised as the sole lawful representative of all China by the international community.<sup>3</sup> The story of the nationalist movement clearly imbued by (sub)ethnic politics began with the tragic 'February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident' in 1947.

### **The Beginning of the Tragedy – The 'February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident' in 1947**

The history of Taiwan from the 1600s onwards has been dubbed 'a history of ambiguity' by one historian:

'Since the 1600s, Taiwan has been defined as a small part of something else. The island was

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China in the future.

<sup>3</sup> While in the former case anti-imperialism underlay the Taiwan independence movement during Japanese colonisation, in the latter the primary concern was to secure the international status of Taiwan as a political entity independent from the mainland.

home to non-Han Chinese peoples for millennia, then became a prefecture of China's Fujian Province in 1684, a full-fledged province in 1885, a Japanese colony in 1895, a province of the Republic of China (ROC) in 1945, the *only* province of the ROC in 1949, and eventually a virtually independent nation, which it remains today. With the exception of the last transition, central governments located far from the island initiated these changes.<sup>4</sup>

This ambiguous history later became the focal point of contentions between China-centred and Taiwan-centred historians. Indeed, pro-independence historians have drawn on this history to create accounts claiming that Taiwan's contemporary history commenced four hundred years ago, as opposed to the KMT and Chinese nationalist notion that the island's history goes back to the Huang Ti period on the mainland, five thousand years ago.

Taiwan was returned to China after Japan's defeat in the Second World War in 1945. Between late 1945 and early 1947, the legacy of Japanese domination and the immediate difficulties caused by the KMT's misrule spurred a lively debate over Taiwan's relationship with the nation of China and the ROC state. With reasoned argument, rhetorical sleights of hand, and unconsciously selected images, the Taiwanese constructed a political discourse that recalled positive aspects of the colonial experience (stability and economic growth for example) while simultaneously downplaying the 'problem' of collaboration with the Japanese.<sup>5</sup> The efficient and rigorous colonial government experienced by the Taiwanese was deployed to assail the Nationalists (the KMT), corrupt and inept as they often were. The retrocession was thus a bitter disappointment to many Taiwanese, especially if

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<sup>4</sup> Steven E. Phillips, 2003, *Between Assimilation and Independence: The Taiwanese Encounter Nationalist China, 1945-1950*, pp. 3. Emphasis original.

one takes into account those of the KMT's goals that involved both the state (ROC) and the nation (the Chinese) – seeking to de-colonise and reintegrate Taiwan by erasing the Japanese influence and bringing the island under the economic, cultural and political sway of the central government.

Economically, the KMT hoped to exploit the island's wealth and industrial base for postwar reconstruction and the struggle against the Communists. The Nationalists/KMT inherited an industrial infrastructure worn down by the demands of Japan's war efforts and American bombing. Repair work ceased upon surrender as Japanese technical experts and managers began to return home, and spare parts for equipment became difficult to obtain. Agricultural production, insufficient in late 1945, remained inadequate because of the lack of fertilisers. Food shortages and unemployment worsened as hundreds of Taiwanese who had been soldiers, labourers, students, merchants and low-level bureaucrats in China, Japan and Southeast Asia were repatriated. The Nationalists/KMT magnified problems that had already been severe by connecting Taiwan to the mainland's economy even as the latter struggled, then failed, to recover from the war.<sup>6</sup>

The Taiwan Provincial Administrative Executive Office, an administrative system unlike that of any another province in China but similar to that in existence during the Japanese colonial era, was established to attain this economic goal. Chen Yi became the administrator and commander of the Taiwan Garrison. Taiwan's special status included restrictions on freedom of speech, understandably creating the feeling

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<sup>5</sup> Phillips, 2003, p. 40.

<sup>6</sup> Phillips, 2003, pp. 64-5.

among Taiwanese that they were again to be treated as second-class citizens. Indeed, the general style of Chen's administration was that of the victor over the vanquished, rather than that of the liberator.<sup>7</sup> The widely shared feeling of being denied recognition as full citizens, or even being seen as foreigners, quelled any initial patriotism felt towards the new regime.

The similarities between the KMT's administrative system and Japanese colonial rule sparked resentment among the Taiwanese. This, together with the policies of cultural assimilation and political authoritarianism, explains why the KMT was considered a 'foreign or external regime' and its rule 'internal colonisation'. Culture and language constituted another problematic aspect of the KMT's policies of de-colonisation and reintegration. The government sought to eradicate Japanese influence and Sinicise the Taiwanese through a process of cultural reconstruction based on cultural assimilation. To this end, Chen Yi used organisations like the Three Principles of the People Youth Corps, the Taiwan Office of Translation and Compilation, and the Association For Improving Taiwan Culture. The main goal was to reform Taiwan's 'enslaved' culture through spreading the doctrine of the Three Principles of the People and promoting the study of *Kuoyu*, which mainly refers to classical Chinese literature and 'standard Mandarin'.

Language became a point of conflict between the Taiwanese and the new Chinese administration.<sup>8</sup> Although most Taiwanese enthusiastically studied the new language – whether out of patriotism, a drive to profit in the Chinese market, a

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<sup>7</sup> Christopher Hughes, 1997, *Taiwan and Chinese Nationalism: National identity and status in international society*, pp. 24-5.

<sup>8</sup> For a detailed discussion of the postwar linguistic problems resulting from early mainlander-Taiwanese

curiosity stifled by the Japanese, or simply self-interest, is difficult to say – the government's approach encountered obstacles. Language competence became a symbol of one's 'Chinese-ness' and national loyalty, turning the use of Japanese into a political problem. To mainlanders, the inability to speak, read and write the official language suggested backwardness and a lack of patriotism.<sup>9</sup> This explains why the 'mother languages movement' became an essential part of the nation-state building movement in the early 1990s.<sup>10</sup> The lack of a good command of the new official language, i.e. standard mandarin, among the local elites largely accounts for their absence from public debate in the 1950s.

By early 1947, the problems of reintegration and postwar dislocation led to simmering discontent in the cities, towns and villages of Taiwan. People in the central part of the island talked about 'three hopes' (*san hsi-wang*). First came the hope (*hsi-wang*) that existed when Japan surrendered until the arrival of the Nationalist administration two months later. Next was lost hope (*shih-wang*), stemming from the dismal performance of the new government. Finally came hopelessness (*chieh-wang*), which set in once people came to feel that the future was bleak. A short poem published in *New Taiwan* summed up how many Taiwanese felt about the events of 1945 and 1946:

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contact, see Hsiau, 2000, Chap. 2, pp. 50-75.

<sup>9</sup> Phillips, 2003, p. 69.

<sup>10</sup> The linguistic issue was first addressed within the Dangwai opposition movement when Taiwanese consciousness was at the heart of public debate. The decree stipulating that elementary and high school students who spoke local languages in school must be punished was abolished as a result of an incident in the Legislative Yuan (parliament). A defiant legislator, Kao-cheng Chu, deliberately used Hoklo (commonly known as 'Taiwanese') instead of Mandarin to address a session in with a view to exposing the nature of the KMT's cultural and linguistic policies, that is, assimilation. He wished to highlight the fact that the mainland political elites could not understand and were unwilling to learn the major local language, though they had lived in Taiwan for over forty years. It should be noted that Hoklo is just one of many local languages, which also include Hakka and the languages of the aborigines. See A-chin



'American bombing startled Heaven and moved the Earth,  
the news of retrocession led to debauchery,  
the government was sinister and dark,  
and the people appealed to Heaven and Earth.'<sup>11</sup>

Simmering tensions exploded in an incident on the evening of February 27. Six police officers attempted to arrest a woman selling cigarettes illegally in Taipei. One policeman struck the woman, an angry crowd gathered and violence broke out after an officer fired his weapon, killing a bystander. The next day 2,000 to 3,000 Taiwanese marched to the Monopoly Bureau Headquarters and hundreds gathered outside Chen Yi's office. Besides protesting against the beating and shooting, islanders complained about unemployment, food shortages, inflation, political repression and corruption. That afternoon, a soldier or police officer guarding Chen's office fired into the crowd, sparking an island-wide uprising. Vandalism and violence against police, soldiers, bureaucrats and any mainlanders unfortunate enough to be on the streets spread beyond Taipei.<sup>12</sup> The other masterpiece by Hou Hsiao-hsien, *The City of Sadness*, was the first attempt to provide a historical narrative of the incident in the form of film and to initiate public debate on the event.

### **Official Chinese Nationalism vs. Taiwanese Consciousness, 1947-1970**

The overwhelming power of the ROC military reinforcements from the mainland

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Haisu, 2000, *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism*, pp. 128-35.

<sup>11</sup> This poem can be found in many publications. It was sometimes called 'Five Heavens and Five Earths'. Quoted in Phillips, 2003, p. 74.

<sup>12</sup> For brief historical accounts of the incident, see Wachman, 1994, *Taiwan: National Identity and Democratization*, pp. 98-9; Hsiau, 2000, *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism*, pp. 55-8; and Phillips, 2003, *Between Assimilation and Independence*, pp. 75-6.

ensured consolidation of the new state. In the purges that followed, commonly known as the White Terror,<sup>13</sup> potential leaders among the residents of Taiwan were either killed, co-opted into collaboration, or fled overseas. The events related to the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident were perhaps the most significant formative experiences preventing the consolidation of a Chinese national identity on the island over the following decades. Indeed, the whole episode impeded subsequent efforts at integration because of residual hostility and mistrust. This made it all the more difficult and vital for the KMT regime in Taiwan to establish legitimacy after it was forced to flee across the Strait in 1949 following its defeat by the Chinese communists on the mainland.

Chinese nationalism was the officially sanctioned nationalism and laid the foundation for the KMT's authoritarian rule in Taiwan, although liberal democracy was claimed to be its ultimate goal and also constituted one element of its legitimacy. As briefly discussed in Chapter Two, the KMT's official nationalism was a reinvention of the idea of 'orthodoxy' in the Chinese dynastic tradition. It consisted of three elements: cultural orthodoxy (*dao tong*), legitimate succession (*fa tong*) and orthodoxy *per se* in the dynastic tradition (*cheng tong*). Culturally, the KMT was the defender of orthodox Confucian values in contrast to the communist destruction of these values. Inheriting the iconoclasm of the May Fourth movement, Confucian culture and norms were viewed as the residue of feudalism, from which people should be liberated. Hence, part of the KMT's historical mission was to revive and preserve Chinese culture.

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<sup>13</sup> The leaders of the KMT apparently suspected that the Taiwanese had collaborated with Japan while the KMT had been battling Japanese savagery on the mainland. The KMT also feared that Taiwan had been infiltrated by Communist provocateurs. The February 28<sup>th</sup> uprising was thus linked by the regime to Chinese communist penetration of Taiwan; its leaders were perceived as dangerous dissent intelligentsia.

Some well-respected intellectuals, deeply alienated by the CCP's radical cultural movement, which targeted Chinese culture in the 1950s, thus endorsed the KMT's cultural orientation.<sup>14</sup>

The idea of '*fa tong*', legitimate political succession, was signified in the KMT's self-proclaimed status as representative of all China, grounded in the fact that it had held the last nation-wide elections to the National Assembly and Legislative Yuan in 1947. In short, essential to the KMT's official nationalism and the legality of its rule in Taiwan was the constitutional claim to legitimacy. The constitution formulated in 1947 before the communist take-over (the ROC constitution as opposed to the PRC constitution in 1949) which was devised for the whole of China, together with the addition of a number of emergency measures justified as necessary to the Chinese nationalist revolution,<sup>15</sup> became the foundation of the KMT's claim to '*fa tong*'.

Based on the claim to '*dao tong*' and '*fa tong*', the KMT asserted its orthodox status and claimed to be representative of all China, that is, '*cheng tong*'. In the Cold War context, with the support of the United States and liberal ideology, supposedly shared by all countries of the 'free world', the KMT relegitimised its authoritarian rule primarily through the ideology of Chinese nationalism, which aimed to reunify Taiwan with the mainland. The implementation of the KMT's official nationalism,

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Wachman, 1994, p. 97.

<sup>14</sup> Shaw, 2002, 'Modulations of Nationalism Across the Taiwan Strait', *Issues & Studies*, p. 126.

<sup>15</sup> These were the legal devices for maintaining the party dictatorship put in place on the mainland in April 1948 by the first meeting of the ROC National Assembly. Entitled the Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of Communist Rebellion, they suspended most of the constitutional constraints on the president. The president's powers were further enhanced by the Legislative Yuan in December 1949, when it issued an administrative order declaring Taiwan a combat zone. This allowed Chiang Kai-shek to activate martial law on the island by emergency decree. See Tien, 1989, *The Great Transition*, p. 110; Hughes, 1997, *Taiwan and Chinese Nationalism*, p. 26.

however, resulted in cultural hegemony, which not only impeded reintegration but also helped stir a Taiwanese consciousness among the majority of the population.

Underlying the voices of protest and dissent emerging from Taiwan's creeping democratisation and growing sense of its own identity was the refutation of the principles and imperatives of Chinese nationalism. The discourse of Taiwanese nationalism entered its formative phase. The earliest comprehensive critique of the KMT's official nationalism was probably the 1964 *Declaration of Taiwanese Self-Salvation*, drawn up by a professor of international law at National Taiwan University, Peng Ming-min, and two of his students. All three were promptly arrested and imprisoned, and their publication destroyed. Peng later fled to the United States, where he propagated his views amongst Taiwanese students studying overseas. It was also there that he developed his argument in the 1972 autobiographical work, *A Taste of Freedom*.<sup>16</sup>

Peng's argument laid the ground for the discourse of Taiwanese consciousness articulated in the early 1980s, which took the Chinese consciousness of the KMT's official nationalism and pro-China intellectuals to be the main obstacle to Taiwan's political democratisation. It also had a deep intellectual impact on the construction of the discourse of liberal nationalism in Taiwan, especially the conception of political community developed in his *A Taste of Freedom*, influenced by the work of Ernest Renan, in particular *What Is A Nation?*.<sup>17</sup> Peng's work also elucidates the

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<sup>16</sup> Hughes, 1997, pp. 35-38.

<sup>17</sup> What strikes Peng is that Renan put forward the idea that, contrary to Sun Yat-sen's Principle of Nationalism, neither race nor language nor culture makes a nation, but rather a deeply felt sense of community and shared destiny (Peng, 1972, p. 26; see Hughes, 1997, p. 37), a conception that was clearly attractive to Peng in ethnically-divided Taiwan.

convergence of democratisation and Taiwan nationalism, first in the oppositional discourse of the Dangwai movement and, later, Lee Teng-hui's 'new-state movement'.

### **Neocolonialism, Anti-imperialism, Chinese Nationalism and the Nativist Literary Debate, 1971-1979**

The observation that nation-building by means of the direct manipulation of culture, as practised by the KMT, tends to evoke alienation rather than identification, is borne out by the dissatisfaction felt with the straitjacket imposed under Chiang Kai-shek. Until the mid-1970s, the main alternative to the state-imposed version of Chinese tradition appears to have been literary theories from abroad, the so-called 'modernist school of literature', which, according to critics, was imported wholesale by the cultural 'compradores' of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at National Taiwan University. The Nativist Literary debate began with the 'modern poetry debate', or the attacks by leftwing literary critics on modern poetry, in the context of postwar modernisation and neocolonialism.

#### *The Nativist Literary Debate and the Call for (Chinese) Nationalism*

#### The Diaoyutai Incident and the Baodiao Movement

The Nativist Literary movement emerged in the wake of Taiwan's political crises of the early 1970s, beginning with the Diaoyutai Islands Incident in 1971, which involved the US hand-over to Japan of the Diaoyutai Islands (the 'Senkaku Islands' as they are known in Japan), an archipelago to the north of Taiwan which the Americans

had occupied in the Second World War.<sup>18</sup> Left-leaning university students radicalised in the political and intellectual context of 1968 viewed this as a 'secret deal' between two major 'empires'. The KMT response not only angered and disappointed these students, but also led to their feeling confused about their national identity, inducing many to turn away from 'Free China' and identify with Socialist China. Fearful that the US might cease supporting it, and that it might thus lose the main external foundation of its legitimacy, after initially making no comment, the KMT government merely issued a verbal protest asserting its determination to protect the national interest in the Islands.<sup>19</sup>

In January 1971, before the formal Japan-US agreement was signed, Taiwanese students studying in the United States organised a wave of protests, commonly known as the Baodiao movement, literally 'preserving the Diaoyutai Islands movement'. The radicalisation of Taiwanese students was anchored in the events of 1968 in the United States. 'The storm of 1968', as Lin pointed out, 'was an unusual historical conjuncture, more profound than it may seem, in the sense that it entailed the rebirth and stimulation of an expansive mood of radical resistance within capitalist societies,

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<sup>18</sup> The US-Japan agreement was related to Japan's need to secure its oil sources and was part of America's plan to develop a new strategic structure of cooperation in the region. In 1969, the UN's ECAFE (the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Far East, which became the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in 1977) published a report in Bangkok, suggesting that there were petroleum deposits under the East China Sea. The region includes the Diaoyutai Islands, which lie about 170 km northeast of the island of Taiwan. The Islands had been occupied by the United States in the Second World War. In 1971, Japan and the United States signed an agreement (the 1971 Japan-US Ryukyu Islands Reversion Agreement) returning the Ryukyu (Okinawa) and Daito Islands to Japanese administration. The Diaoyutai Islands were included in the returned islands. Before the reversion agreement was signed on June 17 1971, the Japanese government had already publicly claimed territorial sovereignty over the Diaoyutai Islands in September 1970, a claim recognised by the United States.

<sup>19</sup> In defence of the government, Chue argued that the then-premier Yen Chia-kan had publicly expressed the ROC government's determination to protect the national interest in the islands as early as September 1971. The Taiwan Provincial Assembly also passed a motion urging the government to stand firm in claiming sovereignty over the islands. Chue, 2001a.

under conditions of peace, prosperity and political stability based on bourgeois democracy'.<sup>20</sup> The access to radical political thoughts, specifically the new leftism or radical liberalism, enjoyed by Taiwanese students in North America, is particularly important to understanding the emergence of the Baodiao movement. For in Taiwan's anti-communist context, radical or leftwing intellectual stimulation was non-existent and access to it was denied, indeed banned. The revolutionary spirit of the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1977-1976) had an enormous influence on the student movements in the heartlands of the capitalist world, such as the United States, Japan, France and West Germany, and special meaning for the patriotic Taiwanese students taking part in the demonstrations in North America.

Nation-wide protests were launched by Taiwanese students on 29 January 1971. Initially, the students agreed to leave aside the internal ideological differences between liberal capitalism and democratic socialism and unite under the banner of patriotism. Right-wing supporters of the KMT, radical sympathisers with the CCP and a relatively small number of pro-independence Taiwanese students reached a compromise in order to put the protest against America and Japan first.<sup>21</sup> Eventually, though, disputes erupted between left and right. Important here was the fact that autonomous activities centred on Chinese patriotism were viewed with suspicion by the state. The government condemned the patriotic demonstrations staged by students across the Chinese-speaking world following the Diaoyutai Incident as part of a CCP-inspired united front. As a result, the KMT's supporters, in defence of the government's foreign policy, attacked their left-leaning co-participants in the

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<sup>20</sup> Lin, 1993, *The British New Left*, p. 108.

<sup>21</sup> Kuo, 1999, *The Leftwing Movement in 1970s Taiwan*, p. 19.

demonstrations, branding their criticisms of the government and sympathy with Socialist China 'unpatriotic'. At the same time, the leftwing Baodiao movement gradually evolved into a 'unification movement', aiming to found a democratic socialist China.

The Baodiao movement in Taiwan emerged slightly later than its counterpart in North America, primarily due to the lack of information. Under martial law, information was strictly controlled. Personal correspondence between students in Taiwan and North America therefore became the only channel for exchanging messages, making the Baodiao movement possible on the island.<sup>22</sup> After the Baodiao movement was dominated by left-leaning students, the nationalist movement critical of American imperialism and frustrated by the KMT's muted response to the Diaoyutai Incident was transformed into a national opposition movement fighting against both capitalism and authoritarianism. Inspired by the leftist idea of 'labouring' in general and the populist movement on the mainland in particular, student demonstrations were transformed into a kind of social service movement, dubbed 'Young Men Going to the Countryside Movement'. 'Back to the earth' and 'people', concepts related to 'nation' and 'society' and essential to the Nativist literary movement, were key components of this social service movement.

#### The Nativist Literary Movement – Back to the Earth

While the Baodiao movement was underway, the United States signalled an

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<sup>22</sup> This campaign was known as 'One person, one book; one person, one letter' and involved sending letters containing messages of protest from North America to Taiwan. Related information on the transformation of the Baodiao movement from a purely nationalist/patriotic movement into a leftwing political campaign was also passed to students on the island in the same way. Kuo, 1999, p.35.



impending change in its relations with Taiwan in a statement on April 28, 1971, declaring that the status of Taiwan remained undetermined.<sup>23</sup> The same idea was expressed again later in the PRC-US Joint Communiqué of February 27, 1972, carefully worded to 'acknowledge' and 'not challenge' the position that 'all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain that there is but one China and that Taiwan is part of China', rather than to recognise Beijing's claim to sovereignty.<sup>24</sup> The 1971 visit of the US table tennis team to the PRC and the Kissinger visit to Beijing were not only evidence of the improved relations between Beijing and Washington, but also contributed to the forced withdrawal of the ROC from the United Nations in October 1971.<sup>25</sup> Following Nixon's historic visit to Beijing, Japan recognised the PRC in September 1972 as did many other major states before long. Taiwan thus found itself isolated in the international community as an 'intermediate state'.<sup>26</sup>

The 1970s, as noted above, was also the period when Taiwan experienced rapid and persistent economic growth with an average growth rate of 10 percent, except in 1974,

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<sup>23</sup> The statement made two main points: the legal status of Taiwan is an unresolved issue between the antagonistic governments of the KMT in Taiwan and the CCP on the mainland; any disputes between the ROC on Taiwan and the PRC on the mainland should be dealt with directly by the two regimes.

<sup>24</sup> Hughes, 1997, pp. 30-1.

<sup>25</sup> One important question that had to be resolved, stemming from the normalisation of Sino-US relations, was the representative status of ROC in the international community. In the 1950s and 1960s, the ROC's legitimate representative status was secured with the help of the US, which delayed discussion of the 'Chinese representative' issue at the General Assembly, and insisted that a two-thirds majority was needed to approve PRC membership of the UN. After Nixon's decision to visit Beijing in 1971, the UN General Assembly endowed the PRC with full rights and recognised its representatives as the only legitimate representatives of China to the UN, expelling forthwith those of Chiang Kai-shek, now considered to be unlawfully occupying China's seat at the UN and all organisations related to it (Resolution 2758, the UN General Assembly). Before the Resolution was passed, Chiang Kai-shek had already announced the ROC's withdrawal from the UN, and rejected a proposal by the US to share a seat with the Chinese communists.

<sup>26</sup> The term 'intermediate state' was borrowed by Christopher Hughes from Hedley Bull to describe Taiwan's status. He applied it to Taiwan to draw attention to the difficulty posed to the foreign policy of such an entity, which remains transfixed between statehoods, when it has to deal with international society, whose institutions are designed to deal with states alone. Hughes, 1997, pp. 129-30.

when the rate was zero as a consequence of the global oil crisis. Yet at the same time Taiwan began to encounter social problems resulting from its capitalist industrialisation and urbanisation. For example, the strategy of 'using agriculture to nurture industry and using industry to develop agriculture' did not work out entirely as expected: agriculture declined. The proportion of rural household income earned *outside* of agriculture rose from 25 percent in 1962 to 43 percent in 1975.<sup>27</sup> Industrial policy included a system of multiple rates, overvaluation of domestic currency, trade controls, and the biasing of domestic trade against agriculture by means of land taxes. Both compulsory procurement of rice at below-market prices and the rice-fertiliser barter scheme tended to lower agriculturalists' real income.<sup>28</sup> For many critics, this developmentalist policy was overly exploitative of the agricultural surplus, inevitably creating an unequal power relationship between industries in urban areas and agriculture in rural areas.<sup>29</sup>

Having suffered political humiliations and frustrations externally and social problems

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<sup>27</sup> Ranis, 2002, p. 8, emphasis added. However, while Ranis saw this as a success of Taiwan's industrial restructuring, characterised by the increase in non-agricultural output and the consistent agricultural to non-agricultural labour reallocation, many critics were concerned about the exploitation of farmers in the process.

<sup>28</sup> Overvaluation of domestic currency compared to the US dollar provided a mechanism for extracting resources from the agricultural sector and transferring them to manufacturing. Exports, which were mostly agricultural, received less in domestic currency than they would have at an equilibrium exchange rate, so the overvalued rate acted as a kind of export tax. Indeed, rice and sugar exports faced an even more unfavourable rate than other exports under the system of multiple rates. At the same time, trade controls which accompanied the overvalued exchange rate increased the price of everyday consumer goods, tending to lower the farmers' real income. On the other hand, industrialists benefited from the overvalued exchange rate because of lower costs for imported inputs, and from the trade controls as a result of the higher prices of products sold on the domestic market. The domestic terms of trade were also biased against agriculture by means of land taxes and, more importantly, through both compulsory procurement of rice at below-market prices and the rice-fertiliser barter scheme. The total tax burden on agriculture was significantly higher than for the non-agricultural sectors. See Wade, 1990, *Governing the Market*, pp. 76-77.

<sup>29</sup> Chen Yu-hsi, 1992, *Taiwan's Dependent Development*, pp. 129-41. At a seminar addressing the problems of Taiwan's farming villages in the 1970s, Chen quoted the speech by Lee Teng-hui, former president of Taiwan, who was then in charge of the policy: '[T]he government purposely suppressed farmers' income with a view to transferring population from agriculture to manufacturing'. (ibid., p. 132)

resulting from capitalist industrialisation in the early 1970s, the subsequent sense of cultural crisis that gripped the island underscored more than ever the need to tackle social issues and critically examine the state of the nation. The surge of anti-imperialism that followed these political setbacks was manifested in part in the emergence of a 'back to the earth' movement, which began to question the values and ideas of the West and advocated a return to the island's Chinese cultural roots. Among writers and other intellectuals, the mood shifted from disengagement to engagement with immediate sociopolitical issues. The modernist principle of 'art for art's sake' was attacked and replaced by the realist idea of 'art for life's sake'. Modernist poets and fiction writers, with their western themes and borrowed techniques, held less and less appeal to a public thirsty for nationalism.<sup>30</sup>

*The Intellectual* attracted some leading students of the Baodiao Movement after it published a statement protesting against the US-Japan Agreement on the Diaoyutai Islands. The magazine was used by radical left-leaning students to promote their socialist ideas, which they believed should guide Taiwan's political reform, while others wrote articles in favour of capitalist development.<sup>31</sup> A strong social and nativist consciousness was expressed in a co-authored article, 'This is the time to wake up!'.<sup>32</sup> The disintegration of *The Intellectual* group and the government's banning of a public seminar intended to initiate debate on nationalism in the wake of the Diaoyutai

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<sup>30</sup> Hsiau, 2000, p. 69; Yip, 2004, p. 27.

<sup>31</sup> Chang Chun-hung, one of the founding fathers of the DPP, among others, was criticised for his pro-capitalism opinions and for using the magazine as a tool to pursue a career in politics. Kuo, 1999, p.38.

<sup>32</sup> The article argued that: 'Taiwanese capitalists are groomed at the cost of declining farming villages, low labour wages, and the hard lives of the civil servants and service men and women. All Taiwan people were forced to bear the cost.... They therefore have the right to stop the capitalists taking away the capital accumulated by the people as a whole with their sweat and blood'. (ibid., p. 40)

Incident, which involved students from the Philosophy Department of National Taiwan University, forced these left-leaning students to shift their 'field of practice' from political campaigns to literary criticism. There then emerged the most radical cultural movement in postwar Taiwan before 1987– the Nativist Literary movement.

Although the controversy over the relationship between modernisation and westernisation can be traced back to the early decades of the twentieth century, the May Fourth era (1917-1921) and the so-called New Culture Movement, which has been described as the 'beginning of Chinese nationalism',<sup>33</sup> a more immediate but equally significant precursor to the Nativist movement in the 1970s can be found in the modern poetry debates of 1972.

#### Socioeconomic Transformation and the Modern Poetry Debate<sup>34</sup>

Having enjoyed two decades of political stability and economic prosperity, Taiwan encountered serious challenges domestically and externally in the 1970s. Taiwan's spectacular 'economic miracle' was not without its costs. As Taiwan evolved from a primarily rural, agricultural society into a predominantly urban, industrial one, it underwent dramatic and indeed traumatic changes, which shook its traditional orders to the core. The economic boom and industrialisation were accompanied by a host of new problems: social inequalities, conflicts between capitalists and labourers, conspicuous consumption and cultural alienation. As foreign investment grew and the Japanese and American consumer cultures penetrated further into Taiwanese society,

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<sup>33</sup> See Yip, 2004, *Envisioning Taiwan: Fiction, Cinema, and the Nation in the Cultural Imaginary*, pp. 30-2.

<sup>34</sup> The discussion in this section relies primarily on Kuo Chi-chou's work *The Leftwing Movement in 1970s Taiwan* (1999) and June Yip's *Envisioning Taiwan* (2004).

many began to question the social and cultural costs of the island's continued military dependence and its increasingly complex economic ties with the global capitalist system. Radical intellectuals wondered whether Taiwan was once again being enslaved and exploited by foreign powers – becoming an economic and cultural colony of Japan and America. Against this backdrop, the modern poetry debate was initiated.

Western modernism has had a huge impact on Taiwanese literature. From a literary point of view, Taiwanese society was perceived as a 'cultural desert' by many during the first decade of the KMT's rule.<sup>35</sup> The literature taught in Taiwan's schools was limited primarily to Confucian classics and traditional Chinese poetry from the dynastic era. Popular literature consisted largely of escapist entertainment – historical romances and swordsmen epics – far removed from the quotidian realities of Taiwan. The literature of this early period also tended to be monopolised by refugee writers from the mainland.<sup>36</sup> Against this background, post-1949 Taiwan's Modernist literary movement emerged. It in fact carried on many of the traditions established in China during the Republican era, 1911-1949, characterised by emulation of western high culture. Postwar Taiwan's Modernist literary movement, one of the latest in a series of such efforts, naturally displayed some of its essential characteristics. The Modernist literary Movement was arguably linked with liberal thought prior to the

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<sup>35</sup> The native tradition of resistance literature under the Japanese was stifled after the KMT take-over of the island, since, as noted above, many Taiwanese authors were either executed or imprisoned by the government or fled abroad. Besides, writers in Taiwan were largely cut off from the humanistic tradition of modern Chinese literature, as the richly varied and socially conscious literature of the May Fourth period was banned by the government because most of its major authors, such as Lu Hsun, Lao She and Pa Chin were affiliated with the Chinese communists. Yip, 2004, p. 23.

<sup>36</sup> Their work was dominated by the nostalgic literature of exile, love stories and spy novels set in Shanghai, Nanjing, Beijing and other cities in China, which were unfamiliar to the majority of Taiwanese readers. (ibid., p.23)

(communist) Revolution, especially that of Anglo-American intellectuals.<sup>37</sup>

The new generation of young writers taking part in this literary movement, many of them university students, began to publish critical and creative works in newly established literary journals, some of which were devoted to promoting 'new poetry', such as *Blue Star* (1957-1965) and *Contemporary Poetry* (1953-1963), while some focused exclusively on fiction, for example *Epoch* (1954-1970), *Literary Review* (1956-1960) and *Modern Literature* (1960-1973). The major characteristic of these literary journals was an intense interest in European and American modernist literature, which for many young intellectuals had begun to fill the void left by Taiwan's alienation from modern Chinese literary traditions.<sup>38</sup> The principle of artistic autonomy was promoted and defended.

The attacks on modernism by Nativist writers in 1972, predominantly from an anti-imperialist and realist perspective, were commonly known as the modern poetry debate, a precursor of the Nativist Literary debate later that year. This debate began with Kuan Chieh-ming's article promoting the 're-Sinicisation' of modern Chinese poetry and calling for poets to forget their borrowed western ideas and techniques and turn their attention to the Taiwanese reality around them, to the daily struggles of the ordinary people. His was one of the earliest appeals for a 'national style' in Taiwanese

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<sup>37</sup> The ideas of key literary figures in post-1949 Taiwan such as Liang Shih-chiu, former member of the Crescent Moon Society, Hsia Chi-an, the chief editor of *Literary Magazine* and mentor of a group of modernists, and Yen Yuan-shu, a leading critic of the 1960s who introduced New Criticism into Taiwan, are all fundamentally rooted in the western liberal-humanist tradition (the R.O.C. Yearbook 1999, pp. 431-2).

<sup>38</sup> For a detailed discussion of the works of these modernist writers and the intellectual influence of western writers on them, see Yip, 2004, pp. 24-5. For a discussion of contemporary poetry, see Kuo, 1999, p. 43.

literature.<sup>39</sup>

The modernists were criticised for their overeager experimentation with techniques and ideas borrowed from western literary theories; they were considered the victims of cultural and intellectual colonisation. Moreover, their use of obscure, unconventional language and their obsession with formal stylisation elicited charges of hollow aestheticism, elitist decadence and abdication of social responsibility.<sup>40</sup> The attack on western modernism initiated by the modern poetry debate eventually evolved into a broader and more constructive discussion of the function of literature and the arts. As the aestheticism of literary modernism fell increasingly out of favour, the historical and social role of literature was re-emphasised. It was during this period of introspective enquiry and cultural renaissance that writers and scholars re-discovered the native Taiwanese literature of the Japanese occupation period.<sup>41</sup>

Like modernist writers, Nativist writers were loosely affiliated with particular newspapers and literary journals, most notably the *United Daily News* (specifically, its literary supplement), one of the island's leading newspapers, *Writer's Forum*, *Youth Monthly* and *Literary Quarterly*. The most important theoreticians of the Nativist Literary movement include Yu Tien-tsung, Wang To and Chen Ying-chen. Their fictional works and the critical discourse they inspired were structured on numerous and sometimes overlapping pairs of binary oppositions, most notably: native vs. foreign cultures, Taiwanese dialect vs. Chinese language, experimental vs. cognitive knowledge, tradition vs. modernity, village vs. city, and rural agrarianism

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<sup>39</sup> Kuo, 1999, p. 43; Yip, 2004, p. 33.

<sup>40</sup> Kuo, 1999, pp. 44-6; Yip, 2004, p. 32.

<sup>41</sup> Yip, 2004, p. 33.

vs. industrial capitalism. Such 'dogmatic' reduction of the complicated changes in Taiwanese society to a binary struggle between the negative values of an industrial capitalism imposed by foreigners and the positive values of indigenous agrarian society certainly bolstered the ideological struggle against the modernists. Yet at the same time it oversimplified the sociohistorical problems facing Taiwanese society.

### Literary Critiques as Social Interventions – Nativist Literature

Unlike most of the *Modern Literature* writers, Wang To, Yang Ching-chu, Chen Ying-chen, Wang Chen-ho and Huang Chun-ming were native islanders writing about the contemporary Taiwanese people and concrete social problems that many felt had been ignored by modern literature. Kuo and Yip have produced excellent, comprehensive analyses of the work of these Nativist writers, highlighting their depictions of the plight of those people exploited and marginalised during capitalist industrialisation, which entailed critical views of the KMT's development strategy.<sup>42</sup>

Yang is best known for his examination of daily life in the new industrial manufacturing plants that dotted the island's landscape. In his most famous fiction, 'The Factory Workers', which drew on his own experiences and observations as a refinery factory worker in Kaohsiung, the base of Taiwan's heavy industries, he depicted the abuse suffered by factory workers and examined its bitter consequences. Wang To, known for his fictions such as 'Auntie Chin-shui' and 'Bombing', was concerned with economic exploitation, not only in the new manufacturing industries

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<sup>42</sup> See Kuo, 1999; Yip, 2004. Whilst Kuo analysed the Nativist literary debate from the perspective of the short-lived re-emergence of the leftwing/socialist movement (dubbed 'the third wave' of Taiwan's leftwing movement since the Japanese rule) in Taiwan society, Yip centred her discussion on the cultural imaginary of 'the (Taiwanese) nation' projected by the Nativist writers.



but also in more traditional modes of production such as farming and fishing, which he perceived to have been permanently altered by the introduction of the capitalist systems of wholesale marketing, organised distribution, and retailing. Chen Ying-chen, probably the most active of the Nativist group, wrote stories addressing the problems created by multinational companies, especially American corporations, that had set up branches in Taipei and which in his view were exploiting and enslaving armies of Taiwanese white-collar workers.

Wang Chen-ho is famous for his *Rose, Rose, I Love You* and 'Oxcart for a Dowry'. The former is a pointed critique of Taiwan's flourishing sex trade, providing Taiwanese women to satisfy the appetites of American soldiers on leave from their tour of duty in Vietnam. The central metaphor of roses in a garden refers at once to sexual love and to the nickname for a type of venereal disease rampant among American soldiers in Vietnam at the time, 'Saigon Rose'.<sup>43</sup> The latter is a dark, sardonic comedy about a destitute couple distinguished only by their ludicrous flaws and a story asking some poignant, fundamental questions: what happens when people struggling for mere subsistence are thrown together in a godforsaken land? When survival is at stake, what happens to venerated cultural notions such as pride, dignity, love and honour? The story, as one literary critic commented, is a complex parable of survival and the human condition.<sup>44</sup>

Huang Chun-ming's works such as 'The Taste of Apples', 'The Sandwich Man' 'Sayonara Good-bye' and 'Days of Gazing at the Sea' all examined the traumatic

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<sup>43</sup> See Yee, 2001, p. 95; Yip, 2004, p. 34.

<sup>44</sup> For detailed analysis of the story, see Yee, 2001, p. 95.

changes that modernisation and urbanisation brought to traditional Taiwanese villages by depicting the poverty-stricken lives of Taiwan's lower classes, the 'little people', such as peasants, street peddlers and prostitutes. 'The Taste of Apples' used the comic and fantastical story of a Taiwanese worker, whose rickety bicycle was run over by an American general's shiny Mercedes limousine, not only to raise questions about the American military presence in Taiwan and the degree to which the penetration of American culture had led to blind admiration of all things Western,<sup>45</sup> but also to demonstrate how harsh the worker's family life was. Instead of grief and complaints, the family felt that the father's injury was good luck – the compensation money from the American general, medical treatment in a well-equipped modern hospital, and a chance to enjoy the taste of apples, luxury fruit for most Taiwanese people at the time.

These Nativist fictional works were later the raw materials of the first New Wave Cinema or New Cinema in 1980s Taiwan, which was inspired by the idea and theory of Third Cinema.<sup>46</sup> Inspired by the Nativist literature of the 1970s, New Wave directors such as Hou Hsiao-hsien, Edward Yang (Yang Teh-chang), and Wang Tong created a new style of cinema with a unique Taiwanese flavour by focusing on realistic and sympathetic portrayals of rural and urban life. Among them, Hou's later films, such as *The City of Sadness* and *The Puppet Master*, are recognised as major

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<sup>45</sup> See Yip, 2004, p. 35.

<sup>46</sup> Third Cinema was characterised by its 'oppositional' filmmaking, influenced by revolutionary cinematic currents in Europe that were, in part, precipitated by anxieties over encroachment by foreign, notably American, culture: movements such as Italian neorealism and British notions of the social documentary. The parallels that Italian neorealism offers to Third Cinema in general and Taiwanese New Cinema in particular are striking, both in terms of its historical significance as a cinematic movement and its stylistic characteristics. For a more detailed discussion of Italian neorealism, Third Cinema and Taiwanese New Cinema, see Yip, 2004, pp. 60-8; 173-80.

contributions to world cinema. The New Wave Cinema was original in its replacement of melodrama and escapism – the previous mode of cinema – with a realistic examination of life in Taiwan society following the tremendous social, political, and economic changes that had taken place over the previous fifty or so years.<sup>47</sup>

Nativist writers also relied on frequent public lectures and literary forums – carefully publicised on college campuses and generously covered by the major newspapers – to build an audience and broaden their appeal. By the mid-1970s, the Nativist writers had succeeded in winning considerable popular and critical support. The new foci of anti-imperialism, localism and realism were championed not only as a break from the tired nostalgic fiction of the refugee writers, who had dominated Taiwanese fiction throughout the 1950s and 1960s, but also as a more serious-minded and socially relevant alternative to the escapist literature – teen love stories, historical romances and swordplay sagas – popular at the time.<sup>48</sup>

In line with calls for Chinese nationalism, the Nativists constructed a national consciousness by focusing on specifically Taiwanese sociohistorical problems and shifting away from the western-orientated modernist experimentation and

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<sup>47</sup> The second New Wave Cinema emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the initial enthusiasm of local audiences for the first New Wave began to wear off. The second New Wave offered greater variety in content and style. However, it still exhibited a strong commitment to portraying a uniquely Taiwanese perspective and exploring the reality of life in contemporary Taiwan, especially its pain and absurdities. See the R.O.C. Yearbook 1999, pp. 372-4.

<sup>48</sup> See Hsiao, 2000, p. 67; Yip, 2004, p. 29. Central to the critical discourse of anti-modernism was the idea that the modernism introduced and promoted by many western-trained liberal scholars, considered to be 'superior' and 'progressive' as a body of thought as well as literary genre, was in fact merely a fashionable trend, hard for ordinary people to understand and appreciate. Moreover, ordinary people were seen by the modernists as overly conservative, possessing outdated aesthetic views and insensitive to modern ideas. Modernists were therefore criticised for alienating themselves from the public because they had lost their sociohistorical awareness.

individualistic tendencies of writers associated with the literary magazines of the early 1960s towards more traditionally realist narratives. Although the Nativist cultural form is generally associated with works by Nativist writers in the 1970s, it in fact originated during the period of Japanese occupation and the Sino-Japanese War, when Taiwan was absorbed economically and culturally by the Japanese regime. Conceived by patriotic Taiwanese intellectuals as a nationalistic effort to resist forced assimilation into Japanese culture and preserve local traditions, the Nativist literature of this period sought to realistically depict the social and economic conflicts precipitated by the clash of traditional Chinese feudalism with the capitalist modernisation introduced by the Japanese colonisers. Important Nativist writers of the occupation period include Yang Kuei, Wu Chou-liu, Chung Chao-cheng and Chung Li-ho. Perceiving the historical context of 1970s Taiwan as a type of neocolonialism, the Nativist writers of the 1970s deliberately introduced the works of the prewar generation of Nativist writers.

#### The Nativist Literary Debate and the Foundation of the *China Tide* Group

This debate was triggered by Wang To's article 'Bells toll in the graveyard' in *Cactus Magazine* in 1977. The article was critical of the escapist orientation or 'sociohistorical disengagement' of 1960s literary modernism and called for works tackling local subjects to be published. It was followed by two critical responses: Yin Cheng-hsiung's 'Where are the bells tolling in the graveyard?' and Chu Hsi-nin's 'Where to return? How to return?',<sup>49</sup> accusing Wang of inciting social hatred by

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<sup>49</sup> Chu expressed anxiety that the Nativist movement would eventually develop into a kind of 'regionalism' as the 'localness' of literary creation was overemphasised. He argued that Nativist works could thus hardly be expected to create a new paradigm for literature.

exaggerating social inequalities and promoting localism and xenophobia.

The official response to the rise of Nativist fiction was a retrenchment in which the binary structures of classical nationalistic thinking were manipulated to reaffirm the KMT's vision of China. In August 1977, the government organised a three-day conference called the Symposium of Literary Workers. The ostensible purpose of the conference was to celebrate the creative freedom enjoyed by writers in Taiwan and to condemn the censorship and persecution suffered by writers and artists on the mainland. However, as many have pointed out, it soon became obvious that the true objective of the meeting was to criticise, censure and ultimately suppress the Nativist literary movement.<sup>50</sup>

The KMT strategy was to paint the Nativist camp as traitors, insinuating that its particular brand of sociopolitical consciousness in literature and art was an invitation to subversion and a threat to the national security and unity of the ROC. The most famous supporters of this move were Peng Ke, a critic closely associated with the KMT, and Yu Kuang-chung, a famous modern poet. Yu's sarcastic, critical and oft-cited article 'Wolves are coming!',<sup>51</sup> is an example of how the opponents of Nativist literature sought to link it to the Chinese communists, the national enemy, by mobilising the politically loaded terms 'proletarian literature', 'literature of the workers, peasants and soldiers' and 'class struggle'.<sup>52</sup> The debate on Nativist

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<sup>50</sup> Kuo, 1999, p. 244; Yip, 2004, p. 40.

<sup>51</sup> Yu made a sarcastic remark on Nativist literature: 'We have not heard of "Literature of San-Min-Chu-Yi" in Beijing. Yet "proletarian literature" is already everywhere in Taipei. The "proletarian literature" might win awards someday in Taipei. When our country is suffering from diplomatic setbacks, some people are promoting "proletarian literature". What a coincidence'. Yu (1977), quoted in Wei, 1980, p.266.

<sup>52</sup> This involved specifically the rigidly defined talks on literature and the arts in Yenan. Yip, 2004, p. 40.

literature and its role in the emergence of a 'Taiwanese consciousness'<sup>53</sup> was further polarised by attempts by the government and its cultural apologists to accuse the Nativist writers of promoting separatism.

In response, Wang To wrote the article "Realism" not "Ruralism" to clarify that he was a literary realist rather than political separatist.<sup>54</sup> Chen Ying-chen, in his article 'The blind spot of Nativist literature', insisted on the continuity between the anti-imperialist spirit of Nativist literature and earlier resistance movements in China. He performed an exercise of self-criticism, outlining the position of those who call for Taiwanese cultural nationalism and then dismissing it as the rhetoric of separatism. Instead, Chen emphasised that the Taiwanese consciousness of which the Nativists spoke was an inseparable part of a broader Chinese consciousness, an inherited struggle in pursuit of Chinese self-determination. Besides, Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People – the guiding tenets of the ROC under the KMT, were evoked by Nativists not only to affirm their allegiance to the official vision of Chinese nationalism, insisting that Nativist literature was necessarily opposed to separatist localisms, Yu Tien-tsung's 'Nativist literature and nationalist spirit' being an example, but also to construct a new discourse for the Nativist movement by relinquishing the term 'Nativist literature' altogether, as Wang Hsing-ching's article 'Bells tolling

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<sup>53</sup> 'Taiwanese consciousness' refers to a local consciousness irrelevant to any idea of Taiwanese nationalism as perceived later in the 1980s debate between Chinese consciousness and Taiwanese consciousness.

<sup>54</sup> Wang To argued that the cultural and political movements of the 1970s signalled Taiwan's sudden waking to 'the true face of imperialist aggression' and 'served an important educational and provocative function vis-à-vis our long-time existence under American and Japanese economic incursions masquerading under the guise of "economic cooperation"'. Wang went on to cite numerous examples of tragedies suffered by Taiwanese labourers in American- and Japanese-owned factories. Yip, 2004, p. 34, p. 261 (note 82).

everywhere' set out to achieve.<sup>55</sup>

Faced with all-out attacks from the government and its apologists, Nativist writers understandably sought sympathetic allies and any protection that might be available to them. The *China Tide* group was organised by the leading members of the Nativist movement in part for this reason, with the assistance of the nationalist *China Magazine*. The magazine's Chinese nationalism, anti-westernisation and anti-modernisation made it keen to help the Nativists, many of whom shared these concerns. Hu Chiou-yuan, a legislator and member of the KMT, enjoyed personal connections with the regime due to their shared conservative Chinese nationalism, allowing him to negotiate with the government for the *China Tide* group. Ho defended the group by obscuring or 'whitewashing' the socialist orientation of the Nativist writers, emphasising their Chinese nationalism. The cooperation or union of *China Tide* and *Chinese Magazine* was called the 'China Alliance'. Yet the sociopolitical conservatism and radicalism of the respective groupings laid the foundation for internal conflicts over the issue of 'nationalism vs. internationalism' and eventually caused the Alliance to split in 1979.

### **The 'Chinese Consciousness vs. Taiwanese Consciousness' Debate and the Emergent Taiwanese Nationalism, 1980-1990**

Encouraged by public support for the Dangwai movement in the pre-election

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<sup>55</sup> Wang felt that interpretations of the term 'Nativist literature' were so extreme that the people who used it were 'enslaved' by it rather than using it to express their ideas properly. He then announced the death of the term, hoping however that this would give the literature a whole new lease of life. For Wang, this new-born literature, with the same spirit, emphasised 'resistance against imperialism by exalting national dignity, resistance against capitalism by practising the Principle of Livelihood, and resistance against bourgeois democracy by employing the democratic principle of the People's Three Principles'. Wang (1977), quoted in Wei, 1980, p.306.

campaigns and their surprising victories over the KMT's candidates in 1977, the *China Tide* group began to get involved in oppositional activities against the KMT. Initially, they lent the Dangwai opposition verbal support. Later, after a heated internal debate which failed to produce consensus,<sup>56</sup> some members of the group were convinced that the Dangwai movement's 'mass approach', which focused on elections, was more effective and direct than cultural critiques, and joined forces with the political opposition, led predominantly by native Taiwanese politicians.<sup>57</sup>

Another key change in the magazine was the reduced attention paid to the Three Principles of the People and the thoughts of Sun Yat-sen. The focus shifted to the legitimacy of Taiwanese historical consciousness, which contributed to the transformation of Taiwanese consciousness from a local consciousness that was an inseparable part of Chinese consciousness to a Taiwan-centred consciousness. This was embodied by one of Wang Hsing-ching's comments, made in response to the KMT's criticism of violent 'mobs' in the Chungli Incident, which implicitly challenged the China-centred view of history by emphasising the equal importance of the histories of Taiwan and China.<sup>58</sup>

Indeed, his remark also implied that people on the island and mainland had different

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<sup>56</sup> Different views were held by its members. For example, fanatic nationalists like Wang Hsiao-po and Chen Ying-chen insisted that unification was the most important goal, which should never be compromised. Some, like Wang Hsing-ching, rejected the proposal to join the Dangwai movement as they were sceptical about 'bourgeois democracy'. For those who later joined the Dangwai movement, direct contact with the masses in political rallies was the most effective form of political practice.

<sup>57</sup> The editorial entitled 'Our aims and arguments', published on the occasion of *China Tide*'s second anniversary, stated: 'We seldom talk about politics in the magazine. However, this does not mean that we have no political arguments. Our political arguments are very simple: corruption must be eliminated and elections fair... Prior to the election, we published two interviews on the election; after the election, we published our comments and reflections on the Chungli Incident. We are also concerned with the orientation of young people demonstrated in the election'. Editorial, *China Tide*, 1977.

<sup>58</sup> Wang, 1977, p.15.



historical experiences: while the island was a colony of Japan, the mainland was a semi-colony of western powers; whereas Japanese imperialism was a ruthlessly destructive force once launched against China itself, responsible for millions of deaths and massive devastation, in Taiwan it established a relatively orderly, peaceful and productive system of rule. Yet *China Tide*'s call for due attention to Taiwan's history was by no means made to support Taiwan independence.<sup>59</sup> It was not until the new Taiwanese literary movement in the 1980s, a component of Taiwanese cultural nationalism, that Taiwanese consciousness was aroused and the project of crafting a national literature of Taiwan got underway.<sup>60</sup>

The 1979 Kaohsiung Incident, originally a mass rally organised by the Dangwai movement to mark International Human Rights Day, which sadly ended in a ruthless government crackdown, was undoubtedly a severe setback for the opposition. Yet the imprisonment of the rally leaders set the scene for the rise of militants within the group, radicalised their strategy and strengthened their determination to fight against the KMT's authoritarianism. Gradually, Taiwanese consciousness as opposed to Chinese consciousness was promoted by addressing the taboo issue of the "February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident", depicting resistance heroes fighting against different regimes that had ruled Taiwan, and eulogising 'Taiwanese glories'. The radicalisation of the opposition's political discourse was apparent in the common manifesto published in the election campaign in 1983 that defiantly claimed the right of Taiwan people to self-determination: 'Taiwan's future must be decided by all citizens of Taiwan'.

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<sup>59</sup> Its anti-separatist stance has remained unshaken. This was shown in its overall 'cautious cooperation' with the Dangwai movement in general and open criticism of the Kaohsiung Incident in 1979 in particular.

<sup>60</sup> See Hsiao, 2000, p. 90-102.

### *The Characteristics and Evolution of Taiwanese Consciousness*

In the context of the KMT's authoritarianism and official Chinese nationalism, as noted in Chapter Two, the convergence of Taiwanese nationalism and democratisation naturally became central to oppositional discourse. Taiwanese consciousness was thus construed as both a democratic consciousness and a national consciousness. In his article 'Taiwanese consciousness – the cornerstone of the Dangwai democratic movement', Chen Shu-hung listed reasons why the recognition of Taiwanese consciousness, which was independent from Chinese consciousness, must be the pre-condition for Taiwan's democratic development. In contrast, Chinese consciousness, on which the official Chinese nationalism and the political legitimacy of the KMT's authoritarianism (the frozen democratic constitution, suspension of re-election of representatives to the three central legislative bodies, and the repression of civil liberties) were based, was seen as the major obstacle to Taiwan's liberal democratisation.<sup>61</sup>

In defining 'Taiwanese consciousness', Chen provided a rather materialist account: 'Taiwanese consciousness is neither born naturally nor is it merely a geographic term. It is the product of a distinctive social and economic development'. This view is reminiscent of the accounts of Benedict Anderson and Perry Anderson,<sup>62</sup> among others, who attribute the emergence of Taiwanese nationalism to its unique historical experiences and geographical separation, and is closely related to the theoretical

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<sup>61</sup> Chen Shu-hung, 1983, 'Taiwanese consciousness – the cornerstone of the Dangwai democratic movement', in Shih Min-hui (ed.), *A Selection of Articles on the Debate Over Taiwanese Consciousness – A Conclusion to the 'Taiwan Complex versus China Complex' Debate*, pp. 191-205.

<sup>62</sup> Benedict Anderson, 2001, 'Western Nationalism and Eastern Nationalism – Is there a difference that matters?', *New Left Review*, 2001, May-June; Perry Anderson, 2004, 'Stand-Off In Taiwan', *London Review of Books*, June 2004, Vol. 26, No. 11.

perspective on identity change in Taiwan which emphasises the role of social experiences.<sup>63</sup> He rejected the primordial view of national identity which argued that a 'common consciousness' would *necessarily* develop within a group of people who were born and grew up in the same place, that is, a natural community. Instead, he put forward a modernist-functionalist account of the formation of Chinese national consciousness that stressed the role of capitalist development commencing in the late Ming dynasty (1600s). This common consciousness was later consolidated further by the common experience of resisting foreign aggression on the mainland.<sup>64</sup>

Chen argued that before the mid-nineteenth century, no common Taiwanese consciousness existed on the island. Local consciousnesses prevailed as the result of migration from the mainland, primarily Fujian and Guangdong provinces. Most notable were the 'Chuan-chou consciousness', the 'Chang-chou consciousness' and the 'Hakka consciousness'.<sup>65</sup> The feudal economy and small-scale agriculture at the time were taken to explain why diverse local consciousnesses overrode the very weak 'common Taiwanese consciousness', if it existed at all. Frequent ethnic conflicts, according to Chen, proved the absence of a common Taiwanese consciousness.

The capitalist industrialisation launched under colonial rule to meet the needs of

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<sup>63</sup> Melissa J. Brown, 2004, 'Preface', *Is Taiwan Chinese? The Impact of Culture, Power, and Migration on Changing Identities*.

<sup>64</sup> For comprehensive discussions of theories of nationalism see Anthony D. Smith, 1998, *Nationalism and Modernism*; 2001, *Nationalism – Theory, Ideology, History*.

<sup>65</sup> People of Chang-chou and Chuan-chou origin are commonly termed and viewed as sub-groups of the 'Min-nan' people in the popular categorisation of ethnic groups in Taiwan. According to this categorisation, there are four main ethnic groups in Taiwan: the aborigines (normally contrasted with the Han Chinese, which includes the following three ethnic groups), the Min-nan, the Hakka and the mainlanders (those people who came to the island with the KMT in the postwar era and their offspring). See Wang Fu-chang, 2003, *Ethnic Imagination in contemporary Taiwan* (especially Chapter Three); Melissa J. Brown, 2004, *Is Taiwan Chinese?* (especially 'Figure 4' which illustrates the relations between the ethnic terms used in Taiwan, p. 10).

Japan's imperialist expansion was, according to Chen, a significant stage in the development of Taiwanese consciousness. The establishment of unified measuring and monetary systems and the construction of the North-South highway boosted the growth of island-wide business. It also reflected the growing level of unity in Taiwan's social and economic affairs. It was as a result of this stage that a Taiwanese consciousness shared by different ethnic groups gradually grew.<sup>66</sup> In addition, the new educational system, which encouraged children to go to school and increased enrolment rates, the national language policy, which promoted Japanese, and the broad social and collective mobilisation during the Second World War in the service of Japan's military expansionism, all contributed to the formation of a 'sense of unity' under specific temporal and spatial conditions.<sup>67</sup> Taiwanese consciousness was also strengthened by the common experience of resisting Japanese colonialism.<sup>68</sup>

This common Taiwanese consciousness continued to develop in postwar Taiwan. The integration of social and economic activities island-wide continued, despite the demographic change resulting from the retreat of the KMT and its followers to the island, that is, an increase of population on the island. In theory, mainlanders who moved to the island with the KMT in 1949 might be made feel need to decide whether or not to join the existing socioeconomic entity of the island. In practice, however,

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<sup>66</sup> Chen, unlike some historians, contended that the disappearance of ethnic conflicts after the Japanese took control of the island was *not* because of the brutal yet effective suppression by the Japanese police. Instead, it was because of the formation of a common consciousness – Taiwanese consciousness, hence a new collective Taiwanese identity. However, it is hard to believe that these two factors—the brutal suppression by the Japanese police and the formation of common consciousness of the Taiwanese people were irrelevant, as the following accounts demonstrate.

<sup>67</sup> Chiang Cheng-kuan, 1999, 'The Spirit of Resistance in Taiwan's History', in China Tide Foundation (ed.), *Proceedings of the Conference on Chinese Consciousness and Taiwanese Consciousness*, pp. 298-9.

<sup>68</sup> The spirit of resistance was demonstrated in the nationalist movements led by such radical leftist political groups as the 'Cultural Association', 'Taiwan People's Party', 'Farmers Corporation' and the

mainlanders and islanders came to form a community with a common fate, on the basis of shared experiences of rapid and equitable capitalist industrialisation, the KMT's right-wing authoritarian rule, and the severe diplomatic setbacks that challenged the status of the ROC on Taiwan as the sole representative of all China. However, as the Nativist literary movement's call for nationalism demonstrated, this common Taiwanese consciousness should not be equated with 'Taiwan independence consciousness'.

The historian Huang Chun-chieh has studied the intellectual history and evolution of Taiwanese consciousness. Taiwanese consciousness encountered various 'Others' at different historical stages.<sup>69</sup> Similar to Chen Shu-hung's historical periodisation, Huang divided the development of Taiwanese consciousness into four stages. Firstly, during the Ming and Qing dynasties (1661-1895), 'consciousness' was localised, as represented by the Chuan-chou, Chang-chou and Hakka consciousnesses. Secondly, during the period of Japanese colonial rule (1895-1945), a collective Taiwanese consciousness as the ruled class or 'secondary citizens' emerged. The distinctive feature of this Taiwanese consciousness was that it embodied both class and nationalist consciousness. Huang however emphasises that during this period, although Taiwanese consciousness was not an alternative to but rather part of a broader Chinese consciousness, it was a cultural rather than political identity.<sup>70</sup>

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'Taiwanese Communist Party'. Chen, 1983, p. 193.

<sup>69</sup> Huang Chun-chieh, 1999, 'On the development and characteristics of "Taiwanese consciousness" – historical review and prospects', pp. 3-8.

<sup>70</sup> In short, what the Taiwanese people identified with was Han culture rather than the Chinese regime on the mainland. Another dimension of Taiwanese consciousness during Japanese rule was a consciousness as the ruled or dominated class both politically and economically. In short, the national contradiction in the domain of culture, and the class contradiction in the fields of politics and economy, overlapped at that time. See Chiang Cheng-kuan, 1999, 'The spirits of resistance in Taiwan's history – a preliminary review from the perspective of consciousness', pp.8-16.

The third stage began with the end of Japanese colonial rule and the KMT take-over of Taiwan in 1945. From then until 1987, when martial law was lifted, Taiwanese consciousness developed in a context where the 'Other' it encountered was the Chinese consciousness embedded in the political identity of the mainlanders. The February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident in 1947 was undoubtedly significant to the formation of this Taiwanese consciousness. From the late 1980s, the beginning of the last stage of the evolution of Taiwanese consciousness in Huang's account, Taiwan gradually developed into a liberal democracy. The intensifying political enmity between China and Taiwan from the mid 1990s, most notably the 'Crisis of the Taiwan Strait' of 1995-1996, which occurred in the context of Lee Teng-hui's speech at his alma mater, Cornell University, and Taiwan's first popular presidential election in 1996, contributed to making Taiwanese consciousness a political consciousness centred on resistance to the PRC.

#### *The 'Chinese Consciousness vs. Taiwanese Consciousness' Debate*

This debate began with Chen Ying-chen's article titled 'Towards a broader historical vision' in the *Advance Weekly*, commenting on a folk singer's 'illegal' emigration to mainland China in 1983,<sup>71</sup> through a sentimental and sympathetic interpretation of the singer's famous song *The Dragon's Descendants*<sup>72</sup> and a critique of what he called

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<sup>71</sup> At the centre of the event was Hou Teh-chien, a household name in Taiwan, particularly in the 1980s when the 'folk song movement', part of the Nativist movement, was a key element of popular culture. His action was illegal since no contact in any form was allowed between the two sides of the Strait under martial law. As a result, his most famous song, 'The Dragon's Descendants', was banned by the government.

<sup>72</sup> Chen expressed the affection that Ho's song had aroused in him: 'The Yangtze River, the Yellow River; the water of the Yangtze River, a surge of the Yellow River; China; dragon; the "black eyes, black hair, and yellow skin" of the Chinese people; the rumbling of the great powers' guns in China one hundred years ago... These expressions and images deeply arouse our national affection, concealed at the very bottom of our hearts... Perhaps the propagators on the other side of the Strait would say this expresses the

the 'Taiwanese-ism imaginary'.<sup>73</sup> The debate involved and indeed provoked a controversy over the guiding principle of Taiwan's sociopolitical reform – should it be China-centred or Taiwan-centred?

As the chief spokesman of the 'Chinese consciousness camp', that is, the *China Tide* group, Chen interpreted Hou's action as motivated by a 'natural nationalist sentiment' on the basis of a commitment to a 'cultural and historical China' rather than loyalty to the KMT or the CCP. Such 'affection for China's history, culture and geography', according to Chen, went beyond an identification with any 'secular, transient regime'. Moreover, it was shared by all Chinese, be they Taiwanese or mainlanders. By appealing to common ancestry, history and culture, Chen also repudiated the argument made by the 'Taiwanese consciousness camp', revolving around the

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desire of people in Taiwan to return to the motherland. Surely, this is untrue. Today, does any Chinese want to live under an undemocratic and illiberal regime characterised by bureaucratism and political privileges? This song nonetheless really and deeply touches our soul. The Yellow River and the Yangtze River contain more than geographical meanings; "The Dragon's descendants" with "black eyes, black hair, and yellow skin" have more than just anthropological meaning; the "rumbling of the guns one hundred years ago" is more than a historical chronicle. The song expresses a deep and complicated culture and all the concepts about and affection for China throughout history, which eventually form a collective memory and national complex after five thousand years....' Chen, 1984a, pp. 32-3.

<sup>73</sup> Chen's criticism of the 'Taiwanese-ism imaginary' was made in response to the arguments of Shih Ming, commonly known as the 'father of Taiwan independence', who criticised the 'Han-ism imaginary'. At the heart of Shih's argument was the fact that the geographical separation, different social environments and different experiences of modernisation resulting from Taiwan's four-hundred-year historical development made 'Taiwanese people' socially and psychologically different from 'Chinese people' on the mainland. The term 'imaginary Han-ism' referred to any idea constructed without a 'material basis' in the sense that it was produced beyond the space and time of contemporary Taiwan, such as 'China, the motherland' and 'Taiwan, part of China'. Without directly challenging Shih's methodology of historical materialism – both, after all, claimed to be leftists – Chen asked why, under the same historical conditions, Han Chinese people migrated to and settled in other parts of the world yet did not develop a distinctive identity or consciousness like the 'Taiwanese'. Chen then criticised Shih for misusing 'historical materialism' to serve a 'subjective political bias'. With regard to the 'social contradiction' in Taiwan's capitalist society, without addressing the fact that the KMT was a 'foreign regime' for the local Taiwanese or differentiating 'the mainlanders' on the island from Chinese people in general, Chen rejected the view that equated the relationship between the Chinese and Taiwanese with that between the Japanese and the Taiwanese or the Koreans, or that between the British and the Indians. In conclusion, Chen associated this anti-Chinese Taiwanese-ism with a group of 'very frivolous petits bourgeois', who were impolite, provoked and were hostile to the mainlanders. Chen, 1984a, pp. 34-6.

magazine *Cultivate*, that the mainlanders were the ruling group/oppressors and the islanders were the ruled/the oppressed. In line with accounts anchored in dependency theory, Chen instead attributed the 'class problem', which involved the 'real' relationship between the ruling and the ruled, to the invasion of American capitalism through its foreign investment in Taiwan. Chen further argued that both the KMT and the CCP had to be held responsible for the emergence of the 'Taiwan/ Taiwanese' consciousness on the island.<sup>74</sup>

By adopting 'a broader historical vision', Chen thus perceived 'Chinese consciousness' as consciousness of 'a cultural, historical China', which 'evolved over thousands of years and was built with the contribution of Chinese people'. 'Nationalism', according to him, is a kind of 'self-awareness of the Chinese people in the struggle for China's as well as other nations' advancement, progress, development, solidarity and peace'. In light of bitter experiences, 'more and more Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Strait realise the urgent need to create a free, democratic and united nation and are willing to fight for it'.<sup>75</sup>

A number of critical commentaries followed the publication of Chen's controversial article in the *Advance Weekly*. For example, Tsai Yi-min wrote 'On Chen Ying-chen's "Chinese complex"', 'scrutinising' Chen's argument, such as his conception of 'natural nationalism', his interpretation of 'historical view' and his

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<sup>74</sup> He criticised the KMT for the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident in 1947 and the CCP for categorising a leftwing Taiwanese musician, Chiang Wen-yeh, as a rightist because of his Taiwanese origin. Chiang decided to stay on the mainland after the establishment of the Communist regime in 1949. He was criticised as a Rightist in the 1957 Anti-Rightists Campaign and later sent to a labour camp in Hubei Province during the Chinese Cultural Revolution. Here 'Taiwan' refers to the geographic concept of the island whilst 'Taiwanese consciousness' designates the consciousness of being Taiwanese.



criticism of the 'Taiwan/ Taiwanese consciousness'. Rejecting, for instance, Chen's interpretation of Hou's migration to the mainland as motivated by a 'natural (Chinese) nationalism', Tsai stated:

'I believe very few people who grow up under the nationalistic education of the ROC on Taiwan would wish or expect to visit the motherland one day. The KMT's educational system can of course be criticised in many ways. However, the deep affection towards mainland China felt by people growing up under the KMT's educational system should not be criticised in any way. It is therefore not difficult to understand why Teh-chien Ho, who has grown up under this educational system, wrote a song such as "The Dragon's Descendants" and why he wanted to see mainland China, "the Dragon's homeland". It is nonetheless questionable to interpret his ideas and behaviour as the expression of a "natural nationalism" in this specific historical-political context of ideological inculcation'.<sup>75</sup>

Without addressing Chen's association of 'Taiwanese-ism' with 'the ideology of the Taiwanese petit bourgeoisie', Tsai questioned his 'double standard' in evaluating Chinese consciousness as natural nationalism and Taiwanese consciousness as a distorted consciousness. In addition, Tsai challenged the opposition between the two consciousnesses in Chen's argument. In short, Tsai emphasised that Taiwanese consciousness and Chinese consciousness were likely to coexist. Tsai implied that Taiwanese national identity was 'compatible' with consciousness of a 'cultural and historical China' and 'Han-ist' ethnic nationalism. This discourse of 'Taiwanese nationalism' appeared for perhaps the first time in Chen's public response to Tsai's article, and has become the most widely accepted discourse for those who support the

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<sup>75</sup> Chen, 1984a, p. 37.

<sup>76</sup> Tsai Yi-min, 1984, 'On Chen Ying-chen's "China Complex"', p. 40.

subjectivity or autonomy of Taiwan.<sup>77</sup>

Chen Ying-chen and famous left-wing historian Tai Kuo-hui engaged in a dialogue in an attempt to provide a more systematic and scholarly criticism of the development and theory of Taiwanese nationalism, albeit in the language of Taiwanese consciousness. It was published with the title “‘Taiwanese consciousness’ and the falsity and truth of the ‘Taiwan nation’” in *China Tide Tribune*, whose original title was *China Tide*. In the wake of the disastrous Chinese Cultural Revolution, Tai discussed the emergence of Taiwanese consciousness in the early 1980s. Taking the Dangwai movement, which he viewed as a bourgeois democratic movement, as an example, Tai argued that the ‘Taiwanese complex’ originated in the fear of communism and Chinese communists out of ‘personal interest’, which led some, especially middle-class islanders, to advocate the maintenance of the status quo and the right to self-determination in Taiwan. ‘Personal interest’ referred to the possible loss of their properties, which relied on the institutions of capitalist democracy.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> The term ‘Taiwanese nationalism’ appeared perhaps for the first time in public debate in Chen Ying-chen’s response to Tsai’s article. Chen doubted the existence of a Taiwanese nation and Taiwanese nationalism, albeit he only touched on the issue in passing, arguing that: ‘Discussions of “Taiwanese nationalism” involve analyses and judgements from various perspectives of philosophy of history and Taiwan’s history in general, social history and political economy. The best way to deal with the so-called “problem of provincial origins” is to initiate an intellectual debate among ideologues of left-wing Taiwanese separatism, non-KMT nationalism and official nationalism’ (Chen, 1984b, p. 62). Chen clearly shifted the focus of his discussion from a left-wing critique of Taiwanese consciousness to calling for open and thorough deliberation on Taiwanese nationalism. This is partly because Taiwanese consciousness or nationalism cannot be explained only from the perspective of historical materialism but must also be defended from a left-wing ideological stance. Chen however still firmly rejected any movements promoting Taiwanese nationalism as separatist movements that would harm the solidarity of the whole (Chinese) nation. For Chen, so-called ‘Taiwanese separatism is a temporary historical phenomenon and indeed a freak born in the dark politics and international imperialism of China’s contemporary history’ (Chen, 1984b, p. 66).

<sup>78</sup> Tai argued that the failure of the Chinese Cultural Revolution explained much of the disillusion felt especially by left-leaning pro-unification intellectuals and the general public in Taiwan, where the official Chinese nationalism of the KMT had held sway for over three decades. This disillusion in turn accounted for the emergence of the ‘maintaining the status quo’ discourse. After emphasising the significance of the Cultural Revolution for world history and expressing high expectations of it regardless of its unclear content, Tai pointed out with disappointment and a sense of powerlessness that

A significant international factor, which affected the views of these bourgeois Taiwanese, according to Tai, was the normalisation of Sino-US relations. By advocating the maintenance of the status quo, they wished on the one hand to prevent any possibility of secret deals between the KMT and the Chinese Communist Party, and on the other to resist the influence of mainland China on Taiwan, especially its socialist ideology. Chen Ying-chen and most left-wing pro-unification intellectuals and activists held the same view on this issue, criticising the Taiwan independence movement for being a political movement *of* and *for* the Taiwanese bourgeoisie.<sup>79</sup>

### *Constructing An Idea of 'Taiwanese Nation'*

The focus of the 'Chinese consciousness vs. Taiwanese consciousness' debate then shifted to the nature of the Taiwan independence movement and the construction of theories of the Taiwanese nation from various perspectives. In his dialogue, Chen-Tai discussed Liao Wen-yi's lineage theory of the 'Taiwanese nation', which emphasised the hybrid ethnic origins of the Taiwanese people<sup>80</sup> and was claimed to by Liao and

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'the only choice left now was the argument for the maintenance of the status quo'. 'Maintaining the status quo' was seen by Tai as the 'common interest' of the KMT and the bourgeois democratic movement, led primarily by middle-class Taiwanese. 'Reformation for the preservation of Taiwan' was their common goal, against the background of Taiwan's rapid economic growth. The right to self-determination of the 18 million people in Taiwan was therefore put forward against the Chinese Communists' call for unification. Tai, 1984, pp. 80-1.

<sup>79</sup> See Tai, 1984, pp. 79-80; Chen, 1984, p.83. In his discussion, Chen presented an interesting theory of what might have been, imagining a divided China with the CCP ruling the territories north of the Yangtze River and a right-wing liberal-democratic regime founded by the bourgeoisie to the south and on the island. Because the bourgeoisie was almost entirely destroyed in the Chinese revolution, the Taiwanese bourgeoisie, which emerged during the period of rapid economic development in the 1960s, lacked the confidence to transform the whole of China into a liberal democracy. Their efforts were thus confined to the island, which was the second-best scenario. This is why they promoted Taiwan independence. Chen, 1984, p. 81.

<sup>80</sup> According to this hybridist account, the Taiwanese nation was distinct from the Han-Chinese nation in that the Han ethnic group was one of many, such as the aborigines, Japanese, Latin, and Teutonic, that shaped the ethnic configuration of the Taiwanese nation. Lee, 2001, p.111.

his colleagues lay the theoretical foundation for the discourse of Taiwan independence. Liao was a radical advocate of Taiwan independence. In 1948 in Japan, Liao founded the 'Alliance for Taiwan's Re-Liberation' with Sheue-hong Hsieh, an important figure in the history of Taiwan's communist movement.<sup>81</sup>

US President Nixon's historic visit to Beijing in 1972, in Tai's view, was an important factor in the transformation of the discourse of Taiwan independence. The prime mover here was the World United Formosans for Independence (WUFI), a group of Taiwanese intellectuals who studied primarily in the United States and Japan, later blacklisted by the KMT for promoting Taiwan independence abroad.<sup>82</sup> A new discourse of the Taiwanese nation based on the model of civic nationalism was suggested by scholars who are sympathetic to Taiwan independence to replace the previous lineage theory. Most notable was Peng Ming-min's idea of 'community', influenced by Renan's theory of liberal nationalism.

Two points were at the heart of this new discourse: first, membership of the Taiwanese nation should be based on Taiwanese citizenship; second, Taiwanese nationalist morality was rooted in the political principle of liberal democracy (or liberal patriotism as some theorists like to call it). This was also an attempt to resolve the intensifying ethnic conflict at the time by rejecting the opposition between the

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<sup>81</sup> In Japan, Liao founded the 'Taiwan Independence/Democratic Party' in 1950 and the Interim Government of the Republic of Taiwan in 1956.

<sup>82</sup> The new idea of the Taiwanese nation was expressed in a secret WUFI document written by the then chairman Tsann-hong Chang in 1976. Like Tai, Lee saw the diplomatic crises of the 1970s as a significant factor in the transformation of the discourse of the Taiwanese nation. Unlike Tai, who emphasised that the reason for the change in the WUFI's discourse was anxiety about the suspension of America's support due to the normalisation of Sino-US relations, however, Lee argued that the change was essentially strategic, necessary to advance political reform inside Taiwan. The central idea was to differentiate between the KMT/Chiang regime and ordinary mainlanders in order to broaden the social base of support for Taiwan's democratic reform. Lee, 2001, pp. 134-5.

mainlanders, the 'late-comers', and the islanders, the earlier Chinese immigrants. The minority aborigines were missing entirely from this discourse.<sup>83</sup>

In contrast to the earlier argument that associated all Taiwan independence apologists with the petit bourgeoisie, Chen Ying-chen and Tai Kuo-hui now differentiated sub-groupings within the Taiwan independence movement, which included 'pro-Taiwan independence conservatives' and 'pro-independence leftists'. The core members of the former grouping were middle-class Taiwanese in North America preoccupied with capitalist interests in Taiwan and piecemeal political reform rather than radical change. The latter group consisted mainly of radical intellectuals influenced by the uprisings led by Taiwanese national heroes, such as Liao Wen-yi and Hsieh Sheue-hung. Compared to the right-wing conservatives, these were far less powerful within Taiwanese society. Although leftwing radical discourse has played a part in shaping the Taiwanese public culture of today, it still appears relatively powerless in the face of the ethos of capitalist democracy. Besides, as discussed in greater detail below, in the intellectual and cultural scene on Taiwan, the new leftism, deeply influenced by the legacy of 1968, has been the dominant leftwing voice.

In response to Tai and Chen's critical analysis of Taiwanese independence theory and the independence movement, Cheng Ming-cheh wrote the article 'Is the Taiwan independence movement really a bourgeois movement?', criticising their class-based analysis for oversimplifying the whole issue. Cheng questioned Chen and Tai's criticism of the Dangwai movement as a bourgeois democratic movement from two

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<sup>83</sup> The ethnic imagination of the aborigines in Taiwan emerged only in the late 1980s in the context of Taiwan's flourishing social movements. This was the first time their voices were heard in public fora and their needs taken seriously by the public. This imagination was constructed against the category of the dominant Han Chinese, which included the mainlanders and the Taiwanese (islanders). See Wang, 2003,

perspectives: firstly, it was unreasonable to categorise a movement as 'bourgeois' because its leaders or most members were from a bourgeois background, given that the leaderships of most socialist movements in history were of the petty bourgeoisie; secondly and relatedly, a more reasonable way to decide whether a movement was bourgeois was to examine its goals to determine whether they aimed to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie.

Basing his argument on the 'Paradox of Emancipation',<sup>84</sup> Cheng argued that the Taiwan independence movement could only be said to be bourgeois if it aimed primarily to further the interests of the bourgeoisie. He felt it could be accurately categorised as a populist or nationalist movement, leaving to one side the right-left divide. Cheng then went on to argue that the Taiwan independence movement was not a bourgeois movement, but rather, inspired by the European model of social democracy, aimed to advance the wellbeing of everyone in Taiwan.<sup>85</sup>

### *Same Materialist Perspective, Different Historical Narratives*

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*Ethnic Imagination in Contemporary Taiwan*, pp. 101-119.

<sup>84</sup> He pointed out: 'As the Marxist theories have argued, if the masses and the labourers are always unable to know what their interests really are, then political activists are left with two options: one is to humour the wishes of the masses, the other is to impose the leaders' ideology on the masses. However, if we choose to humour the wishes of the masses in a situation in which mass consciousness is dominated by the ruling class because the people have lived within the existing political order, then can we expect any emancipation at all? To humour their wishes is therefore no different from accepting the existing politico-economic orders. If we choose to impose the leaders' ideology upon the masses, then we would run the risk of tyranny. This paradox can only be resolved through interaction between the movements and the masses. Before this process of interaction is complete, it is too early to define the class characteristic of the movement'. Cheng Ming-cheh, 1984, 'Is the Taiwan independence movement really a bourgeois movement?', Shih Min-hui (ed.), *A Selection of Articles on the Taiwanese Consciousness Debate*, 1984, p.130.

<sup>85</sup> His argument was based on a comparison between the conditions on the island and mainland at the time. He claimed that unification with the mainland could not be expected to improve the living standards of the working people in Taiwan or benefit the development of the labour movement. Moreover, only if all classes except the bourgeoisie preferred equality or socialism to other values and ideals and would pursue them at any cost, such as greater poverty, political corruption, cultural ruin and thought control, could the Taiwan independence movement be labelled a bourgeois movement. (ibid., pp. 124-7)

Towards the end of the 'Chinese consciousness vs. Taiwanese consciousness' debate in the late 1980s, a public debate emerged featuring different historical narratives of the development of national consciousness in Taiwan rooted in the same philosophy of history. This was a historical-materialist approach to explaining the development of national consciousness in Taiwan. At the heart of the debate were different narratives of Taiwan's contemporary history and related analyses of social formation at different historical stages. The debate was further developed in the late 1990s with contributions from poststructuralist and neo-Confucian discourses.

Shih Ming, the 'father of Taiwanese independence', adopted a clearly materialistic approach in his famous book 'The Four-hundred Year History of the Taiwanese', presenting the formation of Taiwanese consciousness and nationalism as the historical product of Taiwan's distinctive developmental experience. Shih stated: 'Taiwan society and the Taiwanese people, that is, the Taiwanese nation, and Taiwanese consciousness and Taiwanese nationalism are the products of a developmental history featuring harsh struggles and endeavours in the processes of migration and reclamation, social modernisation, capitalist industrialisation and struggles against Japanese colonialism in which generations of our ancestors were engaged'. Shih argued that the common experience of anti-colonialist struggle in the prewar era was particularly important.<sup>86</sup>

After the end of the Second World War, Shih continued, in the aftermath of the 'great

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<sup>86</sup> They include: the 'anti-Dutch rule' revolt initiated by the farmers with Kuo Huei-yi as its leader, the 'anti-Qing regime' movements led again by farmers Kuo Yi-kuei and Lin Shuang-wen during the period when the Koxinga occupied Taiwan and used it as a base in their fight against the Qing court, the guerrilla wars led by farmers against the impending Japanese takeover during the period of the short-lived Democratic Taiwan Nation, the contemporary national liberation movements led by reformist intellectuals, and the socialist revolutionary struggles by the Taiwanese workers and farmers.

February 28<sup>th</sup> revolution against the mainlanders', the idea that the Taiwanese belong to the Chinese nation disappeared together with the 'imaginary Great Han nationalism' originally a component of Taiwanese consciousness. In other words, the 'entanglement' of (Taiwanese) consciousness with the notion, based on lineage theory, that Taiwanese were Han Chinese, was entirely disentangled. Taiwanese nationalism, understood as 'the aspiration for independence and liberation of the Taiwanese nation, the argument for its national interests, and concern about the fate and future of the nation', eventually became the sole and ultimate principle underlying the foundation of the Taiwanese nation.<sup>87</sup>

On 'Chinese consciousness', Ying-chen Chen employed the same historical-materialistic approach<sup>88</sup> to explaining the development of consciousness in Taiwan and, like Shih, emphasised the common experience of resistance against Taiwan's colonisers, yet reached a conclusion diametrically opposed to Shih's in terms of their evaluation of Taiwanese nationalism. This was mainly because Chen was so keen to establish historical connections between the two sides of the Strait that he tended to ignore the widely recognised differences in the historical experiences of the two societies. Most notable was the debate between Chen Ying-chen (hereafter Chen Y.) and Chen Fang-ming (hereafter Chen F.), a pro-independence leftwing historian, on the 'social formations' of Taiwan at different historical stages. Central to the dispute were different views of the 'nature' of the KMT regime and different understandings of what constituted 'colonialism'.

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<sup>87</sup> Shih, 1980, pp. 1095-6.

<sup>88</sup> Historical materialism was understood by Chen Ying-chen as involving the view that 'the socio-economic structure of every historical epoch forms the foundation of reality and that the entire superstructure, which is composed of the legal system, political institutions, religious and philosophical



Whilst Chen Y. maintained that Taiwan was a semi-feudal and semi-colonial society under Japanese rule and remained a (new) colonial society in the 1960s and 1970s as the result of American economic and military aid, Chen F. argued that Taiwan was fully colonised by the Japanese, re-colonised by the KMT after 1945 and entered the postcolonial stage after 1987.<sup>89</sup> Chen Y. rejected Chen F.'s characterisation of Taiwan as a full colony under Japanese rule.<sup>90</sup> Obviously, their main differences stemmed from the fact that Chen F. emphasised political domination or coercion when discussing colonisation, while Chen Y.'s attention was centred on Japanese and American imperialism in Taiwan. This also explains why Chen F. saw the KMT's rule until the lifting of martial law in 1987 as the 're-colonisation' of Taiwan while Chen Y. considered only Japan and America to be colonisers.<sup>91</sup>

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views, should be explained through this foundation of reality'. Chen Ying-chen, 1997, p. 70.

<sup>89</sup> Chen Ying-chen divided Taiwan's social formation into five historical stages: a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society during the period of Japanese colonial rule; a semi-colonial society during the early days of the retrocession in 1945; a new colonial and semi-capitalist society under KMT rule as a result of capitalist transformation (1950s); and the formation of another new colonial society at the stage of capitalist-dependent development in the 1960s and 1970s. See Chen Ying-chen, 2000. Chen Y.'s periodisation of Taiwan's history was actually a critical response to Chen F.'s article, which put forward different historical periodisations: the period of Japanese colonisation (1895-1945); re-colonisation (1945-1987); and the post-colonial period (1987 to the present). See Chen Fang-ming, 2000, pp. 163-5.

<sup>90</sup> Chen Y. rejected Chen F.'s account because 'colonial society' was not considered a distinctive historical stage in Marx's stage theory, which posited primitive communism; slavery (or the Asiatic mode of production); feudalism; capitalism; and socialism/communism. He elaborated on this point: 'On the one hand, imperialism establishes capitalist relations in colonies which results in the collapse of local traditional-feudal economies to a certain degree; on the other hand, imperialist powers, by consolidating and taking advantage of the existing traditional-feudal forces such as bourgeois landlords, compradors, and bureaucrats and their material bases, achieve their imperialist goals of monopolising accumulation and reproduction of capital. As a result... colonies become malformed semi-feudal societies, trapped somewhere in the process stretching from feudalism to modern capitalism'. Chen Ying-chen, 2000a, p. 140.

<sup>91</sup> Chen Y. argued that under the dual structure of the Cold War and the Chinese civil war, Taiwan and mainland China developed separate national economies. It was therefore incorrect to view the KMT's rule in Taiwan as 're-colonisation'. (Chen Ying-chen, 2000a, pp. 148-51). In response, Chen F. said that he had never used the term 'alien regime' to describe the KMT in his works but merely defined its rule as 're-colonisation' because of the continuity of many colonial policies implemented by the KMT government in Taiwan after Japan left, including the national language policy, the monopoly of financial capital, a vigilant household registration system, and a compulsory national education programme. All this, according to Chen F., recapitulated Japanese colonial rule. See Chen Fang-ming, 2000, p.161.

The exchange between the two Chens continued, each eventually trying to expose the other's position on the unification-independence issue. Chen F. argued that Chen Y. insisted on claiming that Taiwan was semi-colonial under Japanese occupation mainly because this was the only way to establish a historical link between social formation in Taiwan and mainland China. For the mainland was a semi-colony during the same period.<sup>92</sup> Chen Y. responded by implying that Chen F.'s project of writing a new literary history of Taiwan, featuring the aforementioned periodisation, would fail if its analytical framework ignored the Marxist theory of social formation. Without discussing his own pro-unification position, Chen Y. also attributed Chen F.'s inability to understand his points to the latter's pro-independence ideology.<sup>93</sup>

The 'Chinese consciousness vs. Taiwanese consciousness' debate in a broader sense came to an end in the late 1980s. Rather than heralding a 'cease-fire' between the Chinese and Taiwanese nationalists, the end of the 'consciousness debate' precipitated the identity politics of 'Chinese nationalism vs. Taiwanese nationalism'. The distinctive feature of Taiwanese public culture since the mid-1980s has been the dominance of the identity issue in public debate.

### **The 'Taiwanese Nationalism vs. Chinese Nationalism' Debate and Identity Politics, 1991 to the present**

Post-1987 Taiwan witnessed the flourishing of social movements primarily as the result of political liberalisation. Between 1987 and 1992, however, liberalisation was a process controlled by the ruling party. The KMT opened as it saw fit, albeit under

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<sup>92</sup> Chen Fang-ming, 2000, p.158.

<sup>93</sup> Chen Ying-chen, 2000b, pp.139-40.

some public pressure, and granted liberties it deemed acceptable. For the first few years of liberalisation, reforms were enacted from above. In the early 1990s, the KMT seemed far less capable of controlling political outcomes than it had been a few years before. Faced with the political challenge from the newly founded opposition party (the DPP) with its political discourse fusing democratisation and Taiwanese nationalism, Lee Teng-hui launched another wave of localisation or Taiwanisation of the KMT.<sup>94</sup>

Lee's 'politics of delegitimisation' was considered to be driven by both the urgent need to consolidate power<sup>95</sup> and his belief in liberal democracy if not Taiwan independence, which motivated him to form the pro-independence Taiwan Solidarity Union in 2004, after coming under pressure to resign as party chairman in the wake of the party's defeat in the 2000 presidential election. As one brilliant analysis pointed out, when Chiang Ching-kuo died in January 1988, most political analysts predicted a collective leadership in the post-Chiang era because no single 'strongman' could be found in the party. Few observers anticipated that Lee Teng-hui would have the Machiavellian prudence and will to oust the KMT old guard. Even fewer foresaw that he would be able to tackle the formidable task of restructuring an imagined

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<sup>94</sup> The previous wave of Taiwanisation by the KMT party-state was carried out under Chiang Ching-kuo in the early 1970s, when Taiwan suffered a series of diplomatic setbacks, in an attempt to reduce the sense of alienation from the state generated by his father Chiang Kai-shek's rule.

<sup>95</sup> Lee's position as the successor to Chiang Ching-kuo was precarious in the beginning. He encountered a series of challenges between 1988 and 1990. He had to maintain his position as the interim KMT party leader against the intervention of Madame Chiang, the wife of Chiang Kai-shek, and challenges from his rivals within the party, primarily the veteran Chinese representatives in the central legislative bodies, who were later known as the non-mainstream faction. By contentiously appointing as premier Hau Pei-tsun, the Minister of Defence and one of the leaders of the non-mainstream faction, Lee completed the consolidation of his power by creating divisions in this faction. This appointment also sparked protests among the KMT's mainstream faction and the DDP against 'the intervention of a military man', or the 'anti-Hau campaign'. See Kuo Cheng-liang, 1998, 'The phenomenon of the "Lee Teng-hui complex"'; Shaw Carl K. Y., 2002, 'Modulations of Nationalism Across the Taiwan Strait'.

community beyond the dichotomy of Chinese and Taiwanese nationalism.<sup>96</sup> This he did by inventing the concepts 'new Taiwanese' and 'community of lives' or *Gemeinschaft*, allegedly due to the influence of Peng Ming-min's argument in his early *A Taste of Freedom*.<sup>97</sup>

In addition to growing domestic demand to move beyond liberalisation towards democratisation, the changing political situation on the mainland in the aftermath of the Tiananmen massacre (June 1989), specifically the challenge to the CCP's legitimacy, was an external factor equally important to understanding the emergence of identity politics in Taiwan. After Deng's tour of the south in 1992, all-out marketisation was unleashed, with rampant capitalist development, astonishingly fast rates of economic growth and rising inequality. The new, uneven prosperity considerably eased the serious crisis of legitimacy that overtook the regime after the Tiananmen tragedy. The contradiction between fading invocations of socialism and the realities of a runaway capitalism, however, still left an acute moral and ideological vacuum. To fill it, the CCP turned increasingly to nationalist appeals. Its fears were intensified by the spectacle of the disintegration of the USSR and Yugoslavia, which some of its think-tanks as well as observers abroad warned might have a bearing on its

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<sup>96</sup> See Shaw, 2002, pp. 129-30.

<sup>97</sup> Lee Teng-hui's formative experiences in many ways paralleled those of the secessionist Peng. Both were among the few Taiwanese who attended university in Japan. Both returned to Taiwan at the end of the Second World War, experienced the trauma of the first years of the KMT administration, attended National Taiwan University, from which they graduated in 1948 with degrees in agrieconomics and politics respectively, and joined the faculty. Both spent periods studying overseas: Lee in America and Peng in Canada. Despite these similar backgrounds, Peng and Lee reacted very differently to co-option into government service, joining different sides of the political divide. Whilst Peng was forced into eventual exile in the United States because of his *Declaration of Taiwanese Self-Salvation*, Lee developed his career in the government, from research fellow at the Taiwan Provincial Co-operative Bank, a post at the US-ROC Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction (JCRR), senior specialist in charge of the Rural Economy Division, Mayor of Taipei City, Governor of Taiwan Province, Vice-President under Chiang Ching-kuo and then President of Taiwan until 2000.

own future. The 1990s saw the steady rise of an official nationalism, based on territorial claims derived from old dynastic imperial conquests, and expansion of the wealth and power of the central state.<sup>98</sup>

Unsurprisingly, the CCP's turn to nationalist politics had a considerable impact on Taiwan's political situation. For Beijing regards Taiwan as an inseparable part of China which was cut off from its motherland as a result of imperialism, first that of Japan, then America. Hence Taiwan, together with Tibet and Xinjiang, has become a central feature of the 'national question' as reflected in Chinese policies. For Beijing, 'Taiwan' is a 'life and death' struggle, primarily against America, which involves not only national pride and security but also its project of creating a multi-polar world order in which China will punch its weight with other mega-states like the US and EU. Beijing's policies towards Taiwan have changed accordingly. 1995 was the watershed in the development of cross-Straits relations. Following the breakthrough in the early 1990s,<sup>99</sup> which was seen as a contribution to 'peaceful unification' and encouraged unionists on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, Beijing carried out a missile test in the South China Sea on the occasion of Lee Teng-hui's visit to his alma mater Cornell, intended to deter Taiwanese voters from casting their ballots in the island's first

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<sup>98</sup> Wang Chaohua saw the development of China after the 1989 Tiananmen massacre as the gradual materialisation of an 'empire-building' project while Chalmers Johnson, commenting on the recent 'remilitarization of the Taiwan problem' in a political atmosphere in which 'China as threat' discourses are again gaining ground, acknowledged the emergence of China as a rich and successful country with understanding and sympathy, saying that 'China has just had a couple of bad centuries and now it's back'. See Wang, 2005, 'The Island of Contention', *New Left Review*, No. 32, Mar/Apr 2005, pp. 93-5. C. Johnson, 2005, 'No Longer the "Lone" Superpower: Coming to Terms with China', Japan Policy Research Institute (JPRI) Working Paper No. 105.

<sup>99</sup> Cross-Straits relations took a positive turn shortly after the Tiananmen incident, when Beijing was hit by international sanctions, with increasing economic exchanges between the two sides. As a result, Taipei took the initiative in setting up the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) to manage practical matters of trade and travel and Beijing responded by creating a counterpart Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS). The contacts between the SEF and ARATS resulted in a meeting between their respective chairmen, Koo Chen-fu and Wang Daohan, in Singapore from 27-29 April 1993.

popular presidential election, to be held in 1996. In March 2005, a new law-- 'Anti Separation Law'-- was passed by the Chinese authorities to delegitimise Taiwan independence legally, claiming its legal right to use force should Taiwan declares independence.

One important factor in Beijing's changing policies on the 'Taiwan question' was lingering suspicion over Lee Teng-hui's true intentions concerning unification, a suspicion reinforced by the general trend of Taipei's mainland and foreign policies. This was evident in the progression from Chiang Ching-kuo's commitment to 'one China', through the Lee administration's idea of 'one country, two governments' and 'one country, two areas', to the idea of 'two political entities',<sup>100</sup> which virtually claimed that Taiwan was a 'state' on an equal footing with the PRC.<sup>101</sup> After the Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1995-1996, exchanges between Taiwan and China came to halt. It was also against this background that Taiwan implemented the policy of 'patience over haste' in 1996 after the opening of China had attracted vast amounts of capital from the island, followed by reverse migration.

#### *The 'Chinese Nationalism vs. Taiwanese Nationalism' Debate*

The publication of *Ethnic Relations and National Identity* in 1993 marked the

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<sup>100</sup> In Hughes' analysis, 'behind all this lay Taipei's attempts to obfuscate the meaning of "one China" by redefining it in terms of a vague entity not necessarily related to concepts of sovereignty. This had been made clear in statements by the National Unification Council and by Lee himself in an interview with the Japanese journalist Ryotaro Shiba on 31 March 1994, in which he said that the implications of "China" are not clear, that "sovereignty" is a dangerous concept, and that the notion that Taiwan is part of the PRC is a "strange dream"'. Hughes, 1997, p. 89. See also Wang, 2005, p. 95.

<sup>101</sup> This policy change was interpreted by many Chinese nationalists as a gesture encouraging pro-independence voices. Lee Teng-hui's position was therefore considered to be 'pro-independent sovereign Taiwan' (*du tai*), which is different from '*tai du*' (Taiwan independence) in that it still upholds the 'One China' principle without relinquishing the goal of eventual reunification, but on the basis of equality between Taipei and Beijing.

beginning of the Chinese nationalism vs. Taiwanese nationalism debate. It was a collection of essays and perhaps the first book devoted to discussions and analyses of the relationship between ethnic politics and Taiwan's democratisation as well as the sensitive issues of 'provincial origins' and nationalism. The contributions most cited in the nationalist debate are Chang Mau-kuei's 'The pursuit of a "community" and the ethnic question' and 'The question of "provincial origins" and nationalism', Wu Nai-teh's 'Provincial consciousness, political support and national identity' and Wang Fu-chang's 'The nature of provincial integration'.

The book originated in the proceedings of the 'Provincial Origins, Ethnic Groups and National Identity' conference, which aimed to provide a public forum for open discussion of the worrying 'ethnicisation of politics', which exacerbated 'ethnic tensions', primarily during election campaigns.<sup>102</sup> The conference was regarded as a chance to pursue a kind of 'collective healing' and to search anew for a foundation for social solidarity. The ultimate goal was to construct a 'community of common destiny in Taiwan', a concept distinct from the long-existing concept of 'nation' that

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<sup>102</sup> 'Ethnic relations' here primarily refers to those between mainlanders and islanders. The mayoral elections in Taipei and Kaohsiung and the Taiwan Province gubernatorial election in 1994 are good examples of the 'ethnicisation of politics' during election campaigns. Nationalist discourses couched in the language of unification and independence mushroomed throughout the year. This occurred after the non-mainstream faction of the KMT had broken away in 1993 to form a new pro-unification party named the China New Party, after Lee was felt to have adopted an 'independent Taiwan' (*du tai*) position. The New Party was founded by six ex-KMT legislators and one veteran, formerly a legislator. In the Taipei City mayoral election the following year, the New Party nominated a former cabinet member and shining political star, Chao Shao-kang, as its candidate to run against the DPP's Chen Shui-bian. National identity became the key theme of the campaigns, generating heated debates over the unification-independence issue. Given the different historical memories of different ethnic groups, primarily the mainlanders and islanders, the ethnicisation of the entire campaign seems unsurprising if unfortunate. In short, rather than more constructive discussions of policies of public interest, the debate degenerated into mutual accusations, summed up in the slogans 'preserve the ROC' and 'independent sovereign Taiwan'. Worst of all was the claim made by Chen Ding-nan, the DPP's candidate for Governor of Taiwan Province, that the campaign was 'the first battle for the Taiwanese in four hundred years', implying that the choice between him and his KMT rival, James Soong, was one of 'ethnic identity'.

overemphasised 'social integration' at the price of pluralism, failing to respect the distinctive consciousness of individual ethnic groups.<sup>103</sup>

This supposed effort to generate public debate on the sensitive issue of ethnic relations and national identity by publishing the aforementioned book was however blamed for 'creating the new nationalist phenomenon'. Chao Kang and Marshall Johnson produced a post-colonialist critique in an essay, accusing the contributors to the collection of taking an active part in the project of 'nationalist social sciences and the fabrication of subimperial subjects in Taiwan'.<sup>104</sup> Central to their critical argument was the idea of 'subimperial subjects', those people who support Taiwanese nationalism. For they considered Taiwanese nationalism a kind of 'subimperialism', involving Taiwan's 'Southward Advancing' policy, which meant establishing 'colonies' in Southeast Asian developing countries for Taiwanese capitalists.<sup>105</sup> In the Taiwanese context, the imperialist was clearly America, whose imperial project, according to Chao and Johnson, 'can only be accomplished with the participation of subjects themselves colonized by a national structure of feeling'.<sup>106</sup> Essays written by Chang Mau-kuei, Lin Chung-cheng and Lin He-ling, Wu Nai-teh, and Wang Fu-chang were singled out as particularly striking examples of this.

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<sup>103</sup> Chang Mau-kuei et al, 1993, *Ethnic Relations and National Identity*, p. 2-3.

<sup>104</sup> Apart from their critique of Taiwan's subimperialism from a post-colonialist perspective, their argument centred on two points: 'firstly, there is a genre in contemporary Taiwanese social science circles ideologically antidemocratic and nationalist in content and positivist in form; secondarily, this genre is deployed not only with the public in mind but also as a model for work in the highly stratified field of Taiwanese academia, a field permeated by authoritarian practices and personnel moulded by the former Chinese nationalism of the KMT'. Chao Kang and Marshall Johnson, 2000, 'Nationalist Social Sciences and the Fabrication of Subimperial Subjects in Taiwan', *positions*, 2000, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 154.

<sup>105</sup> The notion of 'subimperialism' however was first used by Chen Kuan-hsing in his article 'The Imperialist Eye' to signify the cultural imaginary of Taiwanese nationalists. The article is discussed in detail below.

<sup>106</sup> Chao & Johnson, 2000, p. 151.



Chao and Johnson's article must be seen as a critical intervention in the heated nationalist debate, rather than speaking for or defending either side. In fact, the distinctive feature of 1990s nationalist debate among intellectuals in Taiwan, and indeed to this day, is that rather than Chinese nationalists and Taiwanese nationalists engaging in a dialogue in public fora, the discourse of Taiwan-centred liberal nationalism has come under attack from various perspectives, primarily liberalism and radical discourses inspired by postmodernism and poststructuralism. Multiculturalism and civic republicanism, though less prevalent, have also been drawn on, respectively, to suggest ways of dealing with the ethnic question and to construct a more democratic discourse of Taiwanese nationalism. This is mainly because 'liberalism' has been a dominant ideology in Taiwan, although liberal intellectuals see the emergence of nationalist politics as disproving this claim.

Prior to Lee's 'Taiwanisation' of the KMT in the 1990s, there existed a debate between the KMT's official Chinese nationalism and Taiwanese nationalism of different kinds, albeit the terms used at the time were 'consciousness' or 'complex' rather than 'nationalism' due to the political sensitivity of the term, especially Taiwanese nationalism.<sup>107</sup> Thus, apart from election campaigns, in which the two nationalist sentiments were expressed in the language of unification and independence, public debate between Chinese and Taiwanese nationalists was rare. Chinese and Taiwanese nationalism have also been debated beyond the island, between Taipei and Beijing. As noted above, although China's Chinese nationalism

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<sup>107</sup> For a comprehensive study of the movement aiming to construct a Taiwanese cultural nationalism, see Hsiao, 2000, *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism*. It is fair to say that whilst some pro-independence Taiwanese writers have devoted themselves to constructing a Taiwanese cultural nationalism, social scientists have chosen to formulate and promote a Taiwanese liberal/civic

appeals to anti-colonialism and national unity, it is commonly perceived in Taiwan as a discourse of cultural nationalism. It is discussed further below.

### The Discourses of Chinese Nationalism

There are roughly three types of Chinese nationalist discourse in Taiwan. The first is represented by the leftwing discourse of Chen Ying-chen, the second is the rightwing/conservative discourse of Hu Fo, professor of political science, and Wang Tseng-tsai, a historian,<sup>108</sup> and the third is the discourse of neo-Confucianism as put forward by Chen Chao-ying, a professor of Chinese literature.<sup>109</sup> Whilst the elements of ethnonationalism can be discerned in Chen Ying-chen's as well as Hu Fo's and Wang Tseng-tsai's discourses, Chen Chao-ying's argument for Chinese nationalism can be seen as an example of Taiwanese cultural nationalism.

Chen Ying-chen's discourse of Chinese nationalism, as noted above, was constructed against the background of 1970s Taiwan society. Anti-neocolonialism, specifically that of the United States and Japan, in the context of Taiwan's rapid capitalist industrialisation and the Diaoyutai Incident, was its main focus. Nevertheless, elements of cultural nationalism or ethno-symbolism are also apparent in Chen Ying-chen's nationalist discourse, such as his comments on pop-star Hou Teh-chien's migration to the mainland. Central elements of his notion of 'natural nationalism' are

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nationalism.

<sup>108</sup> See Hu, 1983, 'Political culture and young people's national identity', an interview article, *China Tribune*, 1983, Vol. 15, No. 12; Wang, 1994, 'China's national identity and modernisation', in *Identity and State: Comparison of Chinese and Western Contemporary Histories*.

<sup>109</sup> She has been regarded as a 'new star' in the study of neo-Confucianism in Taiwan and has replaced the leftwing 'old generation' represented by Chen Ying-chen and Tai Kuo-hui as the main creator of Chinese nationalist discourse, albeit a cultural nationalist discourse. Indeed, she was dubbed by a commentator, Lu Chien-rong 'the guardian of Chinese nationalism in the 1990s'. See Lu, 1999, p. 248.

symbols of China as a nation, such as 'dragon', 'Yangtzu River', 'Yellow River', and the physical features of Chinese people, such as 'black eyes', 'black hair' and 'yellow skin', all of which appeared in the lyrics of Ho's well-known folksong *The Dragon's Descendants*.

Compared to Chen Ying-chen's discourse, Hu and Wang seemed to base their arguments for Chinese national identity solely on ethnicity and common ancestry respectively. In an interview, Hu identified six levels of identity: internationalism (identifying with all human beings), racism or ethnonationalism (identifying with the Chinese nation), political nationalism (identifying with Greater China, which includes the mainland and Taiwan), separatist identity (identifying with ROC on Taiwan, excluding the mainland), provincial identity (identifying with one's province of origin in China) and local identity (identifying with local communities). Hu put national identity or political nationalism first, believing that it was most capable of ensuring the 'stability of the political system'. As noted above, Hu emphasised common ancestry or 'blood origin' as the basis of national identity. Hu thus rejected the theory of Taiwan independence as 'an attempt to sever the lineage encompassing the Taiwanese and Chinese nation', which was in any event doomed to fail.

Hu's and Wang's nationalist arguments were therefore no different from the KMT's official nationalism, characterised by its anti-communism and anti-independence. They were rightwing and conservative in this sense. Their images of a united China of the future were thus very different: a democratic socialist China in Chen Ying-chen's case and a liberal-democratic capitalist China in the case of Hu and Wang. As many critics have pointed out, Chen Ying-chen's Chinese nationalism, which justified the unification of Taiwan and the mainland on the basis of the existence of a socialist

China, must answer a crucial question: how many socialist elements remain in China's political, economic, social and cultural institutions?

In a 1995 essay entitled 'On Taiwan's nativisation movement' in the journal *Chinese and Foreign Literatures*, Chen Chao-ying periodised the movement, defined primarily by its resistance against the 'Other', into three waves. The first wave (1895-1949) was characterised by its opposition to Japanese imperialism. The second (1949-1983) was opposed to Westernisation. The third wave, beginning with the Taiwan independence movement in 1983, pursued Taiwan's subjectivity. She argued that in the first two waves, Taiwanese consciousness was part of Chinese consciousness or that the two at least overlapped. In the third wave, however, 'China' became the 'Other' to Taiwan (independence) consciousness.

The notion of 'metamorphosis of Taiwanese consciousness' and Hegel's concept of 'alienation' were employed by Chen Chao-ying as the theoretical framework for her analysis and criticism of the formation of the 'independent Taiwanese consciousness' out of Chinese consciousness. She argued:

'[B]ecause Taiwanese people view China as their motherland, naturally, the origin of Taiwanese consciousness is Chinese consciousness. The Chinese culture and particular lifestyle of Han people represented in Taiwan form the cultural base of "Taiwanese consciousness of the Chinese-style". Now, Taiwanese consciousness, following the path along which its self-consciousness evolves, is developing into a new Taiwanese consciousness against itself. As far as the resistance of the new Taiwanese consciousness against Chinese consciousness, which previously embraced Taiwanese consciousness, is concerned, Taiwan-independence consciousness means alienation from Chinese consciousness; insofar as the resistance against the kind of Taiwanese consciousness

characterised by its love for the motherland is concerned, Taiwan-independence consciousness is self-alienation'.<sup>110</sup>

Chen Chao-ying's use of Hegel's notion of 'alienation' to explain the evolution of Taiwanese consciousness from a component of Chinese consciousness to Taiwan-independence consciousness is certainly intriguing, yet for some commentators her account was problematic, implying a kind of 'cultural essentialism' and teleological view of historical development. Liberal intellectual Chiang Yi-hua questioned this teleological view of the prospects for cross-Strait relations, which in fact took eventual unification with the mainland to be the island's prospect. The formidable question for Chen Chao-ying, therefore, was whether other nations or countries deeply influenced by Confucian norms or Chinese culture in general, such as Korea and Vietnam, should eventually unite with China in order to avoid or overcome any (self)-alienation.<sup>111</sup>

Commenting on the debate between Chen Chao-ying and Chen Fang-ming on so-called 'Taiwanese-ness' and 'Chinese-ness', the historian Lu Chien-rong wondered whether Chen Chao-ying's neo-Confucian view of China, centred almost solely on an idealised notion of China's institutional legacy, might run the risk of drawing an uncritical if not unrealistic 'rosy picture' of the nation. Chen Chao-ying claimed that the 'subjectivity of Chinese culture' was based on these ideal institutions. What worried Lu was that Chen Chao-ying seemed to ignore the dark side of Chinese culture and tradition, such as the tendency towards despotism and the conservatism

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<sup>110</sup> Chen Chao-ying, 1995a, 'On Taiwan's nativisation movement', p.25.

<sup>111</sup> Chiang, 1998, pp. 146-7.

deeply anchored in Confucian teachings.<sup>112</sup>

Lu's comment on Chen Chao-ying's view of traditional China was based on his interpretation of her criticism of Chen Fang-ming's 'definition of China on the basis of the negative side of Chinese-ness'. Rather defensively, she stated that, 'from the cognitive point of view, just as "subjectisation" or "Japanisation" should not be seen as representative of the whole content of "Taiwanese-ness", "despotic and conservative China", emphasised by the advocates of westernisation and Taiwan independence, should not be seen as representative of "Chinese-ness"'.<sup>113</sup>

The biggest flaw in Chen Chao-ying's account, according to Lu, was that discussion of the period between 1945 and 1949 was missing. For this was the formative period of a Taiwanese consciousness in opposition to Chinese consciousness, represented by the rule of the KMT, an *émigré regime*, and thus a period essential to analysis of the formation of Taiwan-centred consciousness or identity. Lu used the example of the Taiwanese consciousness of native Taiwanese writers such as Yeh Shih-tao.<sup>114</sup> The February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident in 1947 and the subsequent highly repressive policies of the KMT government are important historical events that had a far-reaching impact on the transformation of Taiwanese consciousness, and indeed on the evolution of a Taiwanese nationalism that initially saw China as the nation in question but later privileged Taiwanese nationhood.

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<sup>112</sup> Lu Chien-rong, 1999, *Fragmenting National Identity in Taiwan 1975-1997*, p. 250. For a comprehensive critical discussion of Chen Chao-ying's argument see pp. 249-55.

<sup>113</sup> Chen Chao-ying, 1995b, 'Discovering the genuine colonial history of Taiwan – a response to Mr. Chen Fang-ming', *Chinese and Foreign Literature*, Vol. 24, No. 4, p.86.

<sup>114</sup> Lu pointed out Chen Chao-ying's selective reading of the works of Wu Tzuo-liu and Yang Kuei which focused on their affection for motherland China without taking into account how their views of China changed. See Lu, 1999, p.253.

## The Modulations of Taiwanese Nationalism

In comparison to Chinese nationalist discourses, more theoretical efforts have been made to construct Taiwanese nationalism, specifically liberal nationalism. Recently, an attempt has been made to build a more radical discourse of Taiwanese nationalism, which can be described as a 'leftwing Taiwanese nationalist discourse'. A Taiwanese cultural nationalist movement has also developed.

As noted above, this movement was promoted by Taiwanese humanist intellectuals revolving around two literary journals, *Li Poetry Magazine* and *Taiwan Literature* in the first half of the 1980s and *New Culture* and *New Taiwanese Culture* in the second half. They also rallied around two organisations: Taiwan Pen Association and Taiwan Association of Professors. Essential to contemporary Taiwanese cultural nationalism is the claim that Taiwanese culture is distinct from both Japanese culture and Han Chinese culture. Crafting a national language, national literature and national history was central to this cultural nationalist movement.<sup>115</sup> Hsu Hsin-liang's Taiwanese nationalist discourse of 'the rising people' (*hsing-hsin min-tsu*) is distinct from all others in that it praised Taiwanese entrepreneurship and capitalist interests and the policy of 'advancing westwards', that is, investing on the mainland.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Among others, novelists Chung Chao-cheng, Lee Chiao, Sung Tse-lai, Yang Ching-chu and Yeh Shih-tao, and poet and literary critic cum history professor Lee Min-yung are the leading figures in this cultural movement. The term 'Taiwanese literature' assumed increasing political significance in the first half of the 1980s. For these Taiwanese humanist intellectuals, Taiwanese literature was based on a wholesome 'Taiwan consciousness' whilst Chinese nationalist writers such as Chen Ying-chen saw it as 'Chinese literature in Taiwan'. The second half of the 1980s witnessed another wave of cultural nationalist discourse, which was characterised by an intention to 'de-Sinicise' and 'nationalise' Taiwanese literature. 'Cultural subjectivity' has been the catchword of Taiwanese cultural nationalists since the late 1980s and formed an important element of cultural nationalist discourse. For them, the subjectivity of Taiwanese culture implied autonomy from Chinese culture and underscored the boundary between the two 'nations'. See Hsiao, 2000, pp. 96-109.

<sup>116</sup> Hsu is a former leader of the DPP. He dubbed Taiwanese 'the rising people', characterised by their determination and courage to overcome the challenges they face, originating in both the natural and

Among liberal Taiwanese nationalists, Wu Nai-teh is perhaps one of the few notable figures. In his research on various but related issues of ethnic identity, political support, democracy and democratisation, and national identity, Wu first drew on theories of liberal nationalism, primarily the writings of J. S. Mill and Yael Tamir, to make a normative argument for nationalism compatible with liberal ideals. He then used the data collected by means of opinion polls on identity-related questions in Taiwan not only to seek empirical evidence for the theoretical arguments of liberal nationalism but also to demonstrate a positive correlation between secessionism or pro-independence identity and democratic consciousness.<sup>117</sup>

Liberal critics however claimed that Wu had misinterpreted the core argument of liberal nationalism, such as that of Tamir. For liberal nationalism generally suggests dealing with identity politics in the multicultural context not by 'secessionism' or 'political independence' but 'cultural autonomy'. While 'secessionism' can be justified by extension of the liberal principle of autonomy, liberal nationalism could support secession solely on the basis of protection of human rights, rather than racial differences.<sup>118</sup> This critical point was made from a theoretical point of view. Anderson's remark that China was unlikely ever to accept a breakaway Taiwan even in the long-term proved it from a historical perspective. Anderson explained: 'From the standpoint of the nation-state, for a former province without ethnic difference

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man-made environments, and by their ability to compete with their rivals economically in the international arena. See Hsu, 1995, *The Rising People*, p.18. It is however unclear whether 'the rising people' here represents all people in Taiwan. Hsu's discussions focused almost exclusively on the role and economic interests of Taiwanese entrepreneurs. His is clearly a 'class-biased' account.

<sup>117</sup> See Wu Nai-teh, 1993, 1996a, 1996b, 1997.

<sup>118</sup> Chiang Yi-hua further argued that 'what should be taken into consideration when Wu attempted to establish a link between liberalism and nationalism is the opposition of liberal nationalism to any arbitrary nationalist appeal to independence or secession'. See Chiang, 1998, 'The theoretical types of national identity discourse in contemporary Taiwan', in Chiang, *Liberalism, Nationalism and National*



from the majority population to attempt independence is secession. So far, no nation-state has ever permitted this'.<sup>119</sup>

Wu Rwei-ren's argument represents another strand of Taiwanese liberal nationalism. In contrast to Wu Nai-teh, who drew on theories of liberal nationalism and used empirical survey data to test theoretical arguments, with a view to demonstrating that liberalism and nationalism were compatible theoretically and empirically, the focus of Wu Rwei-ren's discussion of 'pragmatic Taiwanese nationalism' was the 'democratically formed' discourse of Taiwanese nationalism.<sup>120</sup> This notion is related to what Lin Chia-lung referred to as 'the political formation of Taiwanese nationalism'.<sup>121</sup>

In an essay discussing Taiwan's democratic consolidation, Wu Rwei-ren reminded his readers of Phillippe C. Schmitter's argument that the fundamental precondition for democracy is a pre-existing and legitimate political unit. He applied this to the Taiwanese case. 'The paradox of Taiwan's democratisation', according to Wu Rwei-ren, 'was that the democratisation ensuing the division of national identity, which in turn destroyed the preconditions for democratic consolidation – a commonly recognised political boundary'.<sup>122</sup> Wu's justification for Taiwanese nationalism was thus that national unity is a necessary precondition for democracy, in line with the

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*Identity*, pp. 173-4.

<sup>119</sup> Perry Anderson, 2004, 'Stand-Off in Taiwan', *London Review of Books*, p. 23.

<sup>120</sup> By 'pragmatic nationalism', Wu Rwei-ren meant the 'democratically formed discourse of Taiwan-ROC's sovereignty'. Moreover, Wu argued that 'the democratically formed discourse of Taiwan-ROC sovereignty has already gained a status of what Gramsci calls "moral and intellectual leadership" in Taiwanese society from which almost no serious political contender can afford to deviate'. See Wu Rwei-ren, 2002, 'Toward a Pragmatic Nationalism', especially p. 213.

<sup>121</sup> Lin, 2002, 'The Political Formation of Taiwanese Nationalism'.

<sup>122</sup> Wu Rwei-ren, 1997, 'The paradox and dilemma of democratisation?', in You Ying-lung (ed.), *Democratic Consolidation or Collapse*, p. 33.

views of political scientists Juan Linz and Alfred Stephan<sup>123</sup> and philosopher Ghia Nodia.<sup>124</sup> Wu Nai-teh's and Wu Rwei-ren's liberal nationalist discourses thus differ in terms of the normative foundation of Taiwanese nationalism: whilst Wu Nai-the focused on the compatibility of liberalism and nationalism, Wu Rwei-ren emphasised the democratic process of constructing Taiwanese national identity through popular elections.

Wu Jieh-min's recently-published critical discussion of Perry Anderson's 'The Stand-Off in Taiwan' and Wang Chaohua's 'What is Taiwan?'<sup>125</sup> has contributed considerably to the construction of a more progressive discourse of Taiwanese nationalism.<sup>126</sup> Wu Jieh-min's article scrutinised the role of America in the emergence and development of Taiwanese nationalism. The critical exploration of this question was a response to Anderson's claim that 'the peculiarity of the Taiwanese case lies in the fact that the nation claiming independence is itself completely dependent on a foreign power'. Taiwanese nationalism is thus a 'soft-shell' or 'protected' nationalism.<sup>127</sup> 'The separation from the mainland that has formed its distinctive experience for the past century', Anderson continued, 'has

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<sup>123</sup> They pointed out that 'nationalism provides one possible definition of the demos, which may or may not coincide with the demos of the state'. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stephan, 1996, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, p. 16.

<sup>124</sup> Nodia argued that rational deliberation in democratic polities rested 'unavoidably on a nonrational foundation' because 'a nonrational act of political definition (determining who belongs to "We the People") is a necessary precondition of rational political behavior'. Ghia Nodia, 1996, 'Nationalism and Democracy', in Larry Diamond and Mark Plattner (eds.), *Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Democracy*, p. 8.

<sup>125</sup> Wang Chaohua, 2004, 'What is Taiwan?', *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, No. 56, December 2004. The English version, titled 'The Island of Contention', was published later in *New Left Review* in March 2005.

<sup>126</sup> Wu Jieh-min, 2005, 'Pink Specter over the Taiwan Strait', *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, No. 57, March 2005.

<sup>127</sup> The term 'soft-shell' or 'protected' nationalism does not appear in Anderson's article but was used in personal communication with the present writer.

always been a function of empire, not a revolt against it. First Japanese, then American suzerainty has been the condition of all else.... But the underlying reality is that the island remains a protectorate of US imperial power.’<sup>128</sup>

Wang’s response to Anderson’s comment that Taiwanese nationalism was a soft-shell or protected nationalism suggested that to grasp Taiwan’s development into a ‘protectorate of the US’ one has to take into account the Cold War context and the nature of its ‘de-colonisation’ following Japanese rule. Besides, Wang argued, if increasingly aggressive Chinese nationalism is taken into consideration, the fact that any claim to independence by Taiwan would depend on American support is entirely understandable.<sup>129</sup>

Wu Jieh-min, probing America’s role in the simultaneous political democratisation and nation-building in Taiwan, agreed that the dominant discourses of Taiwan’s political democratisation and Taiwanese nationalism fail to critically examine the impact of American intervention on Taiwan’s political development. This echoes Anderson’s critical analysis of the characteristic of Taiwan nationalism and the post-colonialist critique claiming that the process of de-colonisation in Taiwan is still incomplete. Wu argued that this was mainly due to the lack of thoroughgoing critical reflections on the nature of the KMT party-state, a ‘quasi-colony’ of American imperialism. This regime had far-reaching historical consequences. Most important, as far as Taiwanese public culture is concerned, is its sociocultural effect: a collective mindset imbued with anti-communist and conservative ideologies. Rooted in this

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<sup>128</sup> Anderson, 2004, ‘Stand-Off in Taiwan’, p. 8.

<sup>129</sup> A point made by Wang in personal communication with the present writer.

mindset were downright hostility to and fear of leftwing ideas, on the basis of collective ignorance.<sup>130</sup>

Addressing the question of national identity, Wu Jieh-min emphasised the importance of the distinction between and deliberation over the principles of ‘political legitimacy’ and ‘political expediency’ in the construction of nationalist discourses.<sup>131</sup> Criticising China’s Chinese nationalism, whose ‘anti-secession’ ideology rejected Taiwan’s claim to autonomy and equality, Wu argued that since Taiwan had been ‘separated’ from China rather than ‘seceding’ from it, any attempt by Beijing to force Taiwan to accept unification on its terms, either by threatening the use of military force or luring the island with economic or other incentives, was ethically unsustainable.

Equally unsustainable in terms of the principle of political legitimacy, Wu continued, was Chinese nationalist discourse that appealed to ‘common ancestry and culture’ and ‘sacred territory’. Given the reality of the separation between Taiwan and China, the *de facto* sovereignty of Taiwan and its liberal democracy, Wu argued that Beijing has

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<sup>130</sup> Wu Jieh-min pointed out four noteworthy structural features of the KMT ‘quasi-colonial regime’ and their consequences. Firstly, the KMT’s capacity to rule can be seen as an extension of American imperial domination in Taiwan. Thus, on the one hand, as the dominator in Taiwan, the KMT demonstrated a mentality of cultural superiority embodied in its systemic discrimination against local Taiwanese culture and dialect. On the other hand, few people in Taiwan are aware of the American hegemony in the political, economic and cultural fields. Second, the nature of the KMT as an ‘*émigré regime*’ dominated by mainlanders explains the opposition focus on the unfair distribution of power between different ethnic groups. As a consequence, notions of ‘de-colonial justice’, anti-colonialism, anti-authoritarianism and anti-exploitation, have been missing from opposition discourses; politics in Taiwan have been ‘ethnified’. Third, the Cold War has had an ambivalent impact on Taiwan’s politico-economic development: Taiwan enjoyed a ‘long peace’ as a result of the stand-off between the US and USSR and received American economic aid, which created initial conditions conducive to its economic prosperity. American aid was not without its costs, as the controversy over American arms sales to Taiwan demonstrated. Last but not least, the most negative legacy of the Cold War was anti-communist ideology. This has underpinned a downright hostility to and fear of all radical/leftwing ideas of social equality and emancipation. See Wu, 2005, pp. 221-6.

<sup>131</sup> The discourse of political legitimacy emphasises ideals and values while the discourse of political expediency is a ‘realist’ discourse: choices should be made in line with the need for practical survival. Wu, 2005, p. 230.

to shoulder the burden of justification for Taiwan's eventual unification with China. He thus produced an indirect form of Taiwanese nationalist discourse. Wu's implicit Taiwanese nationalist discourse calls for critical reflection on the dependence of Taiwanese nationalism on American hegemony and emphasises social emancipation, making it distinct from the discourses of Taiwanese liberal and cultural nationalism.

### *Alternative Discourses – Multiculturalism and Civic Republicanism*

Tsai Ying-wen's multicultural discourse and Shaw Carl K. Y.'s civic republican discourse can be seen as alternatives to mainstream nationalist discourse in that they did not appeal directly to nationalist ideals. Chiang Yi-hua's discussion of the theoretical types of national identity in contemporary Taiwan for example placed Tsai's multiculturalism and Shaw's civic republicanism in the liberal category, which favours 'constitutional identity',<sup>132</sup> a concept similar to Habermas' 'constitutional patriotism'.<sup>133</sup> Yet, unlike liberal or radical critics, they did not express downright hostility to nationalism. The republican concept of liberty, for example, which links individual liberty to collective liberty or the 'liberty of the republic' may lead some to consider civic republicanism a form of nationalist discourse.

Having established why effective communication between nationalists and liberals taking part in the public debate on national identity in Taiwan was difficult if not impossible,<sup>134</sup> Tsai attempted to construct a synthesis argument on the formation of

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<sup>132</sup> Chiang, 1998, pp. 165-70.

<sup>133</sup> Habermas, 1996.

<sup>134</sup> Because: 'From the nationalist perspective, the institutions of liberal constitutionalism and its principles cannot generate citizens' "sense of belonging" or loyalty to the political community where they live and this is because the concept of citizenship is an individualist one.... From the liberal point of view, the construction of a subjectivity of the Taiwanese nation may easily create a situation in which the majority ethnic group dominates culturally and politically. The consequence is the emergence of

self-identity that could accommodate both the merits of liberal universalism and the particularism of nationalism, but which was free of their defects. Tsai argued that a synthesis of the two was inevitable. He summed up the principle underlying this fusion in the following way: 'On the one hand, certain universal normative principles, such as equality and justice, should be taken to be the "metaphysical condition or language" of public deliberation in which individuals and communities are engaged; on the other, the realisation of these universal principles and their meaning should be context-dependent'.<sup>135</sup> Tsai suggested that democratic constitutionalism remained the political order best able to deal with the issue of national identity.<sup>136</sup>

Shaw's discourse of civic republicanism, which referred to the national identity debate in Taiwan, was articulated primarily in three essays: 'National Identity, Nationalism, and Constitutional Democracy: Reflections on Political Philosophy', 'Modulations of Nationalism Across the Taiwan Strait' and 'Democratisation and National Identity in Taiwan: Reflections on Political Theory'.<sup>137</sup> Before writing these essays however, Shaw had studied the intellectual history of 'community', which laid the theoretical ground for the civic republican discourse he later applied to the Taiwanese case.<sup>138</sup> Drawing on this theoretical foundation, Shaw claimed that

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"populism", "aggressive nationalism" or the "collective ethnic cult". Tsai Ying-wen, 1997, 'Identity and Politics', *Political Studies Review*, p. 78.

<sup>135</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 72-6.

<sup>136</sup> According to Tsai, the principle of democratic constitutionalism provides a vantage point for critical reflection upon the value of national culture (or what he called 'locally formed ethnic-cultural identity') whilst national culture constitutes the space or context of public discourse and provides materials for deliberation. Although national culture generates identity, this identity is not fixed, but changes as new situations arise. (*ibid.*, p. 79)

<sup>137</sup> Shaw Carl K. Y., 1997, 'National Identity, Nationalism, and Constitutional Democracy: Reflections on Political Philosophy', *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, No. 26; 2002, 'Modulations of Nationalism Across the Taiwan Strait', *Issues & Studies*, June 2002, Vol. 38, No. 2; 2003, 'Democratisation and National Identity in Taiwan: Reflections on Political Theory', in Chiang Yi-hua and Li Qiang (eds.), *Modern State Structures in the Chinese World*.

<sup>138</sup> Shaw, 1996, 'The Concept of Community: A Historical Review', *Taiwan Political Science Review*,

constructing a theory of political community should not mean 'simply and conveniently mixing those incompatible elements (e.g. rationality and traditionalism) and the various forms of community (e.g. classic political community reminiscent of the ancient Greek polis), modern state, and civil society) without a thoughtfully-selected method.... A better choice of theory is the one that is based on a community theory which regards the liberal public sphere as the core institution and incorporates the civic republican idea of participation, and the romanticist analysis of culture'.<sup>139</sup>

Shaw defined the concept of national identity as citizens' willing identification with the political community to which they belong. The three main characteristics of this identity are outlined as follows: firstly, it represents the choices and common goals of the members of the community within a constitutional regime, i.e. it is an expression of political will; secondly, such identity must be presented in the form of political discourse, which involves rationality and speech action; finally, national identity is indispensable for political legitimacy: the regime must generate political support from its people or citizens in order to achieve solidarity within the community and such support was largely based on the affection of the general public.<sup>140</sup>

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1996, Initial Issue. His main point is that although most liberal scholars view the discourses of community as opposed to liberalism, the liberal view of 'society' is still a theory of community, consisting of two main elements: public opinion and the market. Shaw pointed out that the ideal type of liberal community is one that embodies Hegel's concept of civil society. The reason liberals are reluctant to use the term 'community' to describe their view of society, he argued, is because it seems to them that the teleology of common good in the concept of community is incompatible with individual freedom of choice. Shaw then identified three types of community in modern political theory: the state, civil society, and the nation. (ibid., p. 258).

<sup>139</sup> ibid. p, 287.

<sup>140</sup> Shaw, 1997, p. 4. Nonetheless, Shaw admitted that more often than not, these three elements have been in tension with each other, opening up some difficult questions for the construction of national identity.

Shaw, nevertheless, seemed rather pessimistic about Taiwan's prospects of putting into practice those desirable theoretical arguments of national identity which he proposed. This emphasises the importance of democratic constitutionalism due to the so-called 'Lee Teng-hui phenomenon'. In a sense, according to Shaw, whether Taiwan could establish a civic republic with democratic constitutionalism as its political order depended very much on how respectful Lee was of the constitution after the 'Machiavellian moment', the moment in which the new republic was created.<sup>141</sup>

In light of the heated nationalist debate in Taiwan, in which Chinese nationalism on the mainland has always been an influential factor, Shaw suggested that Taiwan, and China too, should move beyond the idea of 'autocentric nationalism', not least to prevent the 'Taiwan problem' from becoming a life-and-death issue for both sides. Having addressed the contribution of civic nationalism to 'paving the ground for the establishment of a self-sufficient subjectivity through democratic participation in Taiwan',<sup>142</sup> Shaw argued that '[A] further task remains, namely to direct Taiwan's national identity toward the civic dimension in order to avoid the mischief of cultural nationalism'. Based on the civic republican view of corruption, which emphasises that it originates more often from within the community than from the external enemy,

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<sup>141</sup> Shaw creatively, and appropriately, borrowed J. G. A. Pocock's notion of 'the Machiavellian moment' to describe the context of post-1987 Taiwan in which martial law was lifted and Lee Teng-hui, the first Taiwanese president, took over from the last strong-man in Taiwan politics, Chiang Ching-kuo. During this period, Lee strove to complete his project of 'political innovation', a term from Machiavelli's *The Prince*. At this 'Machiavellian moment', Taiwan was a political world whose construction and change revolved around one person, Lee, the 'new Prince'. This was Lee's 'virtue'. Central to his political innovation project was the 'politics of delegitimisation', characterised by implementation of democratisation (institution building) and concurrent 'state building'. See Shaw, 1997, p. 22; 2002, pp. 129-37.

<sup>142</sup> This has partially eased Taiwan's identity crisis rooted in the dilemma of recognition. Shaw, 2002, p. 143.



Shaw drew attention to the most urgent issues facing Taiwan: 'empowering citizen participation, reducing inequality, checking ambitious politicians and power factions, and preventing political struggles from degenerating into private duels'.<sup>143</sup>

Concluding his essay on the modulations of nationalism on either side of the Taiwan Strait, Shaw claimed: '[E]liciting the moral resources from the paradigm of civic republicanism, therefore, is not a naive, self-congratulatory euphoria of Taiwan's political democracy. Rather the movement calls for continual reform of the political order to overcome corruption. A *civitas* is bound to be in perpetual flux, the very reverse of the stable hierarchy of ecumenical empire'.<sup>144</sup> A practical and no less important issue raised by Shaw's argument, as one commentator has pointed out, is the institutional design of civic republicanism in modern societies, in which, in contrast to ancient city-states, political participation in the form of face-to-face public deliberation among all citizens becomes virtually impossible.<sup>145</sup>

### *Critiques of National Identity Politics*

Lee Teng-hui decided to put 'state-building' at the heart of his administration's policies at a time when various discourses critical of Taiwan's nationalist politics started to emerge in public debate. These critiques were made, broadly, from the perspectives of liberalism and radical democracy. Proponents of the latter, often involved in the journal *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, can be further

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<sup>143</sup> Inspired by civic republicanism, Shaw argued that 'this task is to establish a historical self-understanding of an *autonomous* people, rather than a *uniquely* autonomous people'. Shaw, 2002, p. 143-4.

<sup>144</sup> *ibid.*, 144.

<sup>145</sup> This question was raised by Lin Chun at a conference held at the London School of Economics (May 2002) where the early version of Shaw's article was presented.

divided into three groupings on the basis of the distinct yet closely related intellectual influences of postmodern, postcolonial and poststructural theories.

### The Liberal Critique of Populist Authoritarianism

Chien Sechin Y. S. and Wang Jenn-hwan's 'March Towards a New Nation State?' is representative of the liberal critiques. Indeed, it has in a way set the tone for liberal critique of Taiwanese nationalism.<sup>146</sup> In contrast to Shaw's conditionally positive comment on Lee's state-building movement, which saw it as the 'new prince's' project of political innovation to create a new republic, Chien and Wang criticised Lee for exploiting the public yearning for democracy in Taiwan and abusing his power and authority as a democratically elected president to further the ideology of Taiwanese nationalism.

To put it differently, liberals like Chien and Wang suspected that Lee's project was an attempt to construct a new nation-state rather than to consolidate liberal democracy. The result, they contended, was a 'populist authoritarianism' as understood in Wolfgang Mommsen's criticisms of Weberian 'plebiscitary leadership democracy',<sup>147</sup> which invents a homogenised 'people' to mobilise public support. As a result, the diversity of civil society was subordinate to the interests of the ruler. Lee was compared with Adolf Hitler, and Taiwan's politics with the Weimar Republic on the brink of collapse.

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<sup>146</sup> Chien Sechin Y. S. & Wang Jenn-hwan, 1995, 'March Toward a New Nation State? The Rise of Populist Authoritarianism in Taiwan and Its Implications for Democracy', *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, August 1995, No. 20.

<sup>147</sup> Part of the theoretical background of Chien and Wang's critique was the breakdown of the Weimar Republic in the fanfare of acclamation for the *Führer*. Their criticisms thus centred not on democratic electoral politics *per se*, but Lee's charismatic approach to constructing political identity.

Shaw has commented on Chien and Wang's characterisation of Taiwan politics since 1988 as 'populist authoritarianism'. He stated that the concerns underlying Chien and Wang's critique were, first, whether popular democracy would lead to the abolition of liberal constitutionalism and second, whether the presidential elections would be turned into a secessionist referendum, to the very great peril of the country. For Shaw, there were no a priori answers as these were empirical questions. Whilst claiming that the first direction seemed unlikely, Shaw expressed concern about the fast-developing populist politics as democratisation proceeds in Taiwan.<sup>148</sup>

### Deconstructing Taiwan's Cultural Imaginary of a Subempire and a Nation-State

Radical intellectuals influenced, as noted above, by various 'post-isms' and the intellectual legacy of 1968 have expressed downright hostility to the nation-state in general, and Lee Teng-hui's state-building movement and nationalist discourses of all kinds in Taiwan in particular. Whilst their discourses differ in their theoretical positions and presuppositions, most notably, postcolonialism, postmodernism and poststructuralism, they form a united front against nationalist politics in Taiwan and promote the idea of radical democracy. Among these radical discourses, Chao Kang's approach can be differentiated from others in his deployment of (radical) political economy and pragmatism, inspired by Dewey.

Chen Kuan-hsing, a professor of foreign literature, has been commonly regarded as the leading figure in the postcolonialist critique of Taiwanese nationalism, especially after the publication of his article 'The Subimperialist Eye' mentioned in passing

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<sup>148</sup> Shaw, 2002, p. 145. Shaw argued that the first scenario, the radical abolition of liberal constitutionalism, was unlikely given the vitality of civil society in Taiwan and the importance of liberal

above.<sup>149</sup> The English version of the article started by citing a poem, *Burning* (1989), written by Taiwanese aboriginal poet Monanen Malialiaves (Ah Neng) while the Chinese version included three other brief quotes by a Taiwanese lesbian feminist, internationalist-feminist and postcolonialist,<sup>150</sup> intended to indicate an anti-essentialist account of identity and imply his own stance of ‘new international localism’, a multi-levelled construction in terms of epistemology, methodology, politics, ethics and desire.<sup>151</sup> The poem reads:

I look hard for

The origin of blood.

Some say I’m from the Malaysian archipelago,

On the southwest border of China...

But my parents told me:

We are all children of the sun,

The eggs of the rattler,

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legitimacy in sustaining support from major liberal-constitutional states. See also Shaw, 2003, pp. 162-4.

<sup>149</sup> Chen’s article ‘The Imperialist Eye: The Cultural Imaginary of a Subempire and a Nation State’ was first published in Chinese in July 1994 in *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*. The English version was published in 2000, *positions*. He acknowledged the existence of an English-language work with a similar title, Mary Pratt’s *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (N.Y.: Routledge, 1992).

<sup>150</sup> These short quotes included: ‘We live on different native earth’ – a Taiwanese lesbian feminist; ‘I am an internationalist, because I am a feminist’ – Meaghan Morris; “‘African” nation-state building is anti-people’ – Manthia Diawara. Chen, 1994, p. 152.

<sup>151</sup> Chen’s ‘new internationalist localism’ was an attempt to formulate a synthesis that could accommodate universal and particularist claims, similar to Tsai Ying-wen’s multicultural discourse, with a view to preventing nationalism from becoming a conservative and self-centred discourse and losing its liberating potential in the postcolonial context. Chen argued: ‘There is no necessary connection between racism and nationalism, or between nationalism and imperialism. Nevertheless, the trajectory of desire – from individualism, racism, nationalism, and colonialism to imperialism – constitutes history per se unless political ethics intervene to destroy and transform the narcissistic mechanism or alternatively, a denationalising, new internationalism is developed to internalise the other, forging a hybrid intersubjectivity, and thus effects a process of becoming instead of accumulative being. In this context, new international localism based on a dialogical alliance of popular democracy can resolve the dilemma, loosening the imposed nation-state category on the epistemological level; emphasising the dialectic of local and international on the methodological level; resisting all hegemonic operations on the political level; internalising the other on the ethical level; deconstructing the myth of primordial sentiment on the

The race bred in the earth...

No accurate answer after all.

But retracing assures me,

Making me understand the real master of the beautiful island,

And page after page of broken history.<sup>152</sup>

The implementation of Taiwan's 'Southward Advancing' economic policy in 1994 under Lee Teng-hui, 'endorsed by the opposition party, and applauded and propagated by scholars, politicians and capitalists', was seen by Chen as the formation of Taiwan's 'subempire' in Southeast Asia.<sup>153</sup> 'The Taiwan empire was being formed' through capital investment in the developing countries in the region. Chen argued, '[A]s a matter of fact, advancing toward the South, West, and East projects exactly the same desire as that of imperialist expansionism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries'.<sup>154</sup> Chen proposed to critically intervene in the discourses and projects of Taiwan's 'imperialist expansionism' intellectually by means of 'the postnationalist cultural imaginary' and 'the new international localism', central to which was the deconstruction and reconstruction of nationalism and dialogue between the local and international.

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level of desire'.

<sup>152</sup> Translation by Wang Yiman. Chen, 2000, p. 9.

<sup>153</sup> By subempire, Chen meant 'a lower-level empire that depends on the larger structure of imperialism'. Chen argued: 'Within the neocolonial structure, Taiwan's own economic, political, and cultural structure is subordinated to the United States and Japan. Therefore, its targets of expansion are the politico-economically weaker countries, rather than more robust capitalist areas'. Chen, 2000, p. 15.

<sup>154</sup> 'South' referred to Southeast Asian countries where Taiwanese investments have been made, such as 'Taiwan's sixth export processing area' in the Philippines, 'Taiwan industrial area' in Vietnam, 'Taiwan development project' in Indonesia, and capital investments in Malaysia and Thailand. 'West' referred to China, primarily the southeast coastal provinces such as Fujian and Guangdong. For a detailed discussion of this point, see the paragraph 'What are the concrete manifestations of Taiwan's subempire?', Chen, 2000, p. 16.

For many critics, political economists in particular, Chen's critique of Taiwan's 'southward advancing' policy failed to address an important question: for a heavily trade-dependent small economy with a limited domestic market like Taiwan, what would be the alternative to encouraging and assisting Taiwanese industrialists to search for locations offering more favourable production factors and potential markets? In the article, Chen seemed to spare himself this question by stating: 'Where should the structural flow of capital be directed? Is it always necessary for capital to expand externally? These are not the questions I am considering here. Suffice it to say that imperialist expansion not only leads to exploitation of foreign labourers but is harmful to local workers as well; investment abroad will reduce the employment of local labourers'.<sup>155</sup>

Five comments on Chen's essay were published in *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies* in February 1995, the following year. Relatively critical comments were made primarily from the perspective of political economy whilst others were largely in agreement with Chen's argument.<sup>156</sup> Wang Jenn-hwan's critical comment addressed the aforementioned question of Taiwan's industrial policy making. It focused on the political economic implications of the 'southward advancing' or 'south bound' policy as he called it, arguing that the out-flow of Taiwanese capital was basically related to global capitalist trends. The policy accordingly had two implications. Firstly, it was merely the political result of 'following the logic of

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<sup>155</sup> Chen, 2000, p. 17.

<sup>156</sup> They are Yu Chi-chung's 'The Construction of Subjectivity and the Cultural Imaginary of the Nation-State', Wang Jenn-hwan's 'What does the South Bound Policy Tell Us?', Chiu Fred Y. L's 'Externalization of Industrial Disasters, the One- "Nation" Left and Democratic Unthinking- An Internationalist-Historical Discourse on "Taiwan Sub-imperialism"', Wen-liang Cheng's 'Imagined Post-State', and Chu Wan-wen's 'The Myth of Economic Imperialism'. *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, No. 18, February 1995.

capital' and thus a mercantilist approach totally devoid of imperialist intentions. Secondly, this policy-making was still closely bound up with politics in the sense that it was an attempt to alleviate the pressure of demand of 'westward advancing', meaning further deregulation on business investment in China; ideologically, Taiwanese national identity could be strengthened. This was however detrimental to labourers both in Taiwan and the target countries of Taiwanese investment.<sup>157</sup>

Chu Wan-wen made a similar comment to Wang's. Unlike Wang, who straightforwardly rejected the policy as an imperialist project, however, Chu ridiculed the Taiwan state's intention of becoming an empire, given its limited economic power and lack of other powers normally possessed by imperialists. Not only that, but the decision of Taiwanese industrialists to move their factories abroad demonstrated their reluctance or inability to upscale their businesses. This relocation in fact laid bare the weakness of Taiwan's economy rather than its capacity for economic expansion.<sup>158</sup>

#### Representing 'The Phony Taiwanese' – The Anti-Essentialist Critiques

The anti-essentialist critiques of national identity politics in Taiwan have come from postmodernists and poststructuralists. Given their common anti-essentialist position, poststructuralist discourse is perhaps distinct from its postmodernist counterpart primarily in its emphatic use of the notions of 'subject position' and 'empty space'.<sup>159</sup> Liao Chao-yang, for example, commenting on Chen Chao-ying's claim that 'Taiwanese subjectivity' and 'Taiwanese-ness' must overlap with 'Chinese

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<sup>157</sup> Wang, 1995, pp. 226-30.

<sup>158</sup> Chu, 1995, pp. 257-63.

<sup>159</sup> See Liao Chao-yang, 1995a, 'The sadness of the Chinese' and 1995b, 'On empty subject'. Lin Shu-fen, 2001, *Democratization in Taiwan Revisited*.

subjectivity' and 'Chinese-ness', argued that 'identity' was an 'empty space' and therefore we cannot and should not attribute any 'essence' to Taiwanese identity.<sup>160</sup>

Articles collected in a special issue of *Off the Island*, a radical/non-mainstream magazine claiming to speak for all those excluded and neglected by mainstream society, is representative of the anti-essentialist critique of the nationalist public culture in Taiwan. The issue's title 'The Phony Taiwanese – the fifth ethnic group in Taiwan' was clearly a response to the discourse of 'four major ethnic groups' prevailing in the early 1990s, used interchangeably with the term 'new Taiwanese' invented by Lee Teng-hui. For anti-essentialist postmodernist critics, even worse than the discourse of 'new Taiwanese' was the essentialist discourse of 'genuine Taiwanese'.

The term 'fifth "ethnic group"' was a postmodern parody intended to contrast the 'essentialist' categorisation of the four major ethnic groups: the mainlanders, the Taiwanese/islanders, the Hakka and the aborigines. All those who do not identify with the 'Taiwanese nation' or are uncomfortable with the aforementioned categorisation thus belong to this 'fifth ethnic group'. The intention here was to subvert such serious notions as 'four major ethnic groups' and 'brave Taiwanese'. In an article entitled 'The phony Taiwanese', the author, 'Taiwanese', asserted:

'The phony Taiwanese people possess no subjectivity or essence. They can form no centre and cannot be represented or represented. This is an ethnic group without ethnic history or

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<sup>160</sup> Liao argued, '[I]n the process of cultural identity formation, the truly transcendental subject might be an empty space without any substantial content.... Such emptiness cannot prescribe any rational thinking. It can, however, move beyond rationality and promote thinking based on rationality. Accordingly, any substantial content of identity is implanted from outside of the subject. Its function is to fill this empty space. Therefore it should not be categorised as irrational emptiness'. Liao, 1995a, p.118.



tradition; instead, it is a (post) modern ethnic group constituted by fragmented, discontinuous and chaotic signs and experiences. Who are you? Taiwanese mainlander? Taiwanese Hakka? Taiwanese aborigine? Taiwanese Hoklo? Why lousy? Why not join us to be spurious Taiwanese? We are having anal sex, dancing, pissing and shitting wherever we like, farting; we are causing trouble.... we are enjoying ourselves. (And you?) We are (all) phony Taiwanese'.<sup>161</sup>

Chao Kang's discourse of radical or popular democracy, inspired by Dewey and Mills, was also developed against the backdrop of Taiwan's nationalist politics. In fact, he has devoted much of his time to attacking national identity in general and Taiwanese nationalism and its intellectual advocates in particular, as demonstrated in his articles 'The scapegoat of identity politics: patriarchy and women in the military dependants' villages' (1995), 'Another "transvestite politics": national identity, or capital interests?' (1995) 'New Nationalism or Old?' (1996), 'Money, "lies", statistics charts: the interest politics of ethnonationalism' (1998), 'Power, resentment, the vanguards: the identity politics of ethnonationalism'.<sup>162</sup>

His most notable and indeed widely cited article is 'New Nationalism or Old?'. Chao argued for a 'democratic nation' after producing a thoughtful critical analysis of Chang Mau-kuei's article 'The provincial-origin question and nationalism' (1993). Drawing on the theories of nationalism espoused by Clifford Geertz, Eric Hobsbawn and Benedict Anderson,<sup>163</sup> he criticised the 'theological turn' marking Chang's

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<sup>161</sup> 'A Taiwanese', 1993, 'The phony Taiwanese', *Off the Island*, 1993, p. 45.

<sup>162</sup> These articles were written between 1994 and 1998. Most of them were originally published in *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*. They are collected in his book titled *Farewell To Resentment* (1998).

<sup>163</sup> Chao, 1996, pp. 21-30. His discussion focused on pointing out Chang's misreading and misinterpretation of these nationalist theorists in order to justify Taiwanese nationalism.

explanation of Taiwan's ethnic relations. He argued that the quest for Taiwanese identity was similar to the quest for a 'tribal name'. Chao dubbed Chang's nationalism 'hyper-ethnonationalism' or 'voodoo nationalism'.<sup>164</sup>

Chao's critique of Taiwanese nationalism and identity politics made three main points: firstly, it was constructed and promoted to serve the interests of Taiwanese capitalists; secondly, identity politics in Taiwan was motivated by the 'resentments' of the Taiwanese/islanders, and was thus a 'resentment politics'; finally, Taiwanese nationalism was an ethnic nationalism characterised by its 'male-Hoklo chauvinism'. Taiwanese nationalist/identity politics suppressed other identities. The foundations of Chao's critiques were broadly similar to those of the radical discourses discussed above, particularly the postmodernist critiques articulated in the special issue 'The phony Taiwanese' of *Off the Island*. His argument, however, differed from other radical critiques in his emphasis on the significance of a political economic approach and the role of the state in creating the pre-conditions for a well-functioning participatory or popular democracy, whose essence was 'empowering politics'.

Chao's vision of a 'democratic nation', constituted by the democratic public and characterised by 'empowering politics', certainly appears more desirable and progressive than the existing liberal democracy in Taiwan. Yet as Chang Mau-kuei has pointed out, Chao's analysis and interpretation of Taiwanese nationalist discourses of all kinds, such as Chang's own, was biased if not distorted. Chao has shown a downright hostility to the concept of 'ethnie', preferring 'class'. He thus

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<sup>164</sup> Chao, 1996, p. 44. By 'voodoo nationalism', Chao meant a 'totemised, tribalised and mysticised nationalism'.

rejected and assailed research intended to examine ethnic relations and nationalism, though they are commonly thought to be closely related within Taiwan's political development.<sup>165</sup> Whether Chang's nationalist discourse is ethnonationalist is debatable, depending on how 'Taiwanese' is conceived: it could refer to 'citizen' or 'national'. From a civic republican point of view, nationalist discourses as Chang's are not necessarily anti-democratic. Moreover, the invention of the concept of 'new Taiwanese' was in fact an attempt to alleviate the ethnic tensions which occurred primarily during election campaigns. It also refers to all Taiwanese citizens and in this sense features no reference to racial differences.

Radical critics have contributed stimulating critical interventions in the nationalist debate in Taiwan. Nevertheless, important questions remain for these anti-nationalist radicals: Have national identities lost all importance, specifically for national solidarity? Is the realisation of social justice and cultural recognition, the core concerns of these radical/progressive intellectuals, feasible without a secure and capable nation-state?

Smith, responding to the typical postcolonialist critiques of nationalism which highlight its pursuit of 'the cultural unity of the nation', the work of Homi Bhabha being a prime example, argued that: 'There were always counter-myths of origin and alternative memories of national culture, even if some of them might become temporarily predominant – and official. This meant that "national identity" was

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<sup>165</sup> See Chang Mau-kuei, 1996, 'Ideological Critique or Witch Hunting? – A Response to Chao Kang's "New Nationalism or Old?"', *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, 1996, No. 23. Chang Mau-kuei and Wu Hsin-yi, 2001, 'Identity and Sentiment in the Nationalist Discourse – the question of respect and recognition', in Lin Chia-lung Lin and Zheng Yongnina (eds.), *Nationalism and Cross-Strait Relations*.

always being reinterpreted and refashioned by each generation.... After all, most modern states have been ethnically plural and heterogeneous, and most nationalists have sought national unity, and only rarely national homogeneity'.<sup>166</sup> 'What all nationalists demand', he stated, 'is a single public culture'.<sup>167</sup>

Nancy Fraser, a new-left feminist, expressed concern about the 'project of emancipation' proposed and promoted in the post-1968 era. She noted that '[I]n the seventies and eighties, struggles for the "recognition of difference" seemed charged with emancipatory promise. Many rallied to the banners of sexuality, gender, ethnicity and "race".' Fraser continued, '[C]laims for the recognition of difference now drive many of the world's social conflicts.... Why do so many movements couch their claims in the idiom of recognition? To pose this question is also to note the relative decline in claims for egalitarian redistribution'. Fraser concludes that the upsurge in the 'politics of difference/recognition' has worrying implications: 'insofar as the politics of recognition displaces politics, it may actually promote economic inequality; insofar as it reifies group identities, it risks sanctioning violations of human rights and freezing the very antagonism it purports to mediate'.<sup>168</sup>

The same concern has been expressed in a special issue of *Thesis Eleven* that critically examined the impacts of 1968 on the development of the Left 'in the wake of capitalist triumphs over internal and external adversaries'.<sup>169</sup> In light of these critical

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<sup>166</sup> Anthony Smith, 1998, pp. 127-8.

<sup>167</sup> *ibid.*, p. 151.

<sup>168</sup> Nancy Fraser, 2000, 'Rethinking Recognition', *New Left Review*, pp. 107-8.

<sup>169</sup> The special issue collected articles by Johann P. Arnason and Peter Murphy, 'Introduction'; Luc Boltanski, 'The Left After May 1968 and the Longing For Total Revolution'; Peter Wagner, 'The Project of Emancipation and the Possibility of Politics, or, What's Wrong with Post-1968 Individualism?' and others.

reflections on the 1968 legacy and its implications for the sociopolitical emancipation movement, the critical question for anyone claiming to be progressive is: will the downright hostility to the nation-state apparent in most radical discourses in Taiwan help or hinder the movement? What is needed, perhaps, is a more subtle analysis of the state and its role in the politics of 'socioeconomic and cultural recognition', as Fraser put it.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Welfarism and Social Justice**

#### **The Historical Background of the Welfare Development in Taiwan**

As we have seen, the discourses of liberalism and nationalism have dominated Taiwanese public culture since the end of the Second World War. Nevertheless, welfare has also been a consistent concern, although public debate over social welfare and welfare movements in Taiwan emerged only in the late 1980s. The welfare movement got off the ground as part of the broader political opposition movement. The concept of 'welfare state', referring primarily to the Nordic social democratic model, began to emerge as the major welfare discourse within society, as opposed to Sun Yat-sen's Principle of the People's Livelihood, which, along with the Principles of Nationalism and Democracy, informed the official ideology following the foundation of Republican China and thereafter. This was gradually disregarded as the KMT, under the leadership of Lee Teng-hui, pursued 'Taiwanisation', at a time when many intellectuals on the mainland were keen on Sunist doctrines.

The implementation of the KMT's welfare policies in postwar Taiwan has to be understood in the broader historical contexts of the Chinese Civil War, the Cold War, and the ongoing political stand-off between Taiwan and China in the post-Cold War era. Whilst the first two predicaments are intimately related to the ideology of anti-communism, due to the incorporation of Taiwan into the US-led 'Free World', the latter, though undoubtedly a historical legacy of the Cold War, has more to do with the development of nationalist politics in Taiwan. This in turn is tied up with the emergence and growth of Chinese nationalism, and the relations between Taiwan,

China and the United States. In addition, the right-wing, pro-capitalist KMT's social policies have been commonly viewed as a conservative 'pre-emptive strike' against labour movements. Along with all other forms of mass movement, these were seen as the major threat both to the consolidation of KMT power and stable capitalist industrialisation on the island. Making Taiwan a stable, strong and wealthy 'combat base' or 'outpost' was in turn vital to achieving the KMT's ultimate goal of destroying communism and retaking the mainland.

In recent years, the politics of welfare reform in Taiwan, in comparison to the South Korean case, has attracted academic interests. Studies on the subject probe the impact of democratic transformation on welfare reform, arguing that with democratic change, institutions are reformed, policy networks reworked, and incentives restructured, and thus policy priorities are changed, favourable to the development and deepening of social welfare. In short, democracy has matter very much in shaping social policy reform. The phenomenon of 'race to the top' in social policy in Taiwan and South Korea, against the general trend of 'race to the bottom' in most advanced industrial countries, was even dubbed 'another East Asian miracle' by some welfare scholars.<sup>1</sup> The welfare deepening in South Korea and the politics of resisting retrenchment of welfare state in Taiwan were, in the view of Wong, the products of substantively democratic policymaking.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Wong referred this 'East Asian miracle' to the phenomenon that at a time when governments around the world are facing fiscal constraints and are thus clawing back public expenditures, governments in Taiwan and South Korea have increased their spending. Moreover, he pointed out that in an ideological climate in which economic crisis invites neoliberal economic restructuring, Taiwan and South Korea expanded their social safety nets after the 1997 Asian financial crisis. See Joseph Wong, 2004, *Healthy Democracies: Welfare Politics in Taiwan and South Korea*.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

## Social Investment in Postwar Taiwan, 1945-1970

The emergence of social policy in Taiwan can be traced back to 1945 when the Ministry of Social Affairs launched the *Four Postwar Social Policy Outlines: Outline of National Nursery Policy* (on children, families, and population), *Outline of National Labour Policy* (on trade unions and working conditions), *Outline of National Farming Policy* (on land reform and rural recovery) and the *Postwar Outline of a Primary Social Security System* (on social insurance, social relief and employment services).<sup>3</sup> These social policies differed from those pursued in colonial Taiwan, which mainly focused on public health and primary education:<sup>4</sup> the state committed itself to setting up a social security system, particularly social insurance. These social policies, together with national education policy, were later incorporated into the ROC Constitution in 1947.<sup>5</sup> The KMT regime was unable to make a reality of the welfare ideals in the Constitution amid the chaos of civil war on the mainland. When it fled to Taiwan, however, it

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<sup>3</sup> Ku Yeun-wen, 1997, *Welfare Capitalism in Taiwan*, p. 32; Chan Gordon Huo-sheng, 2001, 'The political, economic, social and environmental analysis of Taiwan's welfare development', in Chan and Ku (eds.), *New Thinking in Social Welfare Policy*, p. 22.

<sup>4</sup> Ku pointed out that Japanese colonial welfare development in Taiwan focused mainly on health and education. He further argued that 'because of improvements in public health, a declining mortality rate and increased life expectancy were two distinguishable trends'. After 1905, annual mortality rates in Taiwan, Ku continued, 'appeared not only to fall but to do so rapidly'. Deaths per thousand declined from an average of 33.4 during 1906-10 to 18.5 during 1941-3. The mean life expectancy of males aged 0 rose from 27.7 in 1906 to 41.1 by 1940, and for females from 29.0 to 45.7. Similarly, education was well developed in colonial Taiwan, as illustrated by the radical increase in school and student numbers. Between 1918 and 1944, the number of children attending primary schools, vocational schools and high schools increased significantly. In 1943, when compulsory education was enforced, the enrolment rate of pupils reached 99.62 per cent in some primary schools. Ku, 1997, pp. 29-30. Ranis also pointed out that Taiwan 'benefited from rather unusual colonial policies favoring primary education, for example, by the early 1950s, 60 per cent of the population was already literate' (Ranis, 2002, 'Lessons from Taiwan's Performance: Neither Miracle nor Crisis', pp. 4-5). Ranis also stressed that Japan implemented these colonial policies 'for its own selfish reasons', that is, to support the Japanese war effort.

<sup>5</sup> The articles relating to social welfare clearly prescribed an active role for the state in welfare policies, stating that it should maintain full employment, implement policies to improve the working conditions of workers, farmers, women and children, bring in rules to arbitrate conflicts between employers and employees, establish social insurance and social relief for the old, weak, disabled, or victims of disasters, protect maternity rights and implement welfare policies for women and children, establish a public health and national health system. See Ku's summary, 1997, p. 33.



implemented its social insurance policy, adding to the welfare mix left over from the Japanese occupation.

Political and intellectual debates over social welfare, nevertheless, were absent in Taiwan during the first postwar years. The closest thing to a 'welfare debate' was that between economic liberalism and democratic socialism within the *Free China* group in the 1950s. The focus, however, was on civil liberties rather than social welfare. Economic liberals focussed on the need to limit the government's role in regulating economic affairs and emphasised 'spontaneous order' as opposed to 'invented order'. The former was exemplified in the free play of market forces, the latter by centralised planning and investment. Economic liberalism and socialism differ most fundamentally in that the former values economic freedom above all, while the latter places socioeconomic equality or social justice centre stage.

Several hundreds of communists were arrested in the 1930s when Japan militarised Taiwan's political and social spheres to prepare for war.<sup>6</sup> This severely damaged the socialist movement, which grew out of the resistance against Japanese imperialism. The KMT regime's 'White Terror' policy in the early 1950s played havoc with it once again. In the Cold War context, Taiwan became difficult if not impossible terrain for socialist activism: the KMT regime made 'anti-communism' national policy after its defeat by the Chinese communists and retreat to the island in 1949. There was therefore no real debate between liberalism and socialism until the 1977-78 'Nativist literary

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<sup>6</sup> By the end of 1931, the Japanese police had arrested several hundred communists and communist sympathisers. In one instance that happened in September 1931, ninety-one people were arrested in a preparation for a peasants' uprising, with thirty-seven of them sentenced from two to eight years in prison. And on 2 December 1931, three hundred and ten people with connections to the communist party and its movement were arrested. See Chien Chiung-ren, 1997, p. 148.

debate', in which the left-wing magazine *China Tide* posed a strong challenge to the dominant modernism and modernisation theory espoused by liberal intellectuals.

### *The 'Economic Liberalism vs. Democratic Socialism' Debate in the 1950s*

Prior to the 'Nativist literary debate' in the late 1970s, the only public debate involving a clash between liberalism and socialism pitted the advocates of a 'free economy' or 'economic freedom' against the proponents of 'economic equality' in the 1950s. This debate took place mainly in the influential bimonthly liberal magazine *Free China*. At issue was the core aim of social policy: political and economic freedom, or economic equality and social justice? Leaving aside the issue of national liberation, based on which different socioeconomic and political discourses were constructed and articulated at the same time, this debate resembles that between '(economic) libertarians' or the 'liberal right' and 'egalitarians' or 'liberal left' as we understand these terms today. The prevailing anti-communist ideology ensured that no radical 'Marxist' ideas, such as 'abolishing private property' or 'proletarian revolution' were evoked.

The debate about socioeconomic equality has to be understood against the backdrop of the KMT's defeat by the CCP on the mainland. This defeat was construed as anchored in the KMT's failure to deal with the social stress arising from its mishandling of economic problems. The debate grew out of critical reflection upon the reasons for the KMT's loss of popular support in its struggle against the Chinese communists on the mainland. The anti-communist 'war' was regarded by *Free China* liberals as a 'social war', intended to bring about a more equitable and fair society, more likely to withstand

the attraction of the CCP's socialism.<sup>7</sup> Rather than viewing either the CCP or a particular social class as the enemy in this social war, for *Free China* liberals the 'enemy' primarily referred to socioeconomic inequalities, which, they argued, would impede the development of liberal democracy.

Whilst much less concerned about the establishment of liberal democracy than the consolidation of its power in Taiwan, the KMT government shared the *Free China* intellectuals' concern about socioeconomic equality. The destruction caused by the anti-Japanese war on the mainland and the siphoning off of resources from Taiwan after 1945 for the Civil War had a disastrous effect on China's economy as a whole. Inflation soared. The KMT regime responded by issuing more currency to make up its budget shortfall, aggravating inflation. The prices of goods increased exponentially within a day. Taiwan was affected by these events, but was in a stronger position following fifty years of stable economic and social development under the Japanese, who had developed the island for reasons of their own,<sup>8</sup> than the mainland, which had lurched from crisis to crisis.

Chen Yi, administrator and commander of the Taiwan Garrison and head of the Taiwan Provincial Administrative Executive Office, plundered the Bank of Taiwan, issuing currency to cover deficit financing of the government and its enterprises. This created

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<sup>7</sup> While the question as to whether the anti-communist war was a 'national' or 'social' war was hotly debated, one of the leading figures in the *Free China* group, Yin Hai-kuang, defined it as a political struggle intended to achieve both national liberation and social transformation, underlining its social nature above all (Yin, 1950, *Free China*, 1950, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 11). In the 1950s, the intellectuals concerned all interpreted the success of the Chinese communists on the mainland as a result of support from the Soviet Union and internal economic breakdown and social chaos. The former factor reinforced these intellectuals' notion that the struggle against the Chinese communists was a nationalist war. In their view, the immense socioeconomic problems invited Soviet intervention. To put it another way, it was a social war utilised by the national aggressor.

<sup>8</sup> As noted above, social policies in Taiwan under Japanese colonial rule focused mainly on public health

an environment conducive to inflation. The reforms of August 1948, compounded by a sudden rush of capital from the mainland, increased prices on the island by 1,145 percent in 1948.<sup>9</sup> In addition to the horrendous inflation, production stagnated and supplies were short.

It is no accident, given the similar economic situation facing Taiwan at the time of the KMT's retreat, that while *Free China* liberal intellectuals advocated freedom, democracy, rule of law and human rights, economic equality was thought to be equally important in the early stages of the debate. A number of articles in *Free China* argued that freedom and equality were equally important and 'compatible', and could be attained through Fabian 'democratic socialism'.<sup>10</sup> These articles argued for the 'socialisation' of industries, rather than the 'nationalisation' advocated by the doctrine of 'étatisme statism' and promoted by the Chinese communists.

Whilst 'nationalisation' assumed a state-centred economic policy revolving around a large public sector or state-owned enterprises, 'socialisation' emphasised popular participation in economic policy-making, as exemplified by 'industrial democracy', which promotes self-government for industrial workers.<sup>11</sup> In short, according to the

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and primary education.

<sup>9</sup> See Thomas B. Gold, 1986, *State and society in the Taiwan miracle*, pp. 52-3.

<sup>10</sup> In an article entitled 'There is only one level road of history: on the mutually entwined relationship between freedom and equality', Huang Chung distinguished socialism from communism, repudiating the idea that the latter is the orthodox version of the former (Huang, 1949, *Free China*, No. 2, Vol. 1, p. 19). He also renounced the argument that freedom and equality are mutually exclusive. De-coupling the historical relationship between democracy and capitalism, he argued that 'the achievement of democratic politics is the realisation of freedom, and the advocacy of socialism is the pursuit of equality'. Huang's ideal appears to be 'democratic socialism'. For him, only democracy can guarantee economic equality. Tseng Hsu-bai made a similar argument for democratic socialism (Tseng, 1950, *Free China*, Vol. 2, No. 6, p. 14), emphasising that economic equality is the indispensable precondition for the realisation of true freedom and democracy.

<sup>11</sup> Tai Du-heng produced a brilliant critical article discussing the concept of 'étatisme statism'. In the article he clarified the common, misleading perception of socialism as a kind of 'statism'. According to this misconception, Tai pointed out, the distinctive feature of socialism was its policy of nationalisation,

former idea, the state participates in economic activities, while it regulates or co-ordinates them in the latter. Apart from the value of social equality, the central, unifying feature of these arguments is the reformist approach of democratic socialism.<sup>12</sup>

Faced with the KMT, an authoritarian regime organised along quasi-Leninist lines, and the communist regime on the mainland, the liberal intellectuals of *Free China* were so terrified of 'dictatorship' that after much heated debate they compromised on the idea of economic equality. On behalf of *Free China*, Lei Chen, an active member of the group, concluded a symposium discussion by stating that:

'Recently, our colleagues have reached a common view about the role of the state in economic affairs. That is, if there is too much state intervention, it seems inevitable that political freedom and democracy will be affected negatively. Moreover, if the degree of state intervention is so great that the system becomes state capitalism, then political dictatorship will follow'.<sup>13</sup>

Yin Hai-kuang, a leading figure in the *Free China* group, translated Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* and introduced it to Taiwan. The book's popularity around 1951 and 1952 reflected not only the consensus among *Free China* liberals that a 'free economy' was

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in which the state was a direct participant in economic activities rather than a regulator or co-ordinator. For Tai, socialism was wrongly distinguished from liberalism and repudiated for this reason. After all, Tai stressed, socialism aimed to achieve human emancipation and in this sense was no different from liberalism, whose core value was freedom. The main purpose of Tai's critical discussion of 'étatisme statism' was to clarify the concept of socialism and defend it as a political ideology that could achieve freedom and democracy. See Tai, 1950, *Free China*, Vol. 2, No. 6. On his distinction between 'nationalisation' and 'socialisation' of industries, see p. 10.

<sup>12</sup> For a detailed discussion of democratic socialism, especially its intellectual development in Britain, see *Welfare and Ideology* by George and Wilding (George and Wilding, 1994, pp. 74-101).

<sup>13</sup> Lei Chen made this statement at the end of a symposium organised to discuss the question 'What economic measures should be adopted to realise "economic socialisation" or "economic equality" according to the principle of "people's freedom" and "political democracy"?' (Hsiao and Yang, *Free China*, 1950, Vol. 2, No. 7).

essential, but also the dominance of the idea of economic freedom in public debate. This 'negative' understanding of freedom, in Berlin's terms, based on liberal distrust of state, has influenced Taiwan's political culture ever since.

Nevertheless, however influential the Hayekian notion of liberalism has been, Taiwan's economic success, relatively equitable society and peaceful political transformation to democracy show the common neo-classical economic interpretation of the 'Taiwan miracle' to be misleading.<sup>14</sup> As Ranis has pointed out, Taiwan's performance over the past four decades, its spectacular growth in per capita income and income distribution, which improved during the most rapid period of growth in the 1960s, has provided 'the world's most persuasive counterexample to what was once viewed as Kuznet's inverse-U-shaped iron law'. Whilst average real per capita GDP growth rates (percent per year) in the postwar period were 5.9 (1960-69), 8.1 (1970-79), 5.6 (1980-89) and 7.3 (1990-93), income distribution (Gini coefficients) was 0.56 in 1950, 0.44 in 1959, 0.29 in 1970, 0.29 in 1978 and 0.38 in 1990.<sup>15</sup>

Taiwan's history is characterised by a developmentalist ideology, 'state-led development' and the strong foundations for political democratisation provided by human capital. Many ardent free market economists in Taiwan, moreover, such as Chiang Shuo-jieh (Chiang and Hsing Mu-huang,<sup>16</sup> suggest that the ideal of economic liberalism inspired by Hayek has never been taken seriously or 'sincerely' put into

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<sup>14</sup> Alice Amsden and Robert Wade are probably the two most prominent political economists who question the literature on the 'Taiwan miracle' portraying it as a result of nearly free markets. They emphasise the active role of the state in regulating economic activities, or 'governing the market', in order to build the international competitiveness of domestic industries and thereby, eventually, to raise living standards (see for example, Amsden, 1984 and Wade, 1990).

<sup>15</sup> Gustav Ranis, 1999, 'Reflections on the Economics and Political Economy of Development at the Turn of the Century', pp. 5-6.

<sup>16</sup> See Hsing, 1992, *On Taiwan's Economy*. Taipei: San Min.

practice within the context of actually existing 'party-state capitalism'.<sup>17</sup> Acceptance that the state has played a key role in Taiwan's remarkable 'growth with equality' has sociopolitical implications. Rather than using Taiwan's success story to endorse authoritarian capitalist developmentalism or misleadingly advocate neo-classical economics, which insists that capitalism requires the free play of untrammelled market forces,<sup>18</sup> the focus shifts to the vital importance of the state in regulating or co-ordinating economic activities to attain desirable social outcomes.

*State Corporatism, the Social Insurance Programme and 'Political Silence' in the 1960s*

The consensus among *Free China* figures that economic freedom must take priority over economic equality reflected the magazine's primary concern with the civil liberties granted in the constitution but later suspended to bolster the struggle against communism and enhance national security. Taiwan had been both 'over-politicised' and 'under-politicised' under KMT authoritarianism long before the lifting of martial law in the late 1980s.<sup>19</sup> In the aftermath of the 1947 'February 28 Incident', watching Taiwan's elite and its successors being systematically hunted down and murdered by

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<sup>17</sup> Party-state capitalism, in contrast to the positive notion of 'East Asian model/governed market theory', has been put forward by many prominent Taiwanese economists to characterise Taiwan's development. The term manifests a strong political tendency against the KMT's party-state regime. They have advocated economic liberalisation, particularly the privatisation of public enterprises. For a critical discussion of this desire to 'destroy party-state capitalism' in Taiwan, see Wan-wen Chu's article 'The Role of the State in the Development of Capitalism in Taiwan: A Review of *Party-State Capitalism*', (Chu, 1995).

<sup>18</sup> Christopher Pierson, 1991, *Beyond The Welfare State?*, p. 26. Pierson's book comprehensively discusses capitalism, social democracy and the welfare state, defending welfare state regime(s) in the face of challenges from new social movements and neo-conservatives.

<sup>19</sup> It was 'over-politicised' in the sense that the party-state's control over society made people and social groups mere tools of the KMT's political mobilisation and policy propaganda. The 'under-politicisation' of society refers to social 'atomisation' in Taiwan and political apathy, deeply influenced by the common belief that 'politics is dangerous'. See Gold (1986) for this view of state-society relations in Taiwan.

the KMT regime, the Taiwanese people were so traumatised that the phrase 'politics is dangerous' became etched into their collective unconscious. In the public mind, political activities became associated with violence. The re-conquered Taiwanese again became quiescent and apolitical, just as they had been after the brutal Japanese military take-over fifty years before. Although the 'February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident' had a significant impact on the emergence of ethnic politics in Taiwan, the KMT repressed both ordinary mainlanders and native Taiwanese.

The emergence of state corporatism in Taiwan after 1950, commonly thought to be a result of the KMT's deep fear of class conflict and group politics, moulded the social dimension of Taiwan's public culture, influencing the incorporation of civil society, the development of social movements and the public debate on social issues.<sup>20</sup> Much research has been carried out on the related issues of the impact of state corporatism on the development of civil society and social movements and the progress of political democratisation in Taiwan. The labour movement stands out as the subject that has attracted most academic interest and public attention. Scholars commonly argue that by conventional standards, the Taiwanese labour movement has been weak organisationally and in its capacity to mobilise as a result of the KMT's comprehensive

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<sup>20</sup> Philippe Schmitter has defined 'state' or 'authoritarian' corporatism as follows: '[a] system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organised into a limited number of singular, compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports' (Schmitter, 1974, pp. 93-4). State corporatism in Taiwan is characterised by the creation of such corporatist structures and arrangements by the KMT party-state, in which the democratic dimension of social corporatism as practised in countries such as Sweden and Norway is absent. While the 'governed market theorists' see corporatist political arrangements as having contributed to Taiwan's fast economic growth by limiting conflict between major interest groups, promoting continuity of industrial form, and protecting the central bureaucracy from all but the most powerful interest groups (e.g. Wade, 1990), for many liberal critics, state corporatism in Taiwan is a major means of social control and political mobilisation (e.g. Wu Nai-teh, 1987).



control,<sup>21</sup> though they disagree about whether this is due entirely to state corporatism.<sup>22</sup>

While repressing the labour movement and trade unions, the KMT government initiated social insurance as early as 1950 as part of a public welfare scheme.<sup>23</sup> Two accounts have been offered to explain this initiative. The first is developmentalist, emphasising the pragmatic need to ensure a healthy and educated labour force for economic development. The second is political, underlining the KMT's desire to maintain stability and consolidate its rule on the island.<sup>24</sup> The proponents of such accounts point to the specific social groups covered by this social insurance scheme: labourers, military servicemen and government employees.

The first reason recalls Lloyd George's statement within the 'national efficiency' debate in Britain at the beginning of the twentieth century: you 'cannot maintain an A-1

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<sup>21</sup> See for example, Huang Chang-Ling, 'The Politics of Regulation: Globalization, Democratization, and the Taiwanese Labor Movement' (Huang, 2002); Chiu Yu-bin, 'The Taiwanese Labour Movement within the Legacy of Authoritarian Rule: from 1988 to 2004' (Chiu, 2004). Whilst both articles recognise the negative impact of the KMT's authoritarianism on the development of the labour movement, they disagree on whether political democratisation in Taiwan, demonstrated by alternation of power between the KMT and DPP, has significantly empowered the Taiwanese labour movement. The former argues that Taiwanese workers have used their newly acquired political power to manoeuvre between different political forces, paving the way for the development of the labour movement. The latter underlines that more often than not political parties supportive of the labour movement become conservative after gaining power, and emphasises the importance of unions and labour movements autonomous from the state.

<sup>22</sup> For example, Huang Chang-Ling has disputed the common view that control of labour in Taiwan is based on state corporatism. Her central point is that although labour representation is monopolised and the union is organised with a corporatist structure, state-sponsored union federations in Taiwan have no control over their member unions. Nor do they have the ability to articulate working class interests or the means to discipline their supposed member unions (Huang, 1997).

<sup>23</sup> Very simply put, social welfare involves the idea of social rights, as defined by T. H. Marshall. As a constituent part of human rights or citizenship rights, social rights entail the citizen's entitlement to state provision, just like civil and political rights. The state has increasingly established a set of social services to provide a safety net for all of its citizens in order to enforce this right (Marshall, 1964). In the system of social insurance, social services are not defined as a human right and are not delivered in the form of state provision; they are a kind of commodity. In the case of Taiwan, the social insurance systems have been financed from three sources: contributions from both employers and employees and government subsidies.

<sup>24</sup> See Ku, 1997, *Welfare Capitalism in Taiwan*, pp. 149-61; Lin, 2000, 'Social struggle, political power resources, and the development of social welfare policy', p. 72, Chan, 2001, 'A political, economic, social and environmental analysis of Taiwan's social welfare development', p. 22.

empire with a C-3 population'.<sup>25</sup> In the case of Taiwan, the goal was not to build an empire, but to make Taiwan into a strong base from which the mainland might be retaken in future. Economic development was considered crucial to achieving this national goal. In 1950, The Governor of Taiwan Province, Wu Kuo-chen, the architect of labour insurance, indicated that it could on the one hand protect the livelihood of the labourers, and on the other increase economic production. The same view was expressed later by another Governor of Taiwan Province, Chiu Chuang-huan.<sup>26</sup>

The second account, which focuses on the KMT regime's need for political stability and social control, highlights the timing of the introduction of insurance policies and the main social groups they aimed to serve. Lin, among others, dismissed the notion that the KMT government cared about labourers' welfare and was pursuing the ideal of the Three Principles of the People. It was, he thought, no coincidence that these schemes were implemented shortly after the KMT retreated to Taiwan, or that in addition to labourers, the major beneficiaries were military servicemen and civil servants/government employees, most of whom came to the island with the regime.<sup>27</sup> Social insurance was thus deployed to recompense state personnel for their contributions to the country.<sup>28</sup>

The pressure of competition from the mainland and the lessons of the KMT's defeat in the civil war also underlay the implementation of social insurance. This resembles the

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<sup>25</sup> Gilbert, 1970, p. 15, quoted in George and Wilding, 1994. p. 80.

<sup>26</sup> Chiu, quoted in Ku's book, stated that 'the purpose of labour insurance is to protect the livelihood of labourers... in order to increase production and help the economy prosper' (Ku Yeun-wen, 1997, *Welfare Capitalism in Taiwan*, p. 155).

<sup>27</sup> Lin Wan-yi, 1995, 'State and Social Policy', in Hsiao and Hsu (eds.), *State and Society in Taiwan*, pp. 281-2; Ku, 1997, *Welfare Capitalism in Taiwan*, pp. 49.

<sup>28</sup> Fu Li-yeh, 1993, 'The Social Insurance System in Taiwan: A Social Control Explanation', *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, No. 15.

background to the land reforms. As suggested by the idea of 'pre-emptive action' against the labour movement, the regime thought that consolidating the support of civil servants, military servicemen and labourers would bolster the anti-communist forces.<sup>29</sup>

Until the 1980s, the concepts of 'social welfare' and 'social insurance', which have dominated welfare discourse and which have been the most significant welfare achievements in Taiwan, were primarily 'defined' by the KMT according to the Three Principles of the People rather than 'debated' in public fora. It is thus vital to grapple with the role and impact of the Three Principles, the core of Sunist Doctrine. The Principles have long been the core ideology of the KMT government, which ruled the island for over a half century until it was defeated by the major opposition party, the DPP, in the presidential election in March 2000. Although the Three Principles has become the national ideology, the Constitution clearly stating that 'the Republic of China, based on the Three Principles of the People, is a democratic republic of the people, by the people and for the people', its contribution to the establishment of the social welfare system in postwar Taiwan remains a matter of dispute.

While some scholars have emphasised the profound ideological influence of the Principle of the People's Livelihood, others, particularly those critical of the KMT's authoritarianism, have argued that reference to them was mere political rhetoric. Had the KMT leadership taken the Three Principles to heart and practised them seriously, the KMT's critics argued, Taiwan should have had a far more robust and well-developed social welfare system.<sup>30</sup> Other scholars, though, underlined the benefits

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<sup>29</sup> Lin Wan-yi, 1994, *Welfare State – A Historical Comparison and Analysis*.

<sup>30</sup> See for example, Lin, 1995 and Ku, 1997.

of the public provision of such social services as public education and public health under the KMT government without referring to the influence of the Three Principles.<sup>31</sup>

Probably because of the KMT's notorious record of authoritarian rule in Taiwan, the general public has tended to view the Three Principles negatively, although state provision of public education and public healthcare, obviously inspired by the Principle of the People's Livelihood, has been proved to have been crucial to Taiwan's successful development. In the early debate among the liberal intellectuals of the *Free China* group in 1950, Chiang Yun-tien questioned whether it was helpful to adopt the Three Principles as the primary guide to both intellectual and national development. He argued that:

'It is stated in the Three Principles of the People that the Principle of the People's Livelihood is socialism, also known as communism. Today we take the Three Principles as the common standard whilst the Communists take communism as their standard. Which of them should the people follow?'<sup>32</sup>

According to Bergère, Sun's Principle of the People's Livelihood does seem to feature 'utopian communism'. For it states that '[T]he principle of the livelihood of the people...is that the people of the whole nation...have a share in the profits of capital'.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> This is the opinion of the editorial board of the journal *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*. An article titled 'Publics and the Overcoming of Post-authoritarianism: A Tentative Outline for a Democratic Left' was published in 2004 to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the journal. Its English version, 'Manifesto: An argument for democracy in Taiwan' was later published in *Boston Review*, October/November 2004.

<sup>32</sup> See Hsiao and Yang, 1950, *Free China*, Vol. 2, No. 4, p. 124. This was stated in Sun's first of four lectures on the Principle of the People's Livelihood. He then repeated in the second lecture that 'the livelihood of the people is communism, it is socialism'. See Bergère, 1994, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 383.

<sup>33</sup> Bergère's discussion also mentions the claim that this utopian communism would realise the dream of making 'everybody contented and happy, free from the suffering caused by the unequal distribution of wealth and property' (ibid. pp. 386).

Nonetheless, as Bergère has implied, it is unclear whether the Principle of the People's Livelihood is communism given how many and varied are the ideas covered by the term. She draws our attention to Sun's systematic refutation of Marxism, specifically the philosophy of historical materialism, in his first lecture on the Principle of the People's Livelihood.<sup>34</sup> The intellectual confusion was compounded by contradictions born of political necessity, which made Sun's four lectures on the Principle of the People's Livelihood crucially important political statements. They served 'to convey opinions now critical of Marxism, now favorable to communism'.<sup>35</sup> The left and right of the KMT thus produced opposing commentaries on, and even divergent versions of, Sun's text. Chiang's acknowledgement of the intellectual confusion surrounding the Principle of the People's Livelihood should be seen in this perspective.

That said, the KMT retained the Principle of the People's Livelihood as a guide to social policy and as the foundation of its political legitimacy. In 1965, for example, the Current Social Policies of the Principle of the People's Livelihood were announced by the KMT government. The state would improve seven social services: social insurance,

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<sup>34</sup> For Sun Yat-sen, Bergère pointed out, the motivating force of history lay in man's ever renewed efforts to ensure his subsistence. 'The problem of livelihood is the problem of subsistence.... Livelihood is the central force in social progress... and social progress is the central force in history.' Whilst recognising the importance of the industrial revolution and the introduction of machines, he rejected historical materialism, arguing that 'the materialistic conception of history is wrong... the struggle for a living and not material forces determines history'. Contrary to Marx, 'the class struggle is not the reason for social evolution' (ibid., p. 384).

<sup>35</sup> Bergère states that Sun's Principle of the People's Livelihood is hard to grasp and suggests that the very absence of a satisfactory translation can be explained by the multiplicity and complexity of the ideas covered by the term *minshengzhuyi*. She continues: 'Sun Yat-sen used this term to designate at once his philosophy of history, the ideal goal that he assigned to social evolution, and the strategy that he recommended for achieving this objective. *Minshengzhuyi* thus has a triple meaning – philosophical, normative and programmatic – and Sun Yat-sen played upon all these levels of meaning without explicitly warning his public when he was shifting from one to another'. The crisis provoked by the KMT faction hostile to collaboration with the Soviets and the communists at the time when Sun delivered his four lectures on the Principle of the People's Livelihood made his lectures crucially important political statements. 'In the course of crisis', Bergère argues, 'they served to convey opinions now critical of Marxism, now favorable to communism'. See Bergère, 1994, *Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 381-2.

employment services, social assistance, public housing, welfare services for disadvantaged groups, social education, and community development. These constituted the main content of postwar Taiwan's social welfare policy.<sup>36</sup> Welfare scholars have criticised the KMT's social policies because of their 'selectivity' and the party's political motivation, as evident in the timing of the social insurance scheme in the 1950s and the social groups covered by the scheme. The government, nonetheless, exhibited a consistent concern for welfare, exemplified in its investment in public education and public health.

While these social policies, focusing on social insurance, were being carried out in the 1960s, Taiwan was experiencing a period of 'political silence'. This was anchored in the political events revolving around the arrest of the leading figures of the *Free China* group for attempting to organise a new political party and the subsequent suspension of the magazine. Rather than straightforward political criticism of the government's policies or a focus on sociopolitical issues, the public debate in the 1960s was mainly about 'cultural modernisation'. This debate unfolded between cultural conservatives defending traditional Chinese culture, specifically Confucianism, and liberals arguing for Western values and culture, particularly individualism. The former camp was represented by the magazine *Democratic Review*, led primarily by the neo-Confucianists, the latter by the magazine *Literature Star*, led by the eminent critic, historian and writer Li Ao. It had implications for Taiwan's political development. Lee, for example, saw the KMT's political authoritarianism as rooted in traditional Chinese culture and in the norms characteristic of patriarchy and paternalism.

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<sup>36</sup> Ku, 1997, p. 39; Shih Chiao-yu, 2001, 'The present organisational system of Taiwan's social welfare and its prospects', p. 87.

## **Political Crisis, the Nativist Debate and Social Policy in Transition, 1971-1980**

In addition to the diplomatic setbacks resulting from the normalisation of Sino-US relations, which shook the base of the KMT's domestic political legitimacy, by the early 1970s, Taiwan had been integrated into the world capitalist system. An export-oriented economy based on labour-intensive industries and private capital had come into being. In the cities, the middle classes, made up of the owners of small or medium-sized enterprises and white-collar professionals, benefited from the rapid economic growth. The rural areas, meanwhile, witnessed the proletarianisation of the massive peasant population. Social disparities emerged between the cities and rural areas. Taiwan's international political crises in the early 1970s, resulting from America's new 'China policy', as well as rapid capitalist development, formed the background to the launch of the Nativist literary debate. This was an attempt to raise public awareness of the new social problems and criticise the prevailing capitalist ideology and immense western political, economic and cultural influence.

The Nativist literary debate thus emerged in a context in which Taiwan's industrialisation and the accompanying social changes were intensifying and external economic threats were hitting not only Taiwan's economy but also people's daily lives. The external economic shock was initiated by the jump in oil prices in the early 1970s, known as the first oil crisis and caused primarily by the Arab oil embargo. The attendant hike in the prices of other commodities, from food to capital equipment, necessary to Taiwan's survival, plus the subsequent global recession in all of its increasingly protectionist markets, hit the island hard. The nadir came in 1974 when the

government had to struggle with imported inflation and sudden inflationary expectations after many years of hard-won price stability. While the Taiwan government was still trying to dampen inflation through stabilisation measures such as increasing deposit interest rates and taxes, inflation again caused oil prices to surge in 1979-80, following the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war. The island's economy took another battering.<sup>38</sup>

Competition from the mainland in the international market, in addition to the two oil crises, explain the decision to upscale Taiwan's industrial structure from labour-intensive to heavy and capital-intensive industries. After 1979, under the reformist Deng Xiaoping, the People's Republic of China (PRC) opened economically to the outside world. China targeted Taiwan's markets in an export drive, selling similar goods, solicited DFI (direct foreign capital, especially from Overseas Chinese), established Special Economic Zones similar to Taiwan's EPZs (Economic Processing Zones), joined multilateral lending agencies, and floated bonds abroad. All of this posed a threat, of a previously unanticipated genre, to Taiwan's economy.<sup>39</sup>

As noted in Chapter Three, the Nativist literary debate had significant implications for nationalist debates in Taiwan.<sup>40</sup> Here, I probe the 'social consciousness' expressed in the debate, rather than its nationalistic dimension, and investigate its questioning of

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<sup>38</sup> See Gold, 1986, pp. 98-106 and Clark, 1989, pp. 186-96 for detailed discussions.

<sup>39</sup> Gold, 1989, p. 99.

<sup>40</sup> Their anti-imperialist sentiments generally, and anti-Western/American sentiment specifically propelled the Nativists to accuse modernist writers of being 'cultural compradores' as well as to promote Taiwanese literature. It was not until the early 1980s, when the nationalist public debate got off the ground, that Chinese nationalists and Taiwanese nationalists debated whether Taiwan was part of China and, accordingly, Taiwanese literature was a 'local literature' rather than 'national literature'. Initially the participants in the Nativist literary debate were united by their left-leaning position and shared concern for the least privileged, who lost out in the capitalist industrialisation process.



capitalist modernisation in Taiwan under the KMT's right-wing authoritarianism. The most striking feature of the Nativist writers and intellectuals was their engagement with current sociopolitical issues, in contrast to their modernist counterparts' attitude of disengagement. This attitude is anchored in a realist view of literature, which holds that 'literature comes from social self-reflection' and which emphasises its historical and social roles.

Nativist writers wrote about contemporary Taiwanese people and concrete social problems, which many felt had been ignored by *Modern Literature* writers. Their depictions of the plight of those exploited and marginalised in capitalist industrialisation, which entailed criticism of the KMT's development strategy, were discussed in great detail by Kuo and Yip.<sup>41</sup> Yang Ching-chu's fiction *The Factory Workers*, Wang To's *Auntie Chin-shui* and *Bombing*, Wang Chen-ho's *Rose, Rose, I Love You* and *Oxcart for a Dowry*, Huang Chun-ming's *The Taste of Apples*, *The Sandwich Man/Son's Big Dole*, *Sayonara Good-bye* and *Days of Gazing at the Sea* all examined the traumatic changes brought by modernisation and urbanisation to traditional Taiwan villages, depicting the poverty-stricken lives of Taiwan's lower classes, the 'little people', such as peasants, street peddlers and prostitutes. Some were intended to critically expose the negative impacts of American and Japanese cultural-economic imperialism or neo-colonialism on Taiwan's development, such as Wang's *Rose, Rose, I Love You* and Huang's *Sayonara Good-bye*.

The 1977-78 Nativist Literary debate, clearly, did not revolve around conceptions of

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<sup>41</sup> See Kuo, 1999; Yip, 2004. Whilst Kuo analysed the Nativist literary debate from the perspective of the short-lived re-emergence of the leftwing/socialist movement (dubbed 'the third wave' of Taiwan's leftwing movement since Japanese rule), Yip centred her discussion on the cultural imaginary of 'the

social welfare. It featured no concrete policy suggestions. There was, however, a brief debate on how to balance 'economic development and economic equality' and 'dependent economic development [a concept in radical theories of development referring to development that occurs within a dependent structure] and the goal of anti-imperialism'.<sup>42</sup> All in all, the Nativist literary debate undoubtedly raised public awareness of the suffering of the 'little people', the weakest members of society. This it did by writing about their lives and advocating literary realism. Fearful of the government's repression and harassment, indirect criticisms of the KMT's right-wing economic policy were made through public critiques of American and Japanese neo-colonialism.

Radical ideas such as neo-colonialism, imperialism and the Third World were introduced to public debate, also enriching the discourse of the anti-KMT Dangwai movement. The *China Tide*, around which the Nativists rallied, was part of the Dangwai movement, which began around the end of the Nativist literary debate in 1978.

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(Taiwanese) nation' projected by the Nativist writers.

<sup>42</sup> See Guo, 1999, p. 202. This was a debate between Wang To, a Nativist writer, and Sun Chen, a economic technocrat. 'Dependent economic development' meant primarily Taiwan's heavy dependence on foreign investment, including foreign direct investment and capital investment. Taiwan's economic dependency can also be seen in its trade-dependent policies. The Chinese market must now be added to the list. Dependent development was the conceptual invention of Peter Evans, initially applied to Brazil. Understanding 'dependency' is essential to understanding 'dependent development'. In radical economic theories of development, dependency denotes a structural relationship wherein foreign actors, in particular multinational corporations (MNCs), are allied with conservative local elements who facilitate external (MNC) control over economic activity as well as social and political life. Dependency economists argue that economic links with the developed countries, based on supposed comparative advantage in certain primary goods exports, were based on unequal terms of trade that, far from stimulating modernisation, added structural barriers to it. The notion of dependent development refers to cases in which the result of dependency is *not* underdevelopment or non-development as in most Latin American developing countries. Gold, drawing on Evan's analytic framework of a 'triple alliance' comprising local capital, MNCs and the state, explained Taiwan's development. He concluded that 'dependent development on Taiwan resulted from the dynamic interaction of state, multinational, and local capital pursuing their own interests' with emphasis on the role of the strong KMT state within the 'triple alliance', which prevented the adverse effects of MNC penetration. See Gold, 1988, 'Entrepreneurs, Multinationals, and the State', pp. 175-9; pp. 202-4.

Its social concerns were shared by some of the founding members of the major opposition party, the DPP.<sup>43</sup> Magazines emerging around the same time as a result of internal divisions within *University Magazine*, such as *Taiwan Political Review* and *China Tribune*, also drew public attention to social problems and welfare issues, though they focused more on liberal democratic political reforms.

While Taiwan was facing a severe international political crisis and rapid sociopolitical change, the development of its social welfare also entered a new stage. Whilst the idea of social insurance still dominated social policy thinking, a 'welfare turn' was in sight. The passage of the Child Welfare Law in 1973 is often considered a milestone in the development of Taiwan's social policy. The law has often been seen as the KMT government's response to pressure from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) as well as a move to shore up its political legitimacy after the ROC withdrew from the UN and UNICEF's support for child welfare in Taiwan was suspended.<sup>44</sup> At the same time, a number of social assistance and relief policies were implemented against the background of Taiwan's economic slowdown due to the two oil crises. The idea of social assistance was influenced by America's social programme to tackle poverty in the 1960s. Two important projects – *Shao-Kang* (fairly prosperous or 'well-to-do') and

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<sup>43</sup> Leading figures involved in *China Tide*, such as Wang Hsiao-po, Chen Ying-chen and Su Ching-li, have mentioned its link with the Formosa faction within the DPP. Some *China Tide* intellectuals, such as Wang To and Chen Chung-hsin, participated (strategically) in the faction (Guo, 1999, pp. 439-40; p. 462; pp. 503-8). Another faction of the DPP, the Movement, was also thought to be influenced by *China Tide* because some of its young members were 'groomed' by the group (ibid., p. 438). Wang Hsiao-po argued that 'Taiwan Legal Aid for Labour' and 'Rights for Indigenous People Committee', for example, were originally organised by the *China Tide*, but later 'taken over' by the pro-Taiwan independence DPP. Moreover, Huang Hsin-chieh, the late leader of the Formosa faction and chairman of the DPP, had invited the *China Tide* to take charge of the Department of Labour Affairs which was to be established. The *China Tide* group rejected this because of their own pro-unification position (ibid., p. 439).

<sup>44</sup> Ku, 1997; Lin, 2000. For example, Lin argued, 'in the face of international political isolation and domestic pressure for political reform, social welfare legislation thus became the best means of easing the social unrest'. Lin, 2000, p. 72.

*An-Kang* (healthy and wealthy) – were launched by local governments. Various relief measures already existed to provide financial aid to families living below the declared subsistence level, though these were on a piecemeal basis.<sup>45</sup>

It is illuminating here to briefly discuss the distinction between social welfare and social insurance and the latter's relationship to the idea of public welfare. Social insurance is one of many welfare measures which emphasise the contribution of the insured and does *not* involve what welfare scholars call 'direct income transfer', as exemplified in the practice of progressive income tax. The state is thus not assigned an active role in the redistribution of social wealth or at least its role in this process is not stressed.

As implied in Bryson's discussion of vertical and horizontal equity with special reference to the well-being of the working class, 'where needs are covered through social insurance, the state merely supervises thrift and saving among workers, rather than promoting equality through collective measures'.<sup>46</sup> While social insurance is clearly a welfare measure, whether it can be said to be based on the principle of public welfare is questionable. Labour insurance, for example, depends on contributions by labourers, corporations and the state.

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<sup>45</sup> Ku, 1997, p. 38; Chan, 2001, p. 22.

<sup>46</sup> The concepts of horizontal and vertical equity are most often discussed in relation to income, taxation and social security. Horizontal equity implies attempts to spread the burden of social support over a broader range of social groups. Central to this idea is 'cost sharing' by all members of society or general 'social responsibility'. The most common form of compensation is for the costs of raising children, which, on this view, should be spread horizontally to other citizens not raising (a nation's) children in the form of an allowance. Vertical equity is about making the society-wide distribution of resources more equal by reducing the spread of the income-and-wealth ladder. One of the commonest mechanisms used specifically to promote this is progressive income taxation; another is tax on capital gains. Achieving greater vertical equality is, according to Bryson, ostensibly at least, a principle which also underpins the concept of the social wage. See Lois Bryson, 1992, *Welfare and the State – Who Benefits?*, pp. 63-5.

## **The 'Economic Growth vs. Social Welfare' Debate, 1980-1987**

The welfare turn of the 1970s culminated in 1980 in a package of legislation commonly known as the 'three welfare laws' – the Aged Welfare Law, Social Assistance Law and the Handicapped Welfare Law. These laws were however widely criticised, primarily by welfare scholars and social workers, for being largely 'formal' and failing to perform a 'substantial' social function, and for being overly constrained by the government's determination to avoid financial burdens.<sup>47</sup> As this social legislation was being passed, the public debate on 'economic growth vs. social welfare' or 'economy comes first vs. welfare comes first' emerged. What was at issue was whether increasing public expenditure on social welfare would be to the detriment of Taiwan's economic development.

This anxiety over the impact of increased public financing on the economy was inspired by the passage of the three welfare laws, which were seen as ushering in an era of consumption-oriented social policy.<sup>48</sup> This concern was understandable, given that the welfare turn in social policy occurred at a time when Taiwan's trade-dependent economy was facing difficulties due to the labour shortage and the doubling of wages, which increased the price of Taiwan's exports. This was compounded by the developed countries' adoption of neo-protectionist non-tariff measures to restrict imports, especially such Taiwan staples as textiles, footwear, mushrooms and television sets.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Lin, 2000, p. 73; Chan, 2001, p. 23.

<sup>48</sup> Chan, 2001, p. 23. The notion of 'social consumption' contrasts with that of 'social investment'. When a social welfare policy is said to be 'investment-oriented', this means the welfare expenditure is seen as investment in the production and reproduction of a healthy and educated labour force capable of meeting the needs of economic development. A welfare policy is 'consumption-oriented' in the sense that no economic return is assumed or anticipated as it does not and is not expected to contribute to economic production.

<sup>49</sup> In 1974, Taiwan experienced its first trade deficit since 1970 with only 1.1 percent GNP growth. The

The 'economic growth vs. social welfare' debate in 1980s Taiwan must therefore be grasped in the above socioeconomic context. At the heart of the debate was whether the government should establish institutional and comprehensive welfare systems modelled on the Nordic welfare states. Liberal economists and government technocrats, who emphasised the priority of economic growth, argued that the state should not provide and could not afford welfare provision unless the country's economic growth was sufficient to support it. This echoes Olsson's notion that the state is the 'lender of last resort'.<sup>50</sup> Welfare scholars, meanwhile, most of them heavily influenced by theories of the welfare state, along with opposition politicians, argued for greater state provision of welfare. They tended to compare public expenditure on social welfare in Taiwan and other capitalist countries, primarily the Scandinavian welfare states and Britain.<sup>51</sup>

Underlying the 'economy comes first' discourse is concern about the contradictory relationship between the scale of state welfare provision and capital profitability as suggested in O'Connor's two premises. The first is that 'the capitalist state must try to fulfil two basic and often mutually contradictory functions – *accumulation* and *legitimation*'.<sup>52</sup> The second is the fiscal crisis of the state, that is, 'the tendency for

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extended global recession that followed the second oil crisis mired Taiwan in a seemingly endless period of stagflation. It did not recover until 1983. See Gold, 1988, p. 98.

<sup>50</sup> S. Olsson, 1989, 'Social Welfare in Developed Market Countries: Sweden', in J. Dixon and R. P. Scheurell (eds.), *Social Welfare in Developed Market Countries*, p. 265.

<sup>51</sup> In fact, a fair number of influential social welfare scholars were trained in Britain and have played an important role in initiating public debate on social welfare, especially promoting the idea of the welfare state, and actively involved in policy-making as advisors to government. Chan Gordon Hou-sheng and Ku Yeun-wen are examples. The former was a cabinet minister in charge of labour affairs and a professor in the Department of Sociology (Social Work Programme) at National Taiwan University; the latter is a professor in the Department of Social Policy and Social Work at National Chinan University.

<sup>52</sup> See O'Connor, 1973, pp. 6-7 (emphases original). In other words, the state must provide services and benefits which improve private capital profitability and which also strengthen the social acceptability of the capitalist system. In O'Connor's view, 'no state outlays can be classified unambiguously' with the result that the same service may well perform both functions even though it emphasises one of them; no

government expenditure to outrace revenues.’<sup>53</sup>

Neo-classical economics has had a major intellectual impact on Taiwan’s public culture. Heavily influenced by liberal economists such as Hayek, Friedman and Stigler, Kao, a prominent liberal economist in Taiwan, insisted that the provision of state welfare is the major reason for fiscal crisis.<sup>54</sup> Chun-sheng Huang attributed the OECD countries’ fiscal crises to expanded state expenditure on social welfare. He went as far as to claim that scarce resources should be utilised for defence and economic growth rather than education and social welfare. In his view, social welfare should be provided by the private sector.<sup>55</sup>

In contrast with liberal economists, welfare scholars such as Chan, Kuo, Lu and Tsai have attempted to de-couple welfare expenditure and fiscal crisis or economic recession. Based on the rationale of welfare capitalism, they emphasised how social welfare can stabilise production relations as well as supply and demand, facilitating smoother capital accumulation and continuous economic growth.<sup>56</sup> In the debate, liberal economists often used Britain as an example in support of their assertion that social welfare damages economic growth. For instance, they argued that the comprehensive welfare system in Britain deterred people from saving money, which undermined capital accumulation for economic growth. In order to rebut such claims, the article by George and Wilding, ‘Social Policy and Encouragement of Economic Growth’, was translated into Chinese and published by welfare scholars.<sup>57</sup> Arguing

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state can afford to neglect either of these functions.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>54</sup> See Kuo, 1987, p. 208-9.

<sup>55</sup> Huang, 1983, pp. 52-3.

<sup>56</sup> Chan, 1983; Kuo, 1985; Lu and Tsai, 1986.

<sup>57</sup> George and Wilding, 1984.

from the perspective of human capital theory, George and Wilding claimed that 'there's no doubt that both education and health services improve the quality of labour and in doing so they assist economic growth'.<sup>58</sup>

While concern for welfare has been constant in Taiwan, its welfare remained rooted in the traditional 'patronage model' until at least the late 1980s, when social welfare became the centre of political contestation in election campaigns.<sup>59</sup> In addition, compared to the voice of liberal economists, that of welfare scholars has been relatively weak. Some commentators attributed this to the indoctrination carried out by the powerful KMT state apparatus, through which the opinions of economic technocrats and the ideology of capitalist developmentalism were widely publicised. Related to this, the anti-leftist ethos and the KMT's political authoritarianism have caused the public to value 'equality' far less than 'freedom'. In a sense, people often associate the concept of 'equality' with the concentration of politico-economic power and resources in the state, rather than with concerns about social justice and the role the state should play in realising it.

An equally plausible yet commonly neglected reason, however, is that Taiwan's development, at least into the 1980s, was characterised by 'growth with equality'. Living in a relatively equitable society often makes people unaware of the value of equality. This also explains why civil liberties and political rights were and to a certain

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<sup>58</sup> Whilst insisting that social policy is a positive force for economic growth, George and Wilding also admitted that it is not as powerful as some of its protagonists have claimed over the years.

<sup>59</sup> The patronage model can be seen as the opposite of the 'citizenship model', which sees the public provision of welfare as a right of citizenship or public/social entitlement. For a discussion of welfare from the perspective of citizenship, see T. H. Marshall, 1981, 'The right to welfare', in Marshall (ed.) *The Right to Welfare and Other Essays*; Gail Lewis, 1998, 'Citizenship', in Gordon Hughes (ed.), *Imagining welfare futures*.



extent remain the primary concerns of most people in Taiwan, though the growing income gap between rich and poor from the 1990s on has caused increasing public concern and discontent. Popular support for the 'Pan Purple (Fairness and Justice) Alliance', founded by major social welfare groups in Taiwan in 2000 to fight for the welfare of the disadvantaged, demonstrates the public awareness of the issue.<sup>60</sup>

One component of the debate revolved around whether the Principle of the People's Livelihood means democratic socialism or social democracy. Some intellectuals in the early 'economic freedom vs. economic equality' debate in the 1950s tended to interpret it as democratic socialism, while economic technocrats in the 1980s defined the economic system suggested by the Principle of Livelihood as social democracy.<sup>61</sup> The essential difference between democratic socialism and social democracy lies in their different views of capitalism and the welfare state. Simply put, the former holds that socialism is the most desirable form of social system and the welfare state is a significant staging post in the transition from laissez-faire capitalism to socialism.<sup>62</sup> The latter, meanwhile, sees the growth of the welfare state as the capitalist countries' response to lower class protests.<sup>63</sup> For social democrats, welfare services are an integral

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<sup>60</sup> The Pan Purple Alliance was clearly focused on achieving fairer social redistribution by means of progressive income taxation and tax on capital gains. Also included in its manifesto were a universal national pensions scheme, increasing the number of people covered by the social assistance scheme from the present 0.75 percent to 3 percent of the population, and the integration of social welfare resources. The Alliance was in favour of the notion of the welfare state and 'vertical equity', though these terms were not mentioned in its discourse.

<sup>61</sup> For example, Wang Tso-jung, an important economic technocrat in the KMT government, argued that: 'In short, the economic system according to the Principle of the People's Livelihood is a system of maintaining private property and the market mechanism, insisting on private enterprise as the major economic activity, but accompanying this with public enterprise, state-controlled policy, heavy taxes and institutional measures of social welfare'. Quoted in Ku, 1997, p. 184.

<sup>62</sup> See George and Wilding, 1994, p. 74.

<sup>63</sup> Hirst pointed out the major justification for social democracy among established elites in major industrial states: it could prevent the worse evil of communism and harness organised labour to the national war effort (Hirst, 1997, p. 1). The study by Hicks and Swank on welfare expansion in 18 advanced capitalist countries concluded that: 'authoritative policy makers responded to lower-class

part of the capitalist system: they grow out of it and are essential to its economic and political survival.

Political liberalisation certainly created an opportunity structure favourable to the development of the social welfare movement in Taiwan. After the ending of martial law in 1987, the welfare movement was one of many social movements that collaborated with the opposition party to press the KMT government to implement various sociopolitical reforms, its particular concern being the establishment of an institutional welfare system as opposed to the existing residual model.<sup>64</sup>

One faction within the opposition party, the 'Welfare State Caucus', put the establishment of a welfare state in Taiwan at the heart of its policy platform and has influenced thinking on welfare in the party. Indeed, in post-martial law Taiwan, the ruling KMT and the opposition DPP have exhibited different positions on social policy, in addition to their contrasting views of national identity. The DPP's appeal to social welfare proved an effective strategy in election campaigns. It remained an effective means of attracting votes until the ruling KMT responded by absorbing the DPP's welfarist stance. For welfare scholars and social workers, this was a pleasing yet at the same time worrying development in social policy. Instead of initiating public debates

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protests with welfare concessions because such concessions were enacted to placate protestor grievances, accommodate public preferences for social order, and/or obviate growth of militant and electoral opposition to governments' (Hicks and Swank, 1984, p. 106).

<sup>64</sup> As Bryson put it: 'In the fifties and sixties, as many of the world's welfare states took their mature form, there was an extensive debate about the desirability of an "institutional" rather than a "residual" model of social welfare. As a normative position, a residual or marginal view of the role of welfare holds that state provisions should come into play only when there is a breakdown in the "natural" mechanisms for the support of individuals – the family, the market and voluntary charities. Minford's safety-net, based on the proposition that people should be prevented from falling "below a certain minimum living standard due to personal misfortune", represented residualism.... An institutional view, on the other hand sees welfare provisions as "normal", "first line" functions of modern industrial society' and 'implies no stigma, no emergency, no "abnormalcy"....The institutional welfare state... guarantees "full citizenship rights...unconditionally."' Bryson, 1992, pp. 55-6.

over welfare issues and which welfare system should be established, the two parties tried to outdo one another in issuing '(blank) welfare cheques' in an irresponsible manner.<sup>65</sup>

## **Welfare State or Welfare Society? 1990 to the present**

### *Party Politics and the Welfare Movement in the Early 1990s*

In the early 1990s, while Taiwanese public culture was still dominated by nationalist discourses, social welfare was also a key issue. It was particularly hotly debated during election campaigns. From the perspective of resource mobilisation theory, a popular theoretical approach to explaining Taiwan's welfare development, it was thanks to the 'driving force' of electoral competition between the ruling KMT and the opposition DPP that social welfare and social policy, originally dominated by the DPP's welfare state discourse, suddenly became the focus of election campaigns and appeared in the manifestos of both parties. The DPP's victories in elections in 1992 and 1993, in which pensions were the main campaign topic, persuaded the KMT that welfare pledges attracted votes.

In response to the publication of the DPP's *Policy White Paper* and its calls for public

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<sup>65</sup> Ku expressed the same concern in his discussion of the competition between the KMT and the DPP on pension policies in 1993. In order to win the local election that year, the DPP announced a universal pension system in October, in which citizens 65 years old and above would receive NT\$5000 every month. The KMT savaged this policy as a bribe to elderly voters, while itself targeting aged voters and launching new initiatives for them. The Ministry of Interior Affairs announced that a draft policy on pensions would be published in November. Plans were then made public for an increase in the allowance for low-income elderly people from NT\$3000 to NT\$5000 per month. In response, the DPP announced a pension system targeting the traditional supporters of the KMT, the farmers. The KMT reacted with an emergency cabinet meeting and announced a further increase in the allowance for the low-income elderly up to NT\$6000 monthly and NT\$3000 for the middle to low-income elderly. Very quickly, in less than one month, pensions became a political football. The size of the allowance grew exponentially. The whole process looked and felt rather like auctioneering rather than rational policy debate. See Ku, 1997, pp. 247-8.

policy debate in 1993, the KMT published *The Guiding Principles of Social Welfare Policy* in 1994. Based on the idea of welfare state capitalism, explicitly mentioned in the *Policy White Paper*, the DPP emphasised the state's responsibility to protect people's right to work, guarantee fair income distribution, protect the unemployed, sick, disabled and elderly citizens, provide public services such as education, housing and child care, and establish a social assistance system.<sup>66</sup> The KMT's welfare policy was obviously less progressive than the DPP's, emphasising the central role of family in the provision of social welfare and the desirability of a social insurance system. State welfare and its relation to women's needs, and welfare as a 'caring policy' were hardly mentioned.<sup>67</sup> These differing stances are bound up with the contrast between welfare state and welfare society, discussed in detail below.

Most important of all, however, was the socioeconomic context in which welfare issues became so appealing to the public. The Taiwanese currency was rapidly revalued in 1987 at a time when the direction of capitalist globalisation was becoming increasingly clear. Taiwan witnessed a growing concentration of production resources around this time. As a result, social mobility, which had been high mainly as a result of the system of public education, slowed and income inequalities increased. Another reason why welfare increasingly captured the public imagination was the emergent 'money-power politics' in Taiwan, referring to the KMT's close relationship with capitalists and the increasing political influence of capital on public policy, especially social and economic policies.<sup>68</sup> Nevertheless, it would be misleading to think of the DPP as a

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<sup>66</sup> See the chapter 'Guidelines on social welfare policy' in the DPP's *Policy White Paper*, 1993, pp. 161-81.

<sup>67</sup> On the KMT's *Guiding Principles of Social Welfare Policy*, published in 1994, see Ku, 1997, p. 249.

<sup>68</sup> Fu Li-yeh, 2000, 'Old-age pensions, party competition and elections', in Michael Hsiao and Lin

leftist party of any kind.<sup>69</sup> To the disappointment and surprise of those social activists who had worked with the DPP in the opposition movement against the KMT, its right-wing hue and conservative orientation became clear after it was elected to power in 2000, though it is still relatively progressive compared to the KMT.

From the mid-1990s onwards, however, the focus of election campaigns shifted back to national identity. The 1995-96 'Taiwan Strait Crisis', sparked by the approach of Taiwan's first popular presidential election in March 1996, was a decisive component of this shift. In addition to party competition, the rising economic and political power of China on the international stage is also important to understanding the emergence of nationalist debates and the new nation-state movement in Taiwan, characterised by the indigenisation of politics and culture.

The Chinese government's claim that it would use force if necessary to deter any attempts towards Taiwan independence proved rather counterproductive as far as the advancement of reunification is concerned, given the growing consciousness of 'subjectivity' among the Taiwanese public. Yet at the same time, China's huge market and cheap labour were irresistibly attractive to the Taiwanese owners of small and medium-sized enterprises and the island's traditional labour-intensive industries. With the rise of China in the international political arena, Taiwan has perhaps suffered more than before in its 'spatial politics', seeking *de jure* international recognition of its sovereign status.

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Kuo-ming (eds.), *The Social Welfare Movement in Taiwan*, pp. 240-1.

<sup>69</sup> As Lin Wan-yi pointed out, the DPP is not a left-wing party. It is neither a social democratic party nor a labour party although it has discussed social democracy as one potentially desirable system for the future. At most, it can be said to be a centre-left party. See Lin, 2000, pp. 120-1.

In this domestic and international politico-economic context, public attention was understandably drawn to national security or 'external threats'. The Chinese military manoeuvres launched shortly before the 1996 presidential election with a view to deterring votes for Lee Teng-hui are a good example. Those concerned about welfare development in Taiwan expected the presidential election to further advance the welfare debate. China's actions turned the public attention away from domestic issues to national security.<sup>70</sup> As a result, the public debate over social welfare became marginalised, though the island's welfare development was advanced further, primarily due to party competition. The National Health Insurance Scheme, pensions system and the amendment of the Basic Labour Law were perhaps the most important social policies during this period.

*The East Asian Welfare Model and The 'Welfare State vs. Welfare Society' Debate*

After the 1996 presidential election, liberal democrats declared that Taiwan had finally completed its democratic transition. Yet they were deeply worried about the impact of divided national identities on the island's democratic consolidation. Radical democrats/democratic leftists claimed that Taiwan had merely transited from Lee Teng-hui's 'populist authoritarianism' to 'post-authoritarianism' with the election of Chen Shui-bian, the DPP candidate, as Taiwan's president in 2000. Rather than hailing Taiwan's maturation into a democracy, they called for critical reflection on Taiwan's democratisation, which they dubbed the 'provincial-identity path'. One of the primary concerns of the democratic leftists was the retreat of the state from welfare provision

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<sup>70</sup> See Ku, 1997, p. 249.

and the tendency towards privatisation of social welfare.<sup>71</sup>

It is fair to say that from the late 1980s onwards the idea of the welfare state has been influential in the welfare discourse produced by scholars and opposition politicians. Although concern for welfare has been constant in Taiwan, public and academic debates over different welfare systems emerged rather late, around the late 1990s and early 21<sup>st</sup> century. For some western welfare scholars, this can be explained by the fact that 'systematized social welfare itself has been a relatively new development amongst the industrialised East Asian countries'. In the terms of Goodman and Peng, these countries are 'welfare laggards'.<sup>72</sup> As Goodman and Peng have pointed out, with some justification, 'given the relative youth of the subject, East Asian scholars of social welfare have, until very recently, tended to reply on and accept Western analyses of their own social welfare regimes rather than generate indigenous analyses'.<sup>73</sup> This claim is true insofar as even today, the analyses and evaluations of Taiwan's welfare system produced by local scholars and researchers remain heavily reliant on existing western theories and concepts.

The attempt, primarily by welfare scholars in the West, to investigate whether or not there is something which can be termed an 'East Asian welfare model' is evident in the publication of a collection of essays based on comparative studies of Singapore, South

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<sup>71</sup> See The Editors of Taiwan, 2005, 'Manifesto – An argument for democracy in Taiwan', *Boston Review*. An extended version of the article was originally published in Chinese in *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies* (March 2004), with the title 'Publics and the Overcoming of Post-authoritarianism: A Tentative Outline for a Democratic Left'.

<sup>72</sup> On the reasons for the lack of literature on welfare systems in East Asian countries, see Roger Goodman and Ito Peng, 1996, 'The East Asian Welfare States: Peripatetic Learning, Adaptive Change, and Nation Building', in Gøsta Esping-Andersen (ed.), *Welfare States in Transition: National Adaptations in Global Economies*, p. 192.

<sup>73</sup> Goodman & Peng, 1996, p. 192.

Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong and China, *The East Asian Welfare Model – Welfare Orientalism and the state*, in 1998.<sup>74</sup> Interest in the developmentally dynamic societies of East Asia and the lessons which might be learned from them started with attempts to explain the extraordinary success of the postwar Japanese economy. It then spread to other settings, notably the newly industrialised countries (NICs) of South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong. This investigation later went on to include Southeast Asian nations such as Thailand and Malaysia and mainland China.

The notions of an ‘East Asian welfare model’ and ‘Welfare Orientalism’<sup>75</sup> as articulated in the aforementioned book were largely inspired by the discourse of the ‘East Asian model of economic development’. Rather than producing an unconditionally positive evaluation of the East Asian welfare model, characterised by ‘small government, company/corporate welfare systems, and strong “familial” traditions’,<sup>76</sup> or in short, ‘security without entitlement’,<sup>77</sup> the authors questioned whether there is such a thing as an East Asian welfare model and whether the East Asian experience can be emulated.<sup>78</sup> As far as welfare reforms in Western countries are concerned, the East Asian experience is considered ‘of limited substantive relevance to

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<sup>74</sup> *The East Asian Welfare Model – Welfare Orientalism and the State*, edited by Roger Goodman, Gordon White and Kuck-ju Kwon. See the ‘Editors’ Preface’ on the book’s intentions.

<sup>75</sup> The term was borrowed from Edward Said’s ‘Orientalism’. White and Goodman argued that to make sense of the East Asian welfare experience it was essential to place it in the context of the images which have come to structure Western perceptions of East Asia more generally and which have become a component of the rhetoric of Western politicians and business leaders. These function in effect as a new, positive form of what Said called ‘Orientalism’. A ‘positive Orientalism’ was thus set against a ‘negative Occidentalism’ in their discussion. White and Goodman, 1998, pp. 5-10.

<sup>76</sup> Goodman and Peng, 1996, p. 192.

<sup>77</sup> The phrase was used by Vogel to describe the Japanese model of welfare. Its success, Vogel argued, could be measured in the longevity, good health and educational attainment of the general population; low government welfare spending through heavy reliance on the family, the firm and a large voluntary sector; little inner-city degradation and violence; an active and energetic older generation; high rates of employment and little or virtually no welfare dependency. See Ezra F. Vogel’s *Japan as Number One: Lessons for America* (1980), quoted in White and Goodman, 1998, p. 10.

<sup>78</sup> Gordon White and Roger Goodman, 1998, ‘Welfare Orientalism and the search for an East Asian



the West and cannot be regarded as a model for emulation, despite its superficial attractiveness', given that it evolved in the specific politico-economic context of the 'developmental state'.<sup>79</sup>

Scholars of social welfare in Taiwan tend to agree with this critical view of the East Asian welfare model. This can be seen in their discussions of the roles of family and community in welfare provision. Rather than imagining community as the site of social policy intervention and future welfare, as articulated in the 'communitarian discourses' of social welfare constructed by 'conservative moral communitarians' and 'radical left pluralists',<sup>80</sup> they continue to pursue the ideal of the welfare state and related concepts of social/welfare rights. While there exists a grouping of radical pluralists in Taiwan, such as those deeply engaged in the lesbian feminist movement, their discourse has focused on 'sex politics'. Taiwanese radical left pluralists have made few if any attempts to construct a welfare discourse despite their critique of the welfare state discourse produced by liberal feminists.

### *The Discourse of Welfare Society – Community and Family as Welfare Providers*

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welfare model', Roger Goodman et al (eds.), *The East Asian Welfare Model*, pp. 13-9.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>80</sup> The terms 'moral communitarianism' and 'radical left pluralism' were used by Hughes and Mooney to discuss the idea of community in social policy debates in the contemporary UK, primarily those on 'problem communities' in the 1960s through to the community care legislation of the late 1980s and 1990s. Moral communitarianism finds its philosophical roots in communitarianism, which became a popular and influential way of describing political and ideological appeals to community values and common moral virtues in the UK and USA, in reaction to the apparent decline in civic morality and growth in individualism and welfare dependency. Moral communitarian thought, more specifically, claims to reject the market-led ideology of the New Right, the liberal/libertarian emphasis on individual rights, and the state-led, top-down approach to welfare. Radical left pluralism attempts to move beyond the idea of *community* in the singular and exclusive sense to focus on the struggle for *communities* in radically plural and inclusive senses. Radical left pluralism is critical of discourses of conservative authoritarianism such as moral communitarianism, arguing instead for a political and welfare strategy of social inclusion based on the struggles of diverse communities and the democratic, self-governing associations of civil society. See Gordon Hughes and Gerry Mooney, 1998, 'Community', in Gordon Hughes (ed.), *Imaging welfare futures*, pp. 73-97.

‘Welfare communitisation’ is a new perspective on the provision of welfare services in Taiwan. Its emergence is influenced by the discourses of ‘welfare pluralism’<sup>81</sup> and the ‘mixed economy of welfare’ against the background of ‘rolling back the state’ and ‘dismantling the welfare state’ in Western welfare states, commonly known as ‘the crisis of the welfare state’. Central to the notion of ‘communitisation of welfare’ is ‘community care’ or ‘community-based’ welfare services.<sup>82</sup> Related to the new idea of ‘community provision of welfare’ is the programme of community development, which can be traced back to the 1960s.

Although it did not become government policy, this national movement aimed to improve the lives of the poor. It relied on funding from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) until Taiwan withdrew from the UN. As a result, the community development programme has operated on a reduced scale since then.<sup>83</sup> Without having played a significant part in the provision of welfare since its implementation in the 1960s,<sup>84</sup> the community development programme was gradually replaced by the projects of ‘Welfare Communitisation’ and ‘Establishing Community Infrastructure’ in the 1990s.<sup>85</sup> Central to the ‘Welfare Communitisation’ project are the

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<sup>81</sup> Welfare pluralists argue that current over-reliance on state provision of welfare can be relieved through a reallocation of responsibilities to the informal, commercial and voluntary sectors. Of these, the voluntary sector is seen as particularly attractive as the repository of social and altruistic impulses, without many of the vices such as compulsion, centralisation and inflexibility which undermine the state as a vehicle for society’s well-being. See Pierson, 1991, pp. 200-1.

<sup>82</sup> The project of ‘communitisation of welfare’ was defined in the 1995 National Conference on Community Development as a ‘substantive measure and method to integrate the social welfare system and community development’. In addition to cost savings, according to Huang, community care was advocated in part as a means of creating a pleasant environment for those cared for, primarily the elderly. The ‘deinstitutionalisation of care’ was the key idea here. See Huang Yuan-hsieh, 2000, *Community Care*, pp. 3-5; 2001, ‘The practice of and reflections on the communitisation of welfare’, in Chan Gordon Hou-sheng and Ku Yeun-wen (eds.), *New Deliberation on Social Welfare Policy*, pp. 129-30.

<sup>83</sup> Ku, 1997, p. 39.

<sup>84</sup> Huang, 2000, pp. 277-8; 2001, p. 140.

<sup>85</sup> Around the time when the project of ‘Welfare Communitisation’ was launched by the social affairs

community care programmes, which some cities and counties have experimented with and which focus on the establishment of community-based nursing homes and 'care at home'.<sup>86</sup>

Family is another important concept in the discourse of welfare society which, like community, emphasises the values of altruism and mutual aid.<sup>87</sup> As noted above, family and community have been placed at the centre of the KMT's social policy, influenced, at least ostensibly, by Sun's Principle of the People's Livelihood. In 1994, the KMT published *The Guiding Principles of Social Welfare Policy*, which clearly emphasised the central role of the family.<sup>88</sup> In the 1996 National Conference on Social Welfare, the Premier's speech stressed family-centred welfare.<sup>89</sup> The argument here echoes Bayley's characterisation of family relationships as providing 'for both the functional and the expressive needs of their members'.<sup>90</sup>

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authorities, another community-related movement, named 'Establishing Community Infrastructure', was being pursued by the Council for Cultural Affairs. Whilst the integration of community resources (welfare and medical) and the establishment of self-governing communities based on mutual-aid groups featured in both projects, the latter aimed to cultivate 'civic consciousness and culture' by engaging people in community activities. Huang, 2001, pp. 130-6.

<sup>86</sup> Huang, 2000, pp. 286-90.

<sup>87</sup> See Pinker, 1979, *The Idea of Welfare*, p. 16.

<sup>88</sup> The *Guiding Principles* consisted of nine principles for Taiwan's welfare development: 1. a balance must be maintained between economic and social development; 2. a proper social administration system must be put in place; 3. family must be the centre of social welfare policy; 4. government departments must work as a team; professional social workers are crucial; 5. harmony and co-operation between employers and employees is of vital importance; 6. a financially independent social insurance system must be established; 7. needs satisfaction must be pursued and the mixed economy of welfare maintained; 8. public housing must be provided for lower-income families; 9. equal access to medical care must be provided. See Ku, 1997, pp. 248-9.

<sup>89</sup> It was stated in the speech that: 'Family is still the centre of our society. No matter how comprehensive our social welfare system might be, it cannot replace the special role of family.... The social welfare authorities should forge a family-centred model of the provision of welfare services which integrates social assistance, social welfare, communal mutual-aid, in support of the family as the basic unit of social welfare....' Quoted in Huang, 2000, p. 292.

<sup>90</sup> While Bayley's characterisation of family relationships was based on his study of families caring for mentally handicapped relatives, the Taiwanese Premier's talk about the family's 'special role' also focused on Bayley's notions of 'functional and expressive needs', albeit in different languages of familial 'affections and concerns'. See Pinker, 1979, p. 17.

Although the role of community in supporting family has been emphasised in the argument in favour of welfare society, it remains unclear how this can work in practice, especially in a 'gender-blind' socioeconomic system such as Taiwan. Moreover, when the economic function of the family, primarily based on male wage-earning, is affected by massive unemployment, as in the 1997-8 Asian Financial Crisis, state provision of social protection proved critical.<sup>91</sup>

### *The Feminist Critiques of the Welfare Society Model*

The welfare debate on community included the controversy over the consequences of community care strategies, with feminist thinkers in particular criticising the gendered assumptions which underpin many uses of 'community'. Most notable here is the common view of the 'domestic division of labour', in which the man is the breadwinner and the woman the caregiver. Indeed, as Bryson has pointed out, 'women's social position remains constrained by its historical association with the role of wife and unpaid domestic labourer, dependent on a male breadwinner and subject to the authority of the husband as head of the family'. 'The effects of patriarchy are still strong', she continued, 'despite the reality that rates of employment among married women are high'.<sup>92</sup>

Given that women were historically denied property rights and systematically excluded from the better jobs, it is only to be expected that women are poorer than men. This fact has been publicly 'discovered' and called 'the feminisation of poverty'.<sup>93</sup> Yet some

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<sup>91</sup> Eddy Lee, 1998, *The Asian Financial Crisis: The Challenge for Social Policy*.

<sup>92</sup> Bryson, 1992, p. 190. For her feminist analysis of the relations between women and the welfare state, see chapter 6 'Women's Welfare State', pp. 190-225.

<sup>93</sup> D. Pearce, 1979, 'Women, Work and Welfare: The Feminisation of Poverty', in K. W. Feinstein (ed.),

have disputed the notion that the feminisation of poverty is a new phenomenon: 'it seems clear that women have, throughout history, borne the major "burden of poverty"'.<sup>94</sup> Women's relative economic position is masked in two-parent households by the tendency of statistics to ignore access to family income and assume equality of access. It is only when women cease to be part of a couple and head their own family that their poverty gains recognition.<sup>95</sup> The female-headed single parent family appears in the national statistics of most countries as the most disadvantaged household type.<sup>96</sup>

Given the 'feminisation of poverty', social policies based on providing welfare by protecting male wage-earners and their families, and which view family care and domestic labour as a 'labour of love', are thought to exacerbate women's socioeconomic problems. The situation is particularly acute in a society like Taiwan, in which the system of social relations is still dominated by the traditional perception of a division of labour between man and woman – the man as breadwinner/wage-earner and woman as unpaid domestic labourer. In the process of social policy-making, the state has rarely attempted to change this system of social relations. On the contrary, without dealing with the existing 'sexual division of labour', social policy has become one of the mechanisms reinforcing gender inequality. Community care and child care services were singled out by feminist welfare scholars as non-woman-centred family care policies.<sup>97</sup>

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*Working Women and Families.*

<sup>94</sup> Bryson, 1992, p. 192.

<sup>95</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> S. Kamerman, 1984, 'Women, Children, and Poverty: Public Policies and Female-headed Families in Industrialised Countries', *Signs*.

<sup>97</sup> Wang Li-jung, 2001, 'The feminist logic and construction of women policy', in Chan Gordon Hou-sheng and Ku Yeun-wen (eds.), *New Deliberation on Social Policy*, pp. 266-7.

Over the past ten years, there has been no substantial change in child care policy in Taiwan in the sense that women have had no relief from the pressure of caring for their families. Up to the mid-1990s, 25 per cent of children below six years and 75 per cent of children below three years were cared for by their mothers. As a result, the rate of female labour market participation has remained below 50 per cent, at around 45 per cent. Many put this down to the state's inactive child care policy.<sup>98</sup>

Taiwanese women's social position is worsened by an ageing society that lacks proper social policies capable of responding to these demographic changes. Echoing the thinking underlying policies on child care, care of the elderly has remained almost entirely a family matter in Taiwan; women's role as caregiver is taken for granted. According to the national statistics, only 23 per cent of elderly sick people have gained access to care at home or community care (nursing homes) whilst 70 per cent of the population rely on family care. 80 per cent of family carers are women. Another study on family care for elderly people pointed out that about 50 per cent of elderly females are taken care of by their daughters-in-law whilst half of elderly males are looked after by their wives.<sup>99</sup>

From the perspective of welfare society, social policies that emphasise the role of family and the development of community in welfare provision are not necessarily conservative. Yet they can only be progressive if the 'communitisation' and 'familialisation' of welfare does not mean the 'feminisation' of the consequences of welfare policy. To put it another way, the discourse of welfare society should not be 'a

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<sup>98</sup> Wang Li-jung 1995, *Women and Social Policy*.

<sup>99</sup> Wang, 2001, p. 369.

code flagging that government spending for social security was unlikely to reach the level implied by the term welfare state'.<sup>100</sup> Therefore, even if the welfare state appears less desirable and feasible, theoretically and practically, the state is still expected to play an important role in preventing the reproduction of gender inequality within social relations and the 'double burden' of housework and paid employment.<sup>101</sup> In other words, although the state cannot and should not be the sole welfare provider, its role as regulator and co-ordinator of welfare resources should be emphasised.

The concept of socialisation has been proposed to help construct a better system of care work. Welfare scholars have suggested practical welfare measures such as family allowance, family tax credits, flexible working hours, workplace nurseries and paternity/maternity leave. Fraser proposed the idea of 'universal caregiver' to advance gender equality in the post-industrial welfare state. The key, she argued, is to 'make women's current life-patterns the norm for everyone'. The vision of the universal caregiver requires the state to ensure that men do the same as women, who today often combine breadwinning and caregiving with great difficulty.<sup>102</sup>

Feminist interventions in the welfare debate in Taiwan also include critiques by radical left pluralists, represented by lesbian feminists. As noted above, far from intervening in the debate by constructing a welfare discourse, radical pluralists have demonstrated outright hostility to the state and focused on criticising feminists who demand that the

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<sup>100</sup> This is Bryson's comment on the Japanese model of welfare, according to which family and community support are evoked as cheap options for the provision of care without acknowledging the role women play in caring. Bryson cited Watanuki's study, which points to high suicide rates among carers and exhausted daughters, both natural and in-law, suggesting that reliance on British-style community care is the only feasible alternative way of providing relief for family members. Bryson, 1992, pp. 108-9.

<sup>101</sup> White and Goodman, 1998, pp. 17-8.

<sup>102</sup> Nancy Fraser, 1997, 'After the family wage: a post-industrial thought experiment', in Nancy Fraser (ed.), *Justice Interruptus*, pp. 61-2.

state play a more active role in welfare provision, either as provider or regulator/co-ordinator. While scholars concerned with social welfare seem to presuppose a positive concept of liberty, the radical pluralism articulated by Taiwanese lesbian feminists entails the libertarian idea of negative freedom.<sup>103</sup> While radical left pluralism is important in 'problematifying and deconstructing' the given or latent identity associated with welfare discourses, it provides no concrete arguments about or sophisticated analyses of social welfare as such. In Taiwan, the 'right to (sex) work' is perhaps the main notion expressing a concern for welfare close to the common perception of social welfare.<sup>104</sup>

*The Discourse of the Democratic Left – Beyond Social Democracy/Welfare Capitalism?*

In comparison to other welfare discourses in the public debate, the discourse of the democratic left in Taiwan is perhaps the most radical in terms of its opposition to social democracy. This is anchored in the claim that the main objective of social democracy is to 'humanise, not to abolish, capitalism in terms of private ownership', to borrow the phrase used by George and Wilding.<sup>105</sup> In the view of democratic leftists, social democratic welfare capitalism has undermined the conditions for further class-based political mobilisation as a result of the emergence of consumer society, the influence of Fordism over labour organisations and their organisational culture, and the disintegration of traditional working-class communities.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> See Plant on the relationship between welfare and freedom. Plant, 1991, 'Welfare and the Enterprise Society', in Thomas and Dorothy Wilson (eds.), *The State and Social Welfare*.

<sup>104</sup> The demonstrations against the decision by the municipal government of Taipei to abolish legal prostitution in 1997 provide a good example.

<sup>105</sup> George and Wilding, 1994, p. 92.

<sup>106</sup> The Editorial Board, 2004, 'Publics and the Overcoming of Post-authoritarianism', p. 25.



In contrast with social democracy, the democratic left emphasises the ‘politics of empowering the public’,<sup>107</sup> central to which is the idea of ‘active citizenship’ or ‘deep citizenship’.<sup>108</sup> What should be noted however is that, whilst rejecting the capitalist system of a social democratic hue, democratic leftism shares with social democracy the notion of social redistribution and does not deny the value of representative democracy, though it treats it with caution. Elections as a channel of political articulation and representation are accepted by democratic leftists on condition that this representative regime entails individual subjects capable of rational communication and action.<sup>109</sup>

Given its opposition to capitalism and acceptance of representative politics, the position of the democratic left seems little different from democratic socialism. Whether a scholar opts to support the democratic left rather than democratic socialism is likely to be anchored in a compromise between the different intellectual and ideological positions held by the members of the democratic left grouping. These include postmodernism/post-colonialism/poststructuralism (all of which can be placed in the category of ‘radical pluralism’), egalitarian liberalism (heavily influenced by John Rawls’ theories of justice and political liberalism), and radical liberalism (drawing on Dewey’s pragmatism). Despite the divergent intellectual positions implied in the discourse of the democratic left, it nonetheless advocates a key role for the state in provision of welfare.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> ‘Empowering the public’ means turning ordinary people into active subjects rather than the passive objects of public policy, and hence the generators of cultural identity.

<sup>108</sup> Both notions are central to democratic theories which emphasise the ‘active’ political participation of citizens in contrast with liberal democracy. ‘Deep citizenship’, as used by Barry Clarke, is specifically associated with radical democratic theory and new social movements. Clarke, 1996, *Deep Citizenship*.

<sup>109</sup> The Editorial Board, 2004, ‘Publics and the Overcoming of Post-authoritarianism’, p. 25.

<sup>110</sup> This can be seen in democratic leftists’ criticisms of the government’s discourse of ‘education as a realm of private investment’ and plan to privatise/commercialise the national health insurance scheme.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Conclusion: The Future of Taiwan**

Drawing on the historical experience of Taiwan, this thesis has deployed a novel perspective, that of public culture, to study comparative political development. In light of a critical examination of the existing literature, primarily modernisation theory and transitology with their assumptions, public culture is defined as a process of public deliberation in which the public intellectual as well as the general public are engaged, public awareness is stimulated and democratic consensus is arrived at. This perspective presupposes an open and pluralist rather than teleological theory of human development. Central to the concept of public culture is the role of political ideology and public intellectual in shaping the direction and content of political development through public deliberation. This is a process of public education in which the arguments of participants are refined and revised as a result of reflection on the various perspectives expressed in public debate.

Mainstream approaches to political development are anchored in conceptions such as the convergence theory of modernisation, which describes social changes as a transformation in which any culture could in principle serve as 'input'. The concept of public culture, in contrast, suggests that social changes are and ought to be defined by the society under investigation through public deliberation. Public culture also differs from popular materialist theories of political development, such as simplistic modernisation theories and traditional Marxist accounts centred on the material base, whose explanations of human development assume a strict causal relationship between material forces/economic development and social changes, seeing the latter as the result of the former. While recognising the significance of material conditions in

explaining political development, public culture draws attention to political ideology, a crucial factor long neglected in comparative studies of political development.

The existing literature on Taiwan's postwar political development is dominated by modernisation theory and transition theory or transitology. The former emphasises the structural factors shaping political development, the latter the role of political agents in the process of political transition. To remedy the demerits of both approaches, scholars of comparative politics have attempted to develop a synthetic framework intended to combine the analysis of structure and agency.

Modernisation theory attributes Taiwan's democratisation, which occurred relatively fast and without bloodshed, to its stable and rapid capitalist growth and concomitant sociocultural changes. Emphasis is placed on the liberal democratic movement led by the middle classes. Transition theory highlights the power struggles between the ruling elites and the opposition in the process of political transition, and stresses the role of Chiang Ching-kuo in initiating Taiwan's political liberalisation in the late 1970s and of Lee Teng-hui, who led Taiwan towards liberal democracy and the status of independent sovereign state in the 1990s.

Research anchored in these perspectives has undoubtedly contributed to our understanding of Taiwan's post-war political development. Nevertheless, most existing accounts have failed to probe sufficiently other crucial factors, above all the active role of the state, a divided national identity and a consistent concern for welfare. Whilst some political economists have stressed the role of the state in guiding Taiwan's

industrialisation, characterised, at least until the 1980s, by 'growth with equity', most literature on Taiwan's democratisation neglects it.

Drawing attention to the deficiencies of society-centred explanations of Taiwan's political development is by no means to argue that they should instead be replaced by state-centred accounts. It is not intended to argue that public culture developed in this research is a state culture either. On the contrary, it is a society culture, so to speak. The point is that we must take into account the guiding role of the state in explaining Taiwan's rapid and at the same time equitable economic growth and peaceful democratic transformation. The concept of public culture thus imagines a 'strong society and strong state'. The state's role as regulator or coordinator of material production and social redistribution has been crucial to Taiwan's democratisation, which got off the ground in the late 1970s.

Indeed, alongside nationalist politics, which frequently renders rational deliberation in public fora difficult if not impossible, the increasing social inequality in the late 1990s, resulting mainly from the government's conservative, pro-capitalist tax and economic policies, was also detrimental to Taiwan's democratic advancement. Cynicism and political apathy, rather than active public participation, have come to characterise Taiwan's liberal parliamentary democracy, despite claims that the island had achieved 'democratic consolidation' in the late 1990s.

The concept of public culture in this research also emphasises the open-ended and ongoing interaction between evidence and concept pertaining to a particular history, that is, between history and theory. Here, 'history' is related to but not the same as

'culture'. 'History' includes both political-sociological macroanalyses and theoretically informed case studies.<sup>2</sup> Drawing on the idea of deliberative democracy, which not only emphasises the importance of public deliberation and ideological debate in democratic politics but also the socioeconomic conditions indispensable to democratic deliberation, this research develops the concept of public culture to question the economic determinism of modernisation theory and elitism of the transition approach, while drawing attention to the role of state actors, political ideology and public deliberation. The sensitivity to particular histories inherent in the concept of public culture ensures an open-ended and ongoing interaction between the empirical and the conceptual. The concept of public culture can contribute to comparative politics in general because of its pluralist view of human development and attention to the role of political ideology.

### **The Taiwan Imaginary: Freedom, The Nation, and Welfare as Social Justice**

Liberalism, nationalism and welfarism have been influential discourses in Taiwan's public culture since the end of the Second World War. Most existing studies tend to ignore the consistent concern for welfare and its impact on Taiwan's political development. Extensive studies on nationalism and Taiwan's democratisation only emerged in the mid-1990s, yet it was already a factor in Taiwan's political development under Japanese colonial rule.<sup>4</sup> Crucially, nationalist discourse has shifted away from

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<sup>2</sup> See Charles Tilly, 1984; I. Katznelson, 1997.

<sup>3</sup> Lin Chun, 2000, 'Introduction: The Chinese Path and the Limits of Globalism', *China* Vol. III, p. xvii.

<sup>4</sup> The emergence of academic interest in the subject around the mid-1990s has to be understood in the context of the state-building movement led by the Lee Teng-hui administration in Taiwan and the ethnic conflicts in the former communist countries of Eastern Europe. For most political scientists and commentators, resolving the issue of Taiwan's divided national identity is crucial to its prospects of democracy or 'democratic consolidation', a term widely used by scholars of democracy.

viewing China as the nation in question to promoting Taiwanese nationhood.

Compared to nationalism and welfarism, liberalism's role in Taiwan's postwar political development has been studied extensively. During the Japanese occupation, Taiwanese liberal intellectuals and the local gentry launched the liberal movement, which fought for civil liberties and democratic rights for the local Taiwanese. While left-wingers called for popular uprisings and Taiwan independence, liberal campaigns demanded equal status before the law for Taiwanese and the establishment of a colonial assembly. This political movement was accompanied by a cultural movement focused on introducing modern western culture to Taiwan, raising public awareness of Taiwan's status as a colony and preserving its native culture.

This liberal tradition was first interrupted by the increasingly repressive Japanese militarism of the late 1930s, then by the oppressive sociocultural policies pursued by the KMT regime after it gained possession of Taiwan, specifically after the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident in 1947 and the subsequent 'Sweeping the Red' campaign during the 'White Terror' of the 1950s. Not until after the defeat of the KMT by the CCP on the mainland and its retreat to Taiwan in 1949 did liberalism again emerge in public debate.

The 're-emergence' of liberalism in Taiwan in the 1950s has to be understood in the context of the Chinese Civil War and the Cold War. Liberalism, led mainly by intellectuals rallying around the *Free China* bimonthly, was largely an ideological weapon in the KMT's propaganda war against Chinese communism. For most liberal intellectuals of the *Free China* group, such as Yin Hai-kuang and Lei Chen, liberalism was surely a genuine political and moral belief. In addition to anti-communism, moreover, they expected and advocated liberal democratic reforms within the KMT and on the island. Their increasingly critical comments on KMT policies and the

abortive ‘new party movement’, both of which helped get the magazine banned in the early 1960s, demonstrate their commitment.

Intellectually, liberalism in Taiwan was heavily influenced by the tradition of the 1919 May Fourth Movement, also known as ‘the Chinese Enlightenment movement’, in the context of the signing of the Paris Peace Treaty. Hu Shih, one of the prominent May Fourth liberal figures, was the spiritual leader of the Free China movement in Taiwan. ‘Democracy’, its meaning contested by radical leftists and liberals, and ‘science’, were thought crucial to building a strong and wealthy China in the face of foreign aggression.

Yet Yin Hai-kuang’s interpretation of Hayek’s liberal theory, specifically his notion of ‘spontaneous order’ and theory of the free economy, had an even greater influence on the construction of liberal discourse in Taiwan. *Free China*’s liberal discourse is rooted in the negative sense of liberty, as Berlin defines it. Inherent in this conception of freedom is a deep-seated distrust of the state and an antagonistic view of the state-society relationship. This understanding of freedom has had a far-reaching impact on public thinking about Taiwan’s political development. Indeed, it continues to dominate, though more and more radical liberal discourses addressing social justice and equality and eschewing the negative sense of freedom have been presented within public debate.

By linking the concept of freedom to human rights and constitutional democracy, Chang Fo-chuan’s notion of ‘freedom as human rights’ has inspired Taiwanese liberals’ thinking about practical political strategies to fight for individual freedom.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> In other words, the notion of human rights was used by opposition movements in Taiwan to justify demands for constitutional democracy.

Human rights were understood as the 'essence of individual liberties'. Democratic politics, institutionalised through the establishment of liberal constitutionalism, was regarded as indispensable to the protection of human rights, and hence individual liberties. Human rights, though less popular than freedom in the public debate of the 1950s and 1960s, later became the key component of opposition political discourse from the late 1970s onwards. In 2000, when the DPP won the presidential election, human rights were placed at the heart of the government's policies, partly to distinguish it from the old KMT regime. Moreover, nationalist politics has deployed human rights to argue for Taiwan independence since the 1990s, when the island faced increasingly fierce economic competition from the mainland.

After the Free China group's failed attempt to found a new party in collaboration with local Taiwanese politicians in 1961, culminating in the banning of the magazine and the arrest of Lei Chen, Taiwan exhibited a highly oppressive political atmosphere and public silence in the 1960s. *Literature Star*, a liberal literary magazine, became the major channel for liberal voices during this period. Political criticisms were made in the form of cultural critique, attributing the KMT's authoritarianism to traditional Chinese culture and norms. *The Intellectual*, founded primarily by young liberal intellectuals educated in the United States and young entrepreneurs, was the main setting for presentation of liberal ideas in the 1970s. This grouping was mainly concerned with liberal democratic reform, though it also paid attention to the social conditions and welfare of those, such as farmers and workers, disadvantaged by Taiwan's rapid capitalist development.

Taiwan, while performing its economic miracle, suffered a series of diplomatic setbacks in the 1970s, beginning with the Diaoyutai Incident and rapprochement



between the United States and China. *The Intellectual* was founded against this historical background. The bedrock of the KMT's political legitimacy on the island, its status as sole lawful representative of all China, was shaken by US diplomatic recognition of the PRC and the ROC's expulsion from the United Nations. Chiang Ching-kuo's initially positive response to *The Intellectual* group's demand for democratic reform was an attempt to ground the regime's legitimacy anew.

The changing international situation was unfavourable to the continuation of the KMT's authoritarian rule. The violent Formosa Incident in Kaohsiung in 1979 also created conditions conducive to political democratisation. A mass rally, organised to mark International Human Rights Day, turned into a riot. The government responded with brute force. From the mid-1970s and throughout the 1980s, political magazines critical of the KMT government flourished. They appear to have functioned as a key propaganda weapon in the campaigns of the Dangwai opposition movement. At the heart of Dangwai discourse lay human rights and liberal democracy, though the movement itself was a loosely organised 'umbrella grouping' appealing to all who opposed the KMT's authoritarianism but might not believe in liberal democracy. Some of its participants were left-wingers active in the Nativist Literary movement of the early 1970s.

The legacy of the *Free China* group is evident. As an influential intellectual movement and political ideology in Taiwan, liberalism was first seriously challenged only in the early 1990s. The Nativist Literary movement of the early 1970s, imbued with the radical intellectual and political atmosphere of the 1968 student movement, while significant in the history of the left and to nationalist debate in Taiwan, posed only a limited challenge to liberal ideology, mainly because of the prevailing anti-communist

ethos. Only when Taiwan had achieved liberal democracy – the institutionalisation of the procedures of parliamentary democracy in the mid-1990s, including the right of Taiwanese citizens to elect their president – did left-wing discourses of various hues, including the old left, the new/cultural left, the liberal left and the democratic left, together with nationalism and neo-Confucianism, begin to compete with liberalism.

For many liberals, nationalism and nationalist politics represent a real threat to the development of liberalism in Taiwan. As mentioned previously, Taiwan's political development and public culture is marked by the twin development of liberalism and nationalism. Nationalism played an important part in Taiwan's politics after the KMT retreated to the island. Whilst *Free China* intellectuals in the 1950s were critical of the KMT's authoritarianism, implemented in the name of national security, liberals in 1990s Taiwan savaged Lee Teng-hui's 'new (Taiwanese) state movement' as 'authoritarian populism'. Between them, the discourse of Chinese nationalism was produced by the Nativist Literary movement which, unlike the anti-communist Chinese nationalism of the KMT regime, was rooted in a critique of American neocolonialism.

Taiwan's nationalist debate features two main discourses: Chinese nationalism and Taiwanese nationalism. Although Taiwanese nationalism as a radical discourse and movement emerged as early as the Japanese colonial period, it appeared in public debate in postwar Taiwan only in the early 1990s, when it was no longer a criminal offence to call for Taiwan independence. Chinese nationalism, in contrast, was the official nationalism from the KMT's flight to Taiwan at the end of the Second World War until the regime change in 2000, when the pro-independence DPP gained power. The KMT's official nationalism was political and cultural, establishing the regime as the representative of *dao tong*, cultural orthodoxy, and *fa tong*, legitimate succession:

the KMT was claimed to be the sole lawful representative government of the whole of China. In order to implement its official nationalism in Taiwan after a half-century of Japanese colonisation, the regime put in place cultural policies of 'de-Japanisation', reminiscent of the 'de-Sinicisation' pursued by the Japanese colonial government.

Taiwanese nationalism developed on the basis that the KMT's official nationalism was merely an attempt to obscure the regime's status as a foreign political force with no jurisdiction over the island until 1945. KMT authoritarianism – despite its claim to be part of the free world – and the perception of the party as a 'foreign regime', explain the *convergence of national and democratic discourses*.<sup>6</sup> This in turn accounts for the emotive power and momentum of Taiwanese nationalism under the KMT. This subtle discursive convergence also explains why Lee Teng-hui's state-building movement was criticised by liberals as 'authoritarian populism' and why Taiwanese nationalism emerged in the form of civic nationalism, in contrast to the KMT's official nationalism.

Contemporary Taiwanese cultural nationalism emerged only in the late 1980s, like the flourishing social movements, as a result of political liberalisation. The cultural nationalist movement revolved mainly around a group of local Taiwanese writers and humanist intellectuals and strove to craft a national language, national literature and national history of Taiwan in which Taiwanese national identity could be anchored.<sup>7</sup> Yet civic or liberal nationalism remains the dominant discourse of Taiwanese nationalism.

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<sup>6</sup> See Shaw Carl K. Y., 2002, 'Modulations of Nationalism Across the Taiwan Strait', p. 127. Emphasis original.

<sup>7</sup> Hsiao A-chin's book *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism* (2000) is perhaps the first of the very few that investigate the subject.

Central to the discourse of Taiwanese civic nationalism is Renan's idea that periodic presidential elections are the institutional realisation of a nation's existence, which consists of the 'daily plebiscite'. In other words, unlike Taiwanese cultural nationalism, which holds that national identity is a matter of consciousness based on internalising a particular way of life, the result of a unique national history and geography,<sup>8</sup> civic or liberal nationalism emphasises that the nation (state) and national identity are formed through civic participation in public life; in the Taiwanese case, this refers to popular, periodic presidential elections.

While Taiwanese nationalism in the postwar era has clearly aimed to create an independent, sovereign Taiwanese state, the evolution of Taiwanese consciousness entails a more complicated history. Under Japanese colonialism, Taiwanese consciousness was rooted in resistance to Japanese imperialism; it involved no anti-Chinese sentiment. Taiwanese consciousness signifying a (sub)ethnic distinction between mainlanders and islanders and expressing an anti-KMT, hence anti-Chinese nationalism, emerged in the aftermath of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident in 1947. In the view of the participants in the leftwing Nativist Literary movement in the early 1970s, Taiwanese consciousness was a local consciousness opposed to and embraced by a broader Chinese consciousness. For them, Taiwanese consciousness, reminiscent of Taiwan's situation under Japanese colonialism, arose to resist American neocolonialism in the form of global capitalist development.

In the 'Chinese consciousness vs. Taiwanese consciousness' debate in the early 1980s, Taiwanese consciousness was bound up with the struggle against the KMT's

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<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, p. 15.

authoritarianism. Chinese consciousness, based on which the KMT deployed the notions of *dao tong*, *fa tong* and *cheng tong* to back up its claims to legitimacy, was regarded as the major obstacle to Taiwan's political democratisation. By contrasting the authoritarian Chinese consciousness and the democratic Taiwanese consciousness in the context of the KMT's authoritarian rule, anti-Chinese nationalism became essential to this Taiwanese consciousness, which later evolved into the discourse of Taiwanese nationalism.

From the 1990s onwards, following the 'Taiwanisation' of the KMT under the leadership of Lee Teng-hui, 'anti-Chinese consciousness' ceased to mean opposition to the KMT's official nationalism. Its new target was the PRC's Chinese nationalism. Lee's political vocabulary became even more remote from the KMT's official nationalism, at the heart of which was eventual unification, after he consolidated power as the leader of the KMT party-state. Although he provided no systematic agenda for national reconstruction, he advocated four interrelated ideas, intended to stress Taiwan's subjectivity if not to imply Taiwan independence – 'community of lives' or *Gemeinschaft* (1991), 'sovereignty in the people' or popular sovereignty (1994), the novel slogan 'Manage the great Taiwan, establish the new Central Plains' (1995), and most importantly his redefinition of the relationship between Taiwan and China as a 'special state-to-state relationship' (1999).<sup>9</sup>

The unexpected victory of the DPP presidential candidate Chen Shui-bian in 2000 was interpreted by advocates of Taiwan independence as the climax of Taiwanese

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<sup>9</sup> See Christopher Hughes, 1997, *Taiwan and Chinese Nationalism* and Shaw Carl K. Y., 2002, 'Modulations of Nationalism Across the Taiwan Strait'.

nationalism. Some political commentators, meanwhile, saw it merely as the public yearning for regime change, reflecting general disgust with the KMT's 'money-power politics'. What seems clear is that Taiwanese national identity is in the process of crystallisation. It remains to be seen whether the rise of China as a strong regional and global economic power and the increasing economic integration of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait will disturb this process. For many critics, deeply concerned about the democratic prospects for Taiwan, however, the central issue is how to consolidate political institutions to ensure a free and open space for democratic public deliberation on all issues of public concern, including the 'unification-independence' issue.

Also crucial to postwar Taiwan's political development is the consistent concern for welfare, although it is conspicuous by its absence from most studies of the subject. The KMT's concern about welfare issues and implementation of welfare measures shortly after it retreated to Taiwan in 1949 must be understood in the context of its defeat by the CCP on the mainland. The labour insurance scheme, to take one example, was implemented as early as the 1950s as a 'pre-emptive' strike to prevent the labour movement from getting off the ground. Its failure to win popular support on the mainland was after all due to its political corruption and mismanagement of economic problems as well as public attraction to the social programmes proposed by the CCP. The KMT's implementation of public welfare measures, primarily education, basic health care and social insurance, was also intended to produce the healthy, skilled labour force vital to Taiwan's capitalist industrialisation.

The KMT has always claimed that its welfare discourse and social policy are in accordance with Sun Yat-sen's Principle of the People's Livelihood. Critics of the KMT, however, argued that had the party sincerely carried out social policies anchored

in the Principle, Taiwan would have been a well-developed welfare state already. They viewed the KMT's promise to provide social welfare, like its promise to establish political democracy, as an attempt to legitimate its authoritarian rule rather than a serious commitment to the people. However, many of the KMT's socioeconomic policies, most notably land reform, public education and basic health care, did contribute to Taiwan's 'growth with equality'. The existence of a relatively equitable society with decent levels of human development laid a strong foundation for social capital, and hence for Taiwan's democratisation.

The discourse of the welfare state emerged in public debate in Taiwan only in the 1980s, when the opposition DPP identified the establishment of the welfare state as one of its main policy goals. The DPP's discourse is greatly influenced by the western theory of the welfare state that requires the state to provide education, health services, and care for children and the elderly. The family- and community-centred welfare provision that characterised the KMT's social policy, heavily influence by economic technocrats and the ideology of the developmental state, thus became the prime target of welfare scholars' criticisms. Once the DPP's calls for social welfare proved attractive enough to defeat the KMT's candidates in elections, the KMT jumped on the welfare bandwagon.

The party competition between the KMT and the DPP placed social welfare at the centre of public debate, yet not without negative consequences. For both parties 'sold' their welfare policy ideas in a rather irresponsible manner, failing to consider fiscal discipline or, relatedly, whether the state can afford to be the sole provider of public welfare. In short, both parties cared much less about having serious, thorough public policy debates than 'buying' votes by promising to provide social welfare, as the development of the pensions system in Taiwan demonstrated.

Whether the East Asian welfare model, which stresses the role of the family in welfare provision, is more appropriate to Taiwan, depends very much on whether the ‘familialisation of welfare’ might mean the ‘feminisation of welfare’, which has contributed to the burden of women in Taiwan as their labour market participation has increased. The problem for advocates of state welfare, meanwhile, is whether the state can afford to be the sole provider of public welfare. The idea of welfare pluralism is proving helpful in a context in which Taiwan is facing ‘the crisis of the welfare state’, its economy having slowed down while public demand for state welfare has increased. At the same time, welfare state scholars’ concern that welfare pluralism may become nothing more than a theoretical argument for ‘privatisation of welfare’ should be taken seriously.

### **Afterword—The Future of Taiwan**

As a small island country in ‘the web of empires’, as Michael Mann put it,<sup>10</sup> with the status of ‘intermediate state’ within the international community, as defined by Christopher Hughes, nationalism is bound to be an important element of Taiwanese public culture and hence an influential factor in its political development – in fact, it always has been.

For Taiwanese nationalists, it is important to grasp the power relations between China, Japan and the United States that have imbued nationalist politics on both sides of the

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<sup>10</sup> Michael Mann explained the current situation of Taiwan in ‘the web of empires’ (China, Japan and America) from the perspective of the relation between wars, capitalism and empires, concluding that ‘If no resolution is in sight, the best hope is simply that the stand-off, and its ambiguities and insecurities, simply remain’. See Mann, 2004, ‘Taiwan in the Web of Empires: Wars, Capitalism and Empires’, paper presented to the Conference ‘Taiwan at the Edge of Empires’, in Taiwan, December 18-19, 2004. For his discussion of the case of Taiwan, see especially pp. 14-21.



Taiwan Strait. It is equally important to bear in mind Perry Anderson's remark that Taiwanese nationalism is a 'soft-shell' or protected nationalism, dependent on foreign powers, primarily America. Claims that Taiwan has attained 'subjectivity' are dubious if its nationalism is overwhelmingly reliant on the protection of the United States, or can be materialised only on condition of Taiwan being a 'quasi-colony' serving America's interests in East Asia.

Among those pro-independence discourses, what is perhaps the most radical yet not influential and ironically detrimental to the claim of Taiwan independence or subjectivity is the one promoted by the so-called 'The Club 51', a group founded on July 4, 1994 by 51 intellectuals and businessmen with American experience. The main appeal of the Club, as indicated in the first page of its 'Open Letter to the Social Elite of Taiwan' distributed to the public in the event of the 1996 Taiwan Strait-crisis, called for Taiwan to join the United States of America as its 51<sup>st</sup> State, so as to 'guarantee Taiwan's security, stability, prosperity, liberty and democracy.'<sup>11</sup>

It is equally important for Chinese nationalists on both sides of the Taiwan Strait to understand the twin development of liberalism and nationalism that has marked Taiwan's political development since the end of the Second World War. It is true that Taiwan has been compelled to play an important part in the expansion of the American

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<sup>11</sup> The first few paragraphs of the Open Letter makes clear the Club's central arguments: 'If Club 51 cannot awaken the Taiwanese elite in time to give up such selfish and short-sighted practices as individual immigration, and to support instead the proposal of "Taiwan's State-Building Movement" for collective identification and naturalization into the US, within a few years Taiwan will not be able to escape the appalling fate of "Hong Kongization". Even if it could avoid this, it will be permanently beset by Beijing's psychological warfare, plunging it into economic recession, falling confidence, and social unrest.' In 1998, the spokesman of the Club 51 who signed the Open Letter in 1996, Chou Wei-lin published a highly imaginative work to substantiate his arguments and lay out his moment of utopia, entitled *A Date with the US—the Ultimate Resolution of Taiwan's Future: Taiwan becomes a State of the US in 2013; Say Yes to America*. See Chen Kuan-hsing, 2001, 'Club Fifty-One', *New Left Review*,

empire in East Asia. Yet it would be wrong to perceive the development of Taiwanese nationalism merely as the result of manipulative local politicians in pursuit of personal political gain and the passive performance of the political will of the United States. The Taiwanese public has developed a common consciousness as a result of shared historical experiences after 1949. Despite differing positions on unification-independence, which cannot and should not be resolved by unilateral decisions by Taiwan or China at the cost of peace or human life, democracy, understood as self-government and self-determination, has been the key belief common to people in Taiwan.

The people of Taiwan have good reasons to be proud of their democratic achievements, that is, the institutionalisation of liberal democracy. Yet when the practice of liberal democracy in Taiwan, primarily electoral politics, begins to lose its moral character and becomes a game of power and money, a politicoeconomic structure that serves the interests of capital rather than the general public, it becomes essential to think critically and debate publicly the important question of how to reform the existing sociopolitical institutions. Indeed, public deliberation is vital to Taiwan's future development. As this research has demonstrated, important journals and debates, in short, public culture, did help collectively transform state culture in Taiwan from political authoritarianism to liberal democracy, from Chinese nationalism to Taiwanese nationalism, and from capitalist developmentalism to welfare capitalism.

The political apathy and cynicism among the general public in Taiwan reflect a feeling that politics is not working. The worsening socioeconomic inequality in recent years

only makes equal democratic participation an even more remote ideal. It is vital to the future of Taiwan's public culture and democracy that the people are empowered by engaging them in public deliberation. The public intellectual assumes an important role here, engaging in public life, generating new ideas within public debate and raising public awareness. It is easy to make cynical remarks on the situation found wanting. However, it is hard to explain what led to the situation, and even harder to change it.

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